



Banbury-Bedrock Bull Terriers

Doorway Manners

by Mary Remer

On the other side of doors and gates are potential dangers. A “wait” command is good to have in place so that dogs do not exit a house door, yard gate or car door without your OK.

To begin your training of the “Wait” command, have a leash and collar on your dog and some treats in your hand. Go to a door inside your house at a non-stimulating location (i.e. your dog has no association of this doorway leading to anything exciting). Bring your dog close to the threshold, holding the leash close to the collar for greater control. Say “Wait” without allowing your dog to cross over the threshold. Relax tension on the collar if your dog is not pulling to cross the threshold. Count to two, praise saying “Good Wait”, release with a word such as “okay” that tells him he can move and give a treat. DO NOT let him pass through the doorway. Back up and repeat this exercise. Gradually build your time to thirty seconds. Once your dog is beside you and able to wait for twenty seconds, progress by taking a small step to your right, count to two and go back to his side. Praise, release and give a treat.

The next progression is to step in front of and facing your dog. Count to two, return to his side, praise, release and give a treat. When you are able to count to 20 standing in front of him, the next progression is to take incremental steps backwards so that ultimately you have crossed the threshold but your dog has not. If at any time your dog breaks the “wait” command just quietly put him back into position. Do not be upset, he is learning and making occasional mistakes is a normal part of learning. If he makes repeated mistakes, you are probably trying to advance too quickly.

Once he is waiting quietly while you step from one room to another, try the same protocol at another doorway. The final progression is to move to a more exciting location such as your front door, or yard gate. Always use the leash and collar in training. Expect when you move to a more exciting location that the behavior will need to be retrained, starting with the beginning progression of standing beside your dog. Do not expect your dog to learn to “wait” in one day. Spend a couple of minutes a couple times a day and by the end of the week you should begin to see results.