



My Favorite Training and Behavior Books

I love to read. I am old school and love having a physical library at my fingertips. Students regularly ask for recommendations on books to add to their library or for the best resource to address a certain issue. So, I created this list and hand it out to all students who take classes from me. Depending on their interest and skills, I will suggest different books. I also feel that recommendations should come with explanations. I don't suggest that trainers need every book on my list, so I like to explain why I am making each recommendation. For this list, I am not including articles, journals, videos, or websites; these alternative resources are also excellent, but that will be a list for another day.

General Behavior Science Reference

There are dozens of excellent resources that you can turn to when it comes to solid science references. It seems that each of us who wants a good reference will pick different go-to resources. Here are my top three.

Chance, P. (1999) *Learning and Behavior, 4th Edition*. Brooks/Cole Publishing Company.

Chance is my favorite go to resource when it comes to looking for information about the science. His information is no different than any other reference, but he presents it in a more accessible manner; so, I often suggest it is the best behavior science reference for the non-scientist. There are newer editions available.

Kazdin, A. (1999) *Behavior Modification in Applied Settings, 5th Edition*. Brooks/Cole Publishing Company.

A standard behavior reference book. There are newer editions available.

Pierce, W.D. & Cheney, C.D. (2017) *Behavior Analysis and Learning, 6th Edition*. Routledge: Taylor and Francis Group.

This is a more recent reference and covers many of the same things as the others, but also has newer information. I always suggest having as current a reference as possible, to make sure you are using the most up-to-date science.

Focused Behavior Science

Miklosi, A. (2007) *Dog Behavior, Evolution, and Cognition*. Oxford University Press.

This book is unique in that it focuses on dogs and looks at the newer scientific discoveries in the last few decades leading up to its publication.

Schneider, S. (2012) *The Science of Consequences: How They Affect Genes, Change the Brain, and Impact Our World*. Prometheus Books.

A great review of what is known about consequences, including how and why they work, and recent discoveries about the topic.

Sidman, M. (1989) *Coercion and its Fallout*. Authors Cooperative, Inc., Publishers.

One of the only books out there that looks at the challenges of punishment and the impacts that it has on learners.

Todd, Z. (2020). *Wag: The Science of Making Your Dog Happy*. Greystone.

I included this in the section on science, because Zazie takes a scientific approach to understanding dog behavior, but she does so in a way that is accessible to everyone. This is a great read for the layperson and the serious trainer alike.

General Positive Reinforcement & Clicker Training

Alexander, M. (2003). *Click for Joy! Questions and Answers from Clicker Trainers and their Dogs*.

Sunshine Books, Inc.

This type of book appeals to me because it takes common questions, concerns, and misconceptions about clicker training and positive reinforcement training and gives clear answers and explanations.

There may not be new information here for the experienced trainer, but it is a great resource for new trainers, and I often point clients and students to Melissa's answers.

DeWillems, J. (2024). *Manage it! Hacks for Improving Your Dog's Behavior*. Dogwise Publishing.

We always teach people the importance of managing the environment of our learners, yet I have never seen a book devoted to the subject. This is such a good book for the average dog owner and for the trainer who wants a better understanding of how to manage behavior.

Grossman, A. (2024). *How to Train Your Dog with Love + Science: A Dog Lover's Guide to Animal Behavior and Positive Reinforcement Training*. Sourcebooks.

This is a great book for the average dog owner, but I also recommend it for the professional trainer as it takes a straight-forward approach to explaining the science in easy to understand ways. Filled with humorous anecdotes and practical advice from a trainer who works with dogs in the big city!

Laurence, K. (2008). *Clicker Training: The Perfect Foundation*. Learning about Dogs Limited.

Kay is a gifted and innovative trainer. I would probably recommend any books she writes about training. This is an excellent introduction to clicker training from Kay's unique perspective.

Laurence, K. (2009). *Teaching with reinforcement for Every Day in Every Way*. Learning about Dogs Limited.

This book examines reinforcement from new perspectives and will challenge many trainers' understanding of the various types of reinforcement available to them.

Mann, S. (2020). *Easy Peasy Doggy Squeazy: Even More of Your Dog Training Dilemmas Solved*. Blink Publishing an imprint of Bonnier Books, UK.

This is part of a series of books by Steve Mann, the founder of the Institute of Modern Dog Trainers. He employs his uniquely British sense of humor to guide dog guardians through training their dogs and answers common questions about problem behaviors. His practical approach uses great analogies and refrains from overly jargon-filled language.

Pryor, K. (1999). *Don't Shoot the Dog: The New Art of Teaching and Training*. Bantam Books.

Not only was this the first book to expose me to a formal explanation about the value of focusing on positive reinforcement, it is a book that still resonates with me today.

