



Have you ever wondered how dogs as different as a Great Dane and a Yorkshire Terrier can be the same species? Learn the purpose of different dog breeds and how they developed. How can you raise a healthy dog who lives a long life? Study dog nutrition, grooming, medical needs, and responsible ownership. What are some fun activities to do with your dog? Learn about basic training, dog sports, and showing. How can you make your love of dogs a full-time career? Learn about careers that work directly with dogs or contribute to improving the lives of dogs and their families.



Exploring 4-H Dogs

Spark Activity: Spinning in Circles

How can you teach your canine friend to spin in a circle without ever saying a thing? You can use behavior shaping and luring the dog to get it to move in the way you desire. Follow the steps below for some bonding and fun.

1. Teach the dog to watch you. Shape this behavior without saying anything. Have a treat ready (dog treats only-not table scraps), and every time the dog looks at your eyes, quickly say “YES” and give the dog a little treat. Keep the treats small, because you will mark this behavior frequently.
2. Once you have the dog’s attention, you will lure the dog with food. Put the food in your hand right by the dog’s nose. Move your hand towards the tail. Do this in short stages.
3. Get the dog to turn his head to follow your hand. Mark the behavior with “YES” and quickly give a treat.
4. Move your hand farther towards his back so the dog turns about $\frac{1}{4}$ of a turn. Again, say “YES” to mark the desired behavior, followed by the treat as quickly as possible.
5. Successively, turn the dog a bit farther to a $\frac{1}{2}$ turn, then $\frac{3}{4}$ turn and the whole circle with “YES” to mark the behavior with a very quick food treat.
6. When the dog smoothly turns in a circle add the verbal command “SPIN” with the circular movement of your hand. The dog will learn to associate the hand movement with the verbal cue to understand what you want and that it is followed by a tasty treat.

Important notes: What happens if the dog does not do it? The dog does not get a treat. If you lose the dog’s attention, stop training and go back to it at another time. Do not say “no” or scold the dog. It is not fair to scold a dog who does not understand what you want them to do. The goal is to have fun and build a good relationship.

For video demonstrations of this go to: <https://go.illinois.edu/DogTrainingNibbles>

4-H Project Levels and Goals

Beginner

- Learn proper care, grooming and feeding of your dog
- Identify the parts of your dog
- Practice appropriate training for your dog
- Learn different dog roles in society
- Develop a lost-dog plan

Intermediate

- Plan a training and exercise program
- Participate in a dog show
- Compare the labels on pet foods to make an informed decision on your dog’s diet
- Keep a diary of your dog’s health and eating habits

Advanced

- Create a business plan for a pet sitting business
- Explore dog-related careers
- Research diseases and their symptoms in dogs
- Learn how dogs affect the environment
- Participate in a dog show or event

Put Your Project Into Action

Show Your Skills

- Participate in the 4-H dog show
- Make a first aid kit for your dog and show how and why each item is used
- Display about a dogs' nutritional needs
- Interview someone about the importance of microchipping

Service and Leadership

- Learn how dogs are used as service animals and develop a program to raise community awareness
- Make blankets for shelter animals to use at the shelter and then keep when adopted
- Volunteer at a local animal shelter
- Develop a plan to help foster dogs of deploying soldiers or first responders during a crisis
- Organize a dog show for your club
- Organize a fundraiser to benefit a local shelter

Entrepreneurship

- Dog walking service
- Pet sitting in-home service
- Backyard clean-up service
- Dog brush-n-bath
- Make and sell dog toys or treats

Technology Connection

- Online classes for training in obedience, agility, scent/nose work and other dog sports
- Social media groups dedicated to dog rescue, dog sports and specific dog breeds

Connecting with a Mentor

- Local veterinarian
- Local groomer
- Local dog trainer
- Kennel club

Events

- Local 4-H Dog Shows / Illinois 4-H State Dog Show
- University of Illinois College of Veterinary Medicine Open House
- Events sponsored by the American Kennel Club (AKC), United Kennel Club (UKC), Canine Performance Events (CPE), UK Agility International (UKI), Barn Hunt Association, and National Association for Canine Scent Work (NACSW)
- Pet Expos



Careers for People Interested in Dogs

Groomer
Trainer
Shelter employee
Photographer

Scent detection
Animal health care
Service dog trainer

Start a Conversation

What type of dog would be the best for you and your family and how can you find one?

What are the most important things you should do to keep your dog healthy?

What works best to train your dog to be a great home companion or to do competitions?

What do you enjoy most about dogs and how can that become a career?

Want to learn more?

go.illinois.edu/4Hdog

Explore more at Illinois 4-H!

4-H.extension.illinois.edu



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