



Rutland Dog Training

www.rutlanddogtraining.co.uk

Inappropriate Elimination by Adam Beral

We have a one year old Border collie named Pilot. There are two issues that we have with him, although we have to say he is a brilliant family pet, and is loved very much. He gets my sisters and me up in the morning when the alarm goes off by licking us and jumping on our beds to make sure we are up. He also puts my sisters and I to bed when my mum and dad calls bed time, he herds us up the stairs and doesn't rest until we are all in bed.

However, there are some nights when he poos in the same place (in the house), even though he has been walked and let out before bedtime. We also have a cat; my mum thinks that Pilot is marking his territory as the cat does rule the roost. He doesn't do this all the time, but my mum gets really stressed when he does it. He also pulls very hard on the lead when we walk him. My mum has bought him a body harness but this doesn't seem to help. He loves other dogs and is really good with people to the extent that sometimes he thinks the whole world should love him even those that don't like or are afraid of dogs. He is perhaps over loved? Any advice would be greatly appreciated.

Thank you so much for writing me such a lovely letter. It sounds like Pilot is a great friend to have living with you! I will try my best to help you, but I only have a small space so you will have to listen carefully!

Dogs that poo in the house aren't fun – I hope you don't have to clean it up? Your mum has made a good guess about why Pilot sometimes does it, but she probably isn't right I'm afraid (I know! Mum's can be wrong once in a while too, though not very often). I'm sure you have taken Pilot to the vet recently, so you can rule out any medical problem. My guess is that Pilot didn't learn his house training as well as he should have done. Go back to basics with him, as if he were a puppy again, and train him that he only ever does a poo outside. The only way to do this is to take him out and wait for him to poo! This is not much fun in the winter months I'm afraid. When he does a poo, say a word such as 'toilet' and praise him. This will eventually become a command; in time, you will be able to say 'toilet' and he will understand that he has to go and do a poo.



Rutland Dog Training

www.rutlanddogtraining.co.uk

Now then, from pooing to pulling. The best method I know to stop the dog that constantly pulls is known as long-line training. Take Pilot to a quiet area and hold the lead with both hands in front of your chest. Now walk five metres in a straight line, turn on the spot and stop, ignoring Pilot and silently counting to ten. Then step off at a right angle for another five metres. You will end up walking in a square, stopping at each corner. What is important is that you give Pilot none of the usual verbal signals, eye contact or body language that he normally gets. You should aim to do this exercise for quarter of an hour every day. Soon he will be paying you his undivided attention, partly trying to figure out what is going on! After a couple of weeks you can begin introducing commands and praise. Let me know how you get on!

Originally published in the Rutland and Stamford Mercury, 19th November 2010