Pryor, K. (2014). *On My Mind: Reflections on Animal Behavior and Learning*. Sunshine Books, Inc.
More gems from Karen, this is a great collection of essays that she has written over the years on a wide variety of topics.

Ramirez, K. ed. (2017). *Better Together: The Collected Wisdom of Modern Trainers*. Sunshine Books, Inc.
How could I not recommend this book? I collected 60 articles written by some of the leaders in the positive reinforcement world and put them together because I believe these articles contain useful information for trainers at every level.

Ramirez, K. (2020). *The Eye of the Trainer: Animal Training, Transformation, and Trust*. Sunshine Books.
I'm not sure if it makes sense to list my own books, but I figure if you are interested in my favorite books, you might be interested in what I've written. This is a collection of short stories and essays written throughout my career about training.

Puppy Training

Bloom, I., Hills, L., Perez, C., Schultz, M. (2021). *Your Puppy and You: A Step-by-Step Guide to Raising a Freak'n Awesome Dog*. Freak'n Awesome Dog Project.

This is an easy-to-read, how-to book full of checklists, information about puppies, and training guidance that is designed for the average puppy owner. The authors have managed to cram tons of practical, helpful, and valuable information into a beautifully designed workbook.

Mann, S. (2019). *Easy Peasy Puppy Squeezy: Raising and Training a Happy Puppy*. Blink Publishing.
This is a very accessible book, written in an entertaining and practical way that I found so enjoyable. I would recommend it for chapter 3, titled "20½ Things Your Puppy Wants You to Know."

Martin, K. & Martin, D. (2011). *Puppy Start Right: Foundation Training for the Companion Dog*. Sunshine Books, Inc.

This is my favorite book on puppies, it provides clear instructions on raising a puppy with positive reinforcement.

McDevitt, L. (2012). *Control Unleashed: The Puppy Program*. Clean Run Productions, LLC.

I enjoyed Leslie's original Control Unleashed Book and I feel she does a great job of taking those lessons and adapting them to work with puppies.

VanArendonk Baugh, L. (2017). *Social, Civil, and Savvy: Training & Socializing Puppies to Become the Best Possible Dogs*. AEclipse Press.

Another practical guide for puppy owners written in Laura's unique voice and presented from a positive reinforcement perspective.

Dealing with Aggression, Fear, and Anxiety

Arthur, N. (2009). *Chill Out Fido! How to Calm Your Dog*. Dogwise Publishing.

This is a very practical book useful for the non-trainer and trainer alike. I particularly like the step by step exercises Nan provides to help people work through various common dog problems. This is not a book about aggression but focuses dealing with overly excitable dogs.

DeMartini-Price, M. (2014). *Treating Separation Anxiety in Dogs*. Dogwise Publishing.

This is a common problem for many pet dogs and trying to solve the problem has stumped the most skilled trainers. Malena's protocol is well-thought out and very practical. Handling these problems usually requires a skilled trainer and behaviorist, but I think this is a great resource for professionals.

DeMartini-Price, M. (2020). *Separation Anxiety in Dogs: Next Generation Treatment Protocols and Practices*. Dogwise Publishing.

This updated version of her first book on this topic is excellent, it is a great example of how to take a good protocol, combine it with years of practical experience and data, and create a new worthwhile book. If you purchase only one book on separation anxiety, this would be the best one – however I still appreciate her first book and enjoy seeing the ways in which she adapted the protocol.

Donaldson, J. (1996). *The Culture Clash*. Kenneth and James Publishers.

One of my go-to references for anyone who wants to understand and deal with aggression. It may be considered an older reference by today's standards, but it is not outdated and one of the first resources I recommend to trainers who want to understand and deal with aggression.

Donaldson, J. (2002). *Mine! A Practical Guide to Resource Guarding in Dogs*. The Academy for Dog Trainers.

The title says it all. This is a short easy to read guide about dealing with resource guarding. I keep buying new copies because I am always giving my copy to friends and clients.

Donaldson, J. (2004). *Fight! A Practical Guide to the Treatment of Dog-Dog Aggression*. The Academy for Dog Trainers.

I could repeat what I wrote about Jean's other practical guide book above.

McDevitt, L. (2007). *Control Unleashed: Creating a Focused and Confident Dog*. Clean Run Productions, LLC.

I will quote the opening line on the back cover of the book, "learn how to turn stress to confidence and distraction to focus..." That aptly sums up what this book is about. It is not about aggression specifically, but many of the exercises are good tools for dealing with the issues that cause anxiety, reactivity and aggression.

McDevitt, L. (2019). *Control Unleashed: Reactive to Relaxed*. Clean Run Productions, LLC.

