

**Class information**

Thank you for choosing People Training for Good Dogs (PTFGD). Here is some general information about what to expect.

**Commitment**

PTFGD understands how busy your life is and allows for make-up sessions for the group portion of the class. More is learned and retained if you attend on a regular basis. When group sessions begin all members of a family do not have to attend each session.

It is in your best interest not to skip too many weeks total or in a row. The classes are being held that you may have skipped therefore make-ups are at my discretion. You are given four months to complete the group portion of the class. If too much time elapses I may ask you to attend another 1/2 hour lesson at a cost of $30.00 to review. If you go past 4 months then each class will be $10 per class per person. Everyone is allowed to return to class to review or brush up at this price as well.

If you are unable to attend the group class or for several weeks in a row you may make an appointment to come any afternoon from 4-5 PM M-F that I am available. The cost for this is $25 per class. Please arrange this with me in advance.

**Arrival**

You may enter into this enclosed area only. Entry/Exit into/from the yard is only **via my direct permission and assistance**. If someone is in the enclosed area, please ask if it is ok to enter. Please arrive at the scheduled time **and together** for private lessons. We have a rolling start for group lessons. (15-20 minutes late for group lessons is ok).

If you arrive early or you arrive before others in your family, please wait in front of my house until your appointment time so you don't disturb the dogs in the yard. You may also pull across the street and take a short walk on the power-lines only.

**Contacting Me** If you will be late or need to reschedule instruction on your appointment day please call/text my cell phone at **508-944-8072**. If I’m outside I won’t get a call or message on the inside phone. Please call 508-563-3886 **for appointments** though. I must respond to your email for confirmation that it has been received. If you have not received confirmation please call me.

**Parking**

Kindly park so that others can pull in and out. There are 5 spaces on the right hand side of the lot and two parallel to the fence near the power line poles.

**Weather**

Class is held rain or shine. An indoor area is utilized during inclement weather. Please dress appropriately and bring all clothing, supplies and materials in with you to avoid having to go to your car.

**Payment**

Payment is expected at the time of service. A payment plan can also be arranged but need to be arranged prior to your first class. Check or cash only.

**Refunds**

PTFGD combines private and group lessons into the basic package. In tallying the cost for the basic package the price for the private program is different than the group portion. The 2-3.5 hour long private first lesson includes proprietary information on canine predation ecology, human sociology, safety and liability protection in today's world, proper leash handling techniques and the leadership exercise. As this is a special class and includes my book and a special leather training leash, the cost for the first lesson is $250 and $50 for each additional person. It is not designed to be $30 per lesson (less the book/leash cost). Refunds are given accordingly if paid in full during the first session; $150 for canceling after first session, $50 for canceling after second private session. Your next lesson must be canceled 24 hours before your next lesson for the refund to apply. There are no further refunds. There is no refund after the first class for the first class. There are no refunds if request for refund is not made within two weeks of last lesson.

**Adding a Student**

Effort has been made to ensure all family members attend the lecture portion of the class together. If the lecture must be repeated for a newly attending family member who joins during the second or third lesson there is a $75 extra charge for that person's class participation and a $30 charge for the repeated lecture and extra time utilized. Please call me in advance to inform me an additional family member will be joining your class after you have been given your first lesson as the class that includes them will be longer than without them.

**Guests**

Class is limited to students only. Guests must remain in your vehicle. It is inappropriate to bring someone else’s child to class.

**Attire**

Most classes will be held outside. Please dress appropriately including gloves, layers, hats, sunglasses, sunscreen, waterproof shoes and clothes you won't mind interacting with dogs in. Please bring appropriate clothing for your children and bring anything you think you may need inside with you vs. leaving it in the car. I understand you may want them to learn consequences for not remembering their coat/gloves etc. however class time is for class. Please bring something to drink as well.

**Other Services**

PTFGD also offers **daycare and cage-less boarding services**. Prices are based on whether you have attended class, if you attend daycare and how long your dog's stay will be. A price list is enclosed. Those whose dog participates in daycare receive the lowest boarding rate and priority.

**Sunday Walk**

A benefit of PTFGD class is our group walk that is held on Sunday mornings. Students who have completed the first private session can attend. For safety reasons, no guests. Students past and present gather and we walk our dogs in a group. Please ask for more information.