Some might be tempted to suggest that this is just an update of Leslie's original book from 12 years earlier, but it is actually a whole new book. New ideas and suggestions for dealing challenging dogs.

O'Heare, J. (2017). *Aggressive Behavior in Dogs, 3rd Edition: A Comprehensive Technical Manual for Professionals*. BehaveTech Publishing.

This is one in a series of books written by Dr. O'Heare. His books are comprehensive and technically accurate. His books are designed for professionals and serious behaviorists who deal with aggression cases. This is not a book for the casual trainer.

Parsons, E. (2005). *Click to Calm: Healing the Aggressive Dog*. Sunshine Books, Inc.

When I first heard Emma talk about this approach to reinforcing a dog for any reduction in aggressive response and building toward the calm desired behavior I was fascinated, but skeptical. But after watching her work, trying it myself, and then reading this book, it is a truly useful technique for

aggression reduction. Not the protocol of choice for every dog or every trainer, but there is so much useful information here that anyone who deals with aggression regularly should know this protocol.

Parsons, E. (2021). *The New Click to Clam: Solutions for All Dogs in a Challenging World*. Sunshine Books. This is a great update to her first book, but she takes fifteen years of experience using the protocol and updates it to include using the protocol beyond working with just aggression.

Spaulding, K. (2022). *The Stress Factor in Dogs: Unlocking Resiliency and Enhancing Well-Being*. Dogwise Publishing.

This is not a book strictly about aggression, but those who deal with aggression need to read this book to get a better understanding about stress. What I also like about this book is how well it has been researched and the wealth of references included.

Sternberg, S. (2017). *Assessing Aggression Thresholds in Dogs: Using the Assess-A-Pet Protocol to Better Understand Aggression*. Dogwise Publishing.

This is not a book on aggression treatment, but a book focused on assessing and understanding aggression. Sue Sternberg is well-known for her assessment protocols and this book puts her knowledge and protocols together in one useful manual.

Stewart, G. (2016). *Behavior Adjustment Training 2.0*. Dogwise Publishing.

This unique, integrated approach to dealing with reactive dogs takes skill and experience to apply well, but the techniques are well worth mastering. Grisha has refined her BAT protocol over the years and this newest iteration helps trainers give dogs more control over the outcome of their interactions with the world. A particularly useful book for people who can work with their dogs or client's dogs in big open spaces such as a park, field, or forest.

Todd, Z. (2024). *Bark! The Science of Helping Your Anxious, Fearful, or Reactive Dog*. Greystone Books.

This is Zazie's third book, after *Wag!* and *Purr!* Given the consistent quality of these books, I am inclined to recommend any book on training and behavior that she may write in the future. The information is easy to understand, well-researched, and loaded with important references to back up every word. This book has risen to the top of my list for those interested in understanding and dealing with any type of reactivity.

VanArendonk Baugh, L. (2013). *Fired Up, Frantic, and Freaked Out: Training Crazy Dogs from Over-the-Top to Under Control*. AEclipse Press.

Like several of the books in this section that I recommend, it is not a book specifically about aggression. However, it does focus on those many attributes such as fear, excitement, and nervousness that can end up in an aggressive behavior. Laura takes a practical step by step approach that clearly comes from many years of working through client challenges.

Training for Sports & Competition

Bertilsson, E. & Johnson Vegh, E. (2010). *Agility Right from the Start: The ultimate training guide to America's fastest-growing dog sport*. Sunshine Books, Inc.

I am not an agility competitor, but I do enjoy watching agility and I have tried my hand at teaching many of the exercises. As I wrote in the foreword to Eva's and Emelie's book, I love the way they approach the subject with a look at many different exercises and they always ask three questions: "What does the behavior look like?", "How do you train it?" and "What could go wrong?" This is a

practical look at using positive reinforcement in the best possible way for agility, and useful for many other sports as well.

Branigan, H. (2019). *Awesome Obedience: A Positive Training Plan for Competition Success*. Sunshine Books, Inc.

Another sport that I know very little about. But I do know good training when I see it. I have watched Hannah train and teach for several years now and she takes a fresh approach to an old sport. Obedience may be the title of the sport because of its roots in traditional training, but the way she trains it is more like awesome fun, awesome cooperation, or awesome game-play. Many of her practical tips are useful in all areas of training.

Branigan, H. (2020). *Awesome Obedience: The Field Guide*. Sunshine Books.

A useful companion to her book *Awesome Obedience*. Designed with a spiral bind and just the practical exercises laid out so the a trainer can take and use the book in the field.

Fenzi, D, and Jones, D. (2013-2016). *Dog Sports Skills, Books 1-4*. Fenzi Dog Sports Academy Publishing.

The sub-titles of the four books in this series are 1: *Developing, Engaging, & Relationship*, 2: *Motivation*, 3: *Play!*, and 4: *Focus and Engage!* I might not have ever thought to read this series had Denise and Deb not asked me to write the foreword to the second book on motivation, after that I was hooked, and I read them all. This series has great training information even for those not involved in competitive dog sports.

Hewings, R. (2019). *Scent Training for Every Dog*. First Stone Publishing.

A useful and practical book for anyone dealing with scent, from various sporting uses to the professional K9 handler. Rob takes his many years of experience in law enforcement combined with his passion for positive reinforcement to create a practical and excellent book about scent work.

Husbandry & Medical Training

This is an important topic for me and one that I get called on to lecture about often in the zoological world. However, for years I lamented the lack of resources and acceptance of husbandry training with pets. I am glad to see the trend is changing.

Becker, M., Radosta, L, Sung, W., and Becker M. (2018). *From Fearful to Fear Free: A Positive Program to Free Your Dog from Anxiety, Fears, and Phobias*. Health Communications, Inc.

The Fear Free movement is sweeping across the country and it focuses on getting veterinary practices to adopt a kinder positive reinforcement approach to working with their clients. This is an attractive book with great information about how to recognize fear, the importance of training, and how to be successful at training. This is a great resource for introducing people to the importance and value of husbandry training.

Howell, A. and Feyrecilde, M. (2018). *Cooperative Veterinary Care*. Wiley Blackwell.

This book is written by two veterinary technicians who specialize in behavior. Who better to describe the challenges of veterinary medical care and propose training solutions for our dogs and cats? A great resource for veterinary professionals, it contains great descriptions of how to train some of the most important pet medical behaviors.

Jones, D. (2018). *Cooperative Care: Seven Steps to Stress-Free Husbandry*. K9 in Focus.

This is a straight-forward book designed to help dog owners prepare their dogs for less stressful veterinary care. Practical tools and good instruction for the non-trainer make this a unique book as most husbandry training books are designed for the animal care professional.

Miller, P and Sinn, L. (2024). *Veterinary Cooperative Care: Enhancing Animal Health Through Collaboration with Veterinarians, Pet Owners, and Animal Trainers*. Dogwise Publishing.

This book looks at the subject of veterinary care holistically. Bringing together multiple authors, experts in their area, to discuss how to work together with pet guardians, veterinarians, and trainers. This is a worthwhile addition to the library of those interested in good cooperative medical care!

Oblasser-Mirtl, A. and Glatz, B. *Medical Training for Dogs*. Cadmos Publishing.

This is not an English language book as it was written by two talented trainers from the Animal Training Center in Austria. But even if you cannot understand the book there are videos connected to the book available on line, which are worth checking out.

Overall, K. (2013). *Manual of Clinical Behavioral Medicine for Dogs and Cats*. Elsevier, Inc.

This is a great resource for understanding how veterinary behaviorists deal with pet behavioral problems. This is not a substitute for working with veterinary behaviorists, but I like it because it is a good reference about the scope of their work and can help trainers recognize when they should reach out to a veterinary behavior specialist.

Ramirez, K. (2013). *Husbandry Training*. In *Zookeeping: An Introduction to the Science and Technology*, eds.: M.D. Irwin, J.B. Stone, and A.M. Cobaugh. University of Chicago Press.

This is a large expensive textbook that not everyone might be able to afford. But it addresses many excellent topics that zoo professionals will find useful. All trainers will find the sections on training, husbandry, and enrichment beneficial.

Shaw, J. and Martin, D. eds. (2015). *Canine and Feline Behavior for Veterinary Technicians and Nurses*. Wiley Blackwell.

This is another great resource compiled by two veterinary technicians who are also skilled teachers and exceptional trainers. They sought out leading veterinary and behavior experts to write various chapters. This is a rich resource for anyone interested in improved veterinary training.

Yin, S. (2009). *Low Stress Handling, Restraint, and Behavior Modification of Dogs & Cats: Techniques for Developing Patients who Love their Visits*. CattleDog Publishing.

The title of the book accurately describes the subject matter of this book and accompanying DVD.

This reference provides good behavioral information, but its biggest value is in demonstrating the best way to manage, handle, and restrain dogs and cats in the veterinary clinic. It is richly illustrated, and techniques are explained in detail. Sophia has left us with an invaluable resource.

Enrichment

One of the important areas of behavior management that developed in the zoological community was a focus on environmental and behavioral enrichment. Enrichment can make a significant difference in the quality of life for an animal and is a topic that is just as important for pets as it is for animals in the zoo. There are only a few excellent resources that focus on this topic, but here are the ones I most strongly recommend.

Bender, A. and Strong, E. (2019). *Canine Enrichment for the Real World: Making it a Part of Your Dog's Daily Life*. Dogwise Publishing.

I cannot give this book enough high praise. Not only is it the rare book to focus on enrichment for dogs, but it does so in a very holistic and practical way. It is full of great information about giving animals choice, assessing an animal's needs, evaluating effectiveness, and great practical tips for implementing enrichment. It combines science and practice beautifully.

Buchmayer, Barbara (2023). *Enrichment Games for High Energy Dogs*. Positive Herding 101 LLC.

This is a specialized book for high energy, thinking, well-trained dogs. I think of all enrichment as a form of training, but in this case most of the games require training behaviors to accomplish the task, but I like this idea for those dogs that like learning. This is not a book for everyone, but it could be the perfect thing for herding and other high energy dogs.

Markowitz, H. (1981). *Behavioral Enrichment in the Zoo*. Van Nostrand Reinhold.

Hal Markowitz is considered the father of enrichment. He was one of the first to propose that animals needed to be given the opportunity to exhibit behaviors key to their species. This is an important historical reference.

Nicassio-Hiskey, N. and Mitchell, C. (2013). *Beyond Squeaky Toys: Innovative ideas for eliminating problem behaviors and enriching the lives of dogs and cats*. Smart Pets Press, LLC.

The zoological world has focused on enrichment for decades, but it has been a more recent development in the pet community. Nicole and Cynthia come from the zoo world and apply their knowledge and understanding of enrichment to creating some innovative ideas for dogs and cats.

Shepherdson, D.J., Mellen, J.D., Hutchins, M. (1998). *Second Nature: Environmental Enrichment for Captive Animals*. Smithsonian Institution Press.

This is a great reference for zoo professionals with contributions from nearly 40 authors.

Young, R.J. (2003). *Environmental Enrichment for Captive Animals*. Blackwell Publishing.

This is a good resource for zoo professionals new to enrichment. One of the things that makes this book so useful is its final chapter titled, "Information Sources about Environmental Enrichment."

Animal Intelligence & Cognition

This is a new category on my list of favorite books. I have been interested in cognition for most of my career and worked extensively on cognitive projects with cetaceans, primates, and canines. There are several books that I highly recommend on this topic.

Gould, J.L. & Gould, C.G. (1994). *The Animal Mind*. W.H. Freeman and Company.

I taught a class on Animal Intelligence for several years at Loyola University in Chicago. This was the book I chose as the text book for that class. A great overview of the subject of animal intelligence across all species.

Holland J.S. (2024). *Dog Smart: Life-Changing Lessons in Canine Intelligence*. National Geographic Partners.

A very comprehensive review of the study of dog intelligence, the training of intelligent-seeming behavior, and an examination of the varied uses of trained scent-detection. I also appreciate Jennifer's inclusion of the quantity recognition work that I did with the rescued dog, Coral.

Linden, E. (2002). *The Octopus and the Orangutan: More True Tales of Animal Intrigue, Intelligence, and Ingenuity*. Dutton (Penguin Putnam, Inc.).

I have been a fan of Eugene Linden's writing and could have included several of his books on this list. I only included this one because it is a wonderful collection of animal stories from across the animal kingdom.

Miller, P. (2026). *Discover the World of Canine Cognition: Revolutionize Your Dog's Training and Provide Access to the Brain Candy All Dogs Crave!* Dogwise Publishing.

This is one of the few books in this section that gives great tips for training the tasks that are discussed in the book. Pat shares training plans for teaching what she calls "brain candy games" to your dog. They range from discrimination games and choice and consent games to more challenging concepts like imitation, quantity recognition, and more.

Schusterman, R.J, Thomas, J.A., Wood, F.G. (1986). *Dolphin Cognition and Behavior: A Comparative Approach*. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Publishers.

This was a groundbreaking book when it was published in 1986. 40-plus years later, it is still a relevant and excellent book about the training, study, and investigation into dolphin intelligence.

Wynne, C.D.L. and Udell, M.A.R. (2013). *Animal Cognition: Evolution, Behavior, & Cognition, 2nd Edition*. Palgrave MacMillan.

A thoughtful scientific review of the study of animals' cognitive abilities through the lens of various key abilities of many different animal species. This book examines concept formation, time & numbers, reasoning, navigation, self-awareness, social learning, memory, communication, and language.

Body Language

We cannot ignore the importance of animal body language – the ability to interpret our animal's behavior is predicated on understanding what their bodies are telling us. I always joke that dog trainers are lucky because they have great resources, like those listed below available to them; zookeepers don't have a good book on reading hippo body language. Here are three books I recommend to dog trainers.

Aloff, B. (2005). *Canine Body Language: A Photographic Guide*.

This was one of the first, most comprehensive books on dog body language that I found useful.

Chin, L. (2020). *Doggie Language: A Dog Lover's Guide to Understanding Your Best Friend*. Hachette UK.

I love this book, particularly because of its clear information and primarily because of Lili's beautiful illustrations. Unlike the other books in this category, this is a book I would recommend to my dog clients.

Chin, L. (2023). *Kitty Language: An Illustrated Guide to Understanding Your Cat*. Ten Speed Press.

Just like her book about dog body language this cover similar types of information but with an emphasis on cats. It is also one of the few books out there dedicated to cat body language. A must have for the cat trainer or cat lover.

Handelman, B. (2008) *Canine Behavior: A Photo Illustrated Handbook*. Woof and Word Press.

Another excellent resource with great photographs.

Beyond Dogs

I have spent much of my career working with every species imaginable. We constantly need to remind people that these techniques are not dog training techniques but teaching techniques and behavior change techniques that work with any animal.

Bradshaw, J. and Ellis, S. (2016) *The Trainable Cat: A Practical Guide to Making Life Happier for You and Your Cat*. Basic Books.

This is a well-written book that I enjoyed, it gives those skeptical about cat training clear insights as to why training is so beneficial as well as guides those that want to train their cat as to the best way to get started.

Heidenreich, B. (2004). *Good Bird! A Guide to Solving Behavior Problems in Companion Parrots!* Avian Publications.

Barbara is a skilled and talent trainer and this book helps parrot owners deal with some of the common parrot issues. There are not many bird training books out there and even less written by a positive reinforcement trainer.

Kurland, A. (1998). *Clicker Training for Your Horse*. Sunshine Books, Inc.

Alex has led the introduction of clicker training into the horse world. She has several books and many DVDs that are all excellent resources. But I wanted to recommend this great starter book.

Kurland, A. (2023) *Modern Horse Training: A Constructional Training Guide to Becoming Your Horse's Best Friend*. The Clicker Center LLC.

This book was published 25 years after the book listed above. If I were to purchase just one book about horse training, this would be it. However, I love comparing the two and seeing how Alex's thinking and approach to training has changed over the years.

Johnson, M. (2004). *Getting Started: Clicker Training for Birds*. Sunshine Books, Inc.

Karen Pryor Clicker Training published a series of books on how to start training a wide variety of common pet species. All these books give pet owners a great foundation and clear direction on how to start training.

Orr, J. and Lewin, T. (2006). *Getting Started: Clicking with Your Rabbit*. Sunshine Books, Inc.

Another in a series of books about how to start training a wide variety of common pet species. All these books give pet owners a great foundation and clear directions on how to start training.

Pryor, K. (2001). *Getting Started: Clicker Training for Cats*. Sunshine Books, Inc.

Part of a series of books on how to start training a wide variety of common pet species. All these books give pet owners a great foundation and clear direction on how to start training. These books are great resources for beginning trainers.

Ramirez, K. (1999). *Animal Training: Successful Animal Management through Positive Reinforcement*. Sunshine Books, Inc.

While there is much I would like to update in this book, it is still used by many trainers because it is designed as a comprehensive guide to becoming a professional trainer of any species. It was written initially for zoo and aquarium trainers and became the textbook for a graduate course I taught at Western Illinois University for twenty years. I hope to update it and create a new edition, but until then, it still serves as a valuable resource for trainers.

Stafford, G. (2007). *ZOOMility: Keeper Tales of Training with Positive Reinforcement*. iReinforce.com
Grey is an excellent trainer and teacher who has worked for years in the zoological community. It is a practical guide and an easy read for the new keeper or trainer.

Todd, Z. (2022). *Purr: The Science of Making Your Cat Happy*. Greystone.

Like her book “Wag” this is another practical look at training and care, with a scientific background, but this time focused on cats. There are not as many good resources on cat training, so I highly recommend this for the cat lover and trainer.

Training & Teaching People

This is an area that is too often overlooked by animal trainers. Many of the techniques are the same, but most of us are not familiar with how to transition those skills from our animals to our colleagues, clients, and family. Here are the resources that I have found most valuable.

Blanchard, K., Lacinak, T., Tompkins, C., and Ballard, J. (2002). *Whale Done! The Power of Positive Relationships*. The Free Press.

This book was written for businesses as a lesson in how to improve productivity with positive reinforcement. But the book uses the story of visiting SeaWorld and watching the trainers work with killer whales to explain why these techniques work with people. Most animal trainers will be able to relate to this story’s use of “animal training tools” with people.

Blanchard, K., Lacinak, T., Tompkins, C., and Ballard, J. (2009). *Whale Done Parenting: How to Make Parenting a Positive Experience for You and Your Kids*. Berrett Koehler Publishers, Inc.

Because of the success of their book *Whale Done*, the authors followed it up with this excellent look at the use of these tools when raising children.

Covey, S. (2004). *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*. Simon & Schuster.

Although this book is not a book about positive reinforcement per-se, it uses many aspects of positive reinforcement in the lessons about how to more effectively work with people. A practical and popular best-seller.

Daniels, A. (1994). *Bringing Out the Best in People: How to Apply the Astonishing Power of Positive Reinforcement*. McGraw-Hill, Inc.

This book focuses on organizational success through good use of positive reinforcement. The book has remained in print for over 20 years because of its useful concepts.

Daniels, A. (2009). *Oops! 13 Management Practices that Waste Time and Money (and what to do instead)*. Performance Management Publications.

The title says it all. Aubrey Daniels is a skilled behavior analyst with a proven track record of helping businesses improve through better use of behavior analysis principles, especially positive reinforcement.

Davis, S., Derby, C.A., Weber, K. (2024). *Everyone Needs a Timeout: Self-Care Strategies for People and Pets*. The Writing Derby.

Don’t get thrown off or misled by the word “Timeout” in the title of this book. The authors are not referring to the punishing tool of the “behavioral timeout” but the healing and beneficial properties of what I like to call the “sports timeout.” This book focuses on the important and seldom discussed

importance of self-care. This book discusses the same topic for your pets as well, but I felt it best served this list to have it in the people section.

London, K. (2020). *Treat Everyone Like a Dog: How a Dog Trainer's View Can Improve Your Life*. Animal Point Press.

I love the way this book approaches teaching, parenting, coaching and other people relationship issues through the lens of a dog trainer. Her story-telling approach makes all of her lessons very accessible and understandable for everyone. I wish I had written this book, I love Karen's approach.

McKeon, T. (2018). *Don't Nag . . . TAG! Success the First Time with TAGTeach*. 529books.com.

TAGTeach is the remarkable use of a clicker to help shape physical skills with people. I was thrilled when Theresa finally wrote a book about this great concept.

Patterson, K., Grenny, J., McMillan, R., and Switzer, A. (2011). *Crucial Conversations: Tools for Talking When Stakes are High 2nd edition*. McGraw-Hill Education

Probably the hardest time to put training skills to use with people is when you are in a tough conversation. This book focuses on how to have those conversations in the most productive way. This is a must-read for supervisors, coaches, or anyone who must navigate hard conversations.

Patterson, K, Grenny, J., Maxfield, D., McMillan, R., Switzer, A. (2013) *Crucial Accountability: Tools for Resolving Violated Expectations, Broken Commitments, and Bad Behavior*. Mc-Graw-Hill Education.

An excellent follow-up to the *Crucial Conversations* book that was written a few years earlier. There are not enough books that focus on how to have these important and difficult conversations.

Ryan, T. (2009). *Coaching People to Train their Dogs, 2nd edition*. Legacy Canine Behavior and Training, Inc.

Terry has great experience as a skilled teacher of trainers. She has translated that knowledge into this excellent book, a great resource for anyone who is teaching classes or coaching clients.

Ryan, T. (2017). *Gamify Your Dog Training: Training Games for Group Instruction*. Dogwise Publishing.

A book of creative games for use in training classes.

Vargas, J. (2009). *Behavior Analysis for Effective Teaching*. Routledge.

Julie, B.F. Skinner's daughter, is a behavior analyst and she uses the science to help the reader become a better teacher.

Zurchin, C., Ballard, J., Lacinak, T. (2012). *The Whale Done School: Transforming a School's Culture by Catching Students Doing Things Right*. Author House.

Other Valuable Resources

There are some books that I like that don't necessarily fit into the categories above, yet I recommend these titles frequently.

Anderson, T. (2015). *The Dog Behavior Problem Solver*. Fox Chapel Publishing

I highly recommend this book because it is designed for the average pet guardian. Certainly, professional trainers will get something from this book, but I love that it is a book I can confidently recommend to anyone asking for a resource for do-it-yourself problem solving. Teoti suggests positive solutions for the most common problems and gives great advice about when to consult a

professional trainer. Teoti Anderson has several other books and excellent resources for the average pet parent.

Bekoff, M. (2023). *Dogs Demystified: An A-to-Z Guide to All Things Canine*. New World Library.

This is a surprising entry in my list of books to read, as I often find myself on the opposite political and philosophical side from Mr. Beckoff and his approach to animal rights issues. But he is a good writer and a thoughtful scientist. This is a comprehensive list of terms and phrases from the dog world with a fascinating and enlightening explanation of their meaning and origin. He includes terms such as behaviorism and respondent conditioning, concepts like Breed Specific Legislation, popular songs like “Big Black Dog,” and even common sayings such as “Barking at the Moon.” He goes beyond simple definitions and discusses their origins and his opinions about many of them. I have often found it a beneficial resource.

Burch, M and Bailey, J. (1999). *How Dogs Learn*. Howell Book House.

This is a book with great scientific information focused specifically on its application to dog training. I like that it makes the science more accessible to the average dog trainer.

Case, L. (2014). *Beware the Straw Man: The Science Dog Explores Dog Training Fact & Fiction*. AutumnGold Publishing.

I am a fan of Linda’s writing, she does not take anything at face value, she investigates common beliefs or statements about training and looks at the facts so that she can either support or contradict these popular ideas. A great resource and a great read.

Case, L. (2018). *DogSmart: Evidence-based Training with The Science Dog*. AutumnGold Publishing.

A follow-up to her previous book, this one focuses on new beliefs and new information all supported with scientific evidence.

Cattet, Jennifer (2021). *Selecting and Training Your Service Dog: How to Succeed in Public Access Work*. Dogwise Publishing.

This book fills a much-needed void in the training community. It deals honestly and realistically with the training of your own service dog. It is specialized, but it shares the information people really need if they hope to train their own service dog.

Hayward, T., Andors, J., and Francis, A. *Grooming without Stress! Safer, Quicker, Happier: Setting the 21st Century Grooming Table up for Success by Employing Low-stress Handling Techniques*.

This is such an important topic, yet few books have been written about grooming. I’m happy to add this book to my library.

Holland, J. (2024). *Dog Smart: Life-Changing Lessons in Canine Intelligence*. National Geographic Partners, LLC.

I have always been fascinated by the study of animal intelligence. Jennifer does a great job of examining the subject from various perspectives. It is insightful, well-researched, and a very entertaining read. I promise that I am not biased by the inclusion of some of my work being briefly mentioned in the book!

Horowitz, A. (2009). *Inside of a Dog: What Dogs See, Smell, and Know*. Scribner.

Dr. Horowitz is a cognitive scientist who does a great job of looking at the world from a dog’s point of view. A good read with great information.

Jones, E. (2024). *Constructing Canine Consent: Conceptualizing and Adopting a Consent-focused Relationship with Dogs*. CRC Press.

The idea of consent, agency, and choice has become an important barometer of welfare and well-being in animals. This book looks at the topic from a scientific perspective and examines definitions and practical applications of consent. This is a valuable read for any trainer who cares about giving their learners agency.

Laurence, K. (2007). *Learning Games*. Learning about Dogs Limited.

Another great book from Kay that focuses on creative games that you can play with your dog to expand their skills and their learning. I recommend this book highly for people interested in doing cognitive training with their dog.

Lindsay, S. (2000). *Handbook of Applied Dog Behavior and Training, Volumes 1-3*. Blackwell Publishing.

This is a good reference for any dog behavior professional. This well-researched series has useful information in every volume. Volume 1: Etiology and Assessment of Behavior Problems, Volume 2: Adaptation and Learning, and Volume 3: Procedures and Protocols. Some information is outdated and created controversy in recent years. However, the breadth and scope of this book continues to make it a worthwhile reference for the serious trainer.

McConnell, P. (2006). *For the Love of Dog: Understanding Emotion in You and Your Best Friend*. Ballentine Books.

Dr. McConnell is another author whom I suggest reading everything she has written. I love her writing and her thoughtful approach to dog behavior. This is one of my favorites.

Pryor, K. (1995). *On Behavior: Essays and Research*. Sunshine Books.

A collection of Karen's writings, you can open the book to any of the articles and find an enjoyable essay with good information.

Pryor, K. (2000). *Lads Before the Wind: Diary of a Dolphin Trainer, Expanded Edition*. Sunshine Books.

This was my first introduction to Karen. I was a young dolphin trainer and here was someone who had entered the field with little experience working with marine mammals, a background I could relate to. The book is funny, informative, and inspirational. This book holds a sentimental place in my heart.

Pryor, K. (2009). *Reaching the Animal Mind: Clicker Training and What it Teaches Us about All Animals*. Scribner.

This is one of Karen's most recent books. Like all of her books it is a fascinating read.

Sdao, K. (2012). *Plenty in Life is Free: Reflections on Dogs, Training, and Finding Grace*. Dogwise Publishing.

Kathy is a great trainer and speaker. This first book of hers really speaks to the ethics of training in a logical and non-preachy way. I appreciate her perspective.