**Graduating**

There is no graduation per se. After you have completed your 7 group lessons you may either keep participating in beginner level at a cost of $10 per person per class or move on to the Field Trip class. At any time you can come back to review even if it has been several years. Please call me so we can decide whether a private lesson is needed before you participate in group lessons again.

**Field Trip Class**

Field Trip class takes what you have learned in the basic program and takes it to the streets. The program concentrates on helping you hone your skills with your dog off leash, walking the bike path, going to the vet etc. Visits to various areas will be taken. You may also rejoin this class to review or work on issues that may have developed in the interim. Please call me so we can decide whether a private lesson is needed before you participate in the advanced program again.

**Goals**

The goal of the class is to teach each family member how to handle your dog in real life situations. It is also for you to have off-leash control of your dog regardless of the situation. The time it can take to achieve these goals are often longer than ten weeks. I hope that you will take advantage of everything there is to offer at PTFGD and stay a part of our doggie "family" for years to come.

**Satisfaction**

This is a dog handling class not a dog training one (although your dog will learn the basic commands). Instead it focuses on your skills and abilities to navigate your dog through your lifestyle. Learning a new way of interacting that involves changing how your body moves, changing how you respond and changing to two-way communication with your dog, takes time and practice. It also may take an approach that works for dogs that is different from preconceived notions you may have. It involves establishing new habits, which your brain and body will need time to remap and rewire before you are able to do it without having to think about it. This is not simple and may take more time and effort than you may have envisioned. Yet by sticking with it, you will have an easier relationship with your dog, you will stop inadvertently choking, strangling and hanging your pet and you will communicate in a manner your dog understands best.

Other methods are much easier for people but do not focus on your abilities or your skill development. Other methods ignore that you are giving mixed messages, confusing your dog, choking, strangling and hanging him/her etc. with poor leash handling technique and that your are not working in harmony with your dog. Taking a piece of food and using that to gain your dog’s attention and keeping their attention focused will always be a lot easier FOR YOU but 1) does not suit every dog 2) does not improve your handling abilities or skills 3) may not prepare you for situations you may encounter in your life 4) Does not promote two way communication with your pet 5) utilizes passive and not active learning. Vocal rewards will be part of the information dynamic that will be used in class. Although, food is great for teaching sit, down, tricks and agility, we will be relying on gaining your dog’s respect along with communicating clearly and without mixed messages.

Allowing you to practice real life situations amongst other students and dogs with boarding/daycare dogs loose in the yard is also incredibly taxing for me. It would be easier and **more fun for me** to remove all other dogs and forbid the dogs from interacting like a traditional dog training class. Doing so however, would hamper your ability to cope with real life situations. Please keep in mind that my attention is not just on coaching but also keeping all the dogs in line, managing students and dogs while I’m teaching and coaching too. My intent is always to help you succeed. Safety however is a priority.

If you have any issues or level of dissatisfaction, please bring them to my attention as soon as possible so they can be resolved.

**Sunday Walk**

As part of the learning process I lead a Sunday dog walk for students only. You are invited to come on the walk as soon as you have completed your first private lesson.

# Gathering Time: 8:30 AM

**Location: Duration: 1 hour (shorter in humid weather) mostly woody trails can have loose footing and puddles.**

**Rain or Shine**

Dress: Appropriate for a woods walk where wet or muddy dogs may brush by you.

Bring: Training leash, an old 4-foot leash that can drag on the ground, water, 1 or 2 treats, bug spray if necessary, people treats for the end of the walk.

**No Guests Please**. All **participants must be a student of PTFGD** who have completed at least the first private lesson. All children must remain with an adult. Due to the number of people and dogs participating, if you are unable to manage your child(ren) and your dog then it is best to join us when you can do so.

**Purpose:**

The purpose of the Sunday walk is to provide a community atmosphere where PTFGD can encourage each other and be encouraged while we all enhance our handling skills. Dogs will be able to run and have fun while owners hone their skills in an off-leash setting.

**Expectation**: By joining the Sunday walk, you will be joining a unique community. Do note that dogs are animals with urges and instincts set at lightning speed that can take owners time to properly manage and control. Dogs will be prone to lie in mud puddles and can shake on you and on some occasions can run right into you. Always be aware and bend your knees if a dog is about to run into you and the impact cannot be avoided. If you ever fall, please get to your feet as quickly as possible or all of the dogs may come to see if you are all right! For safety sake, you may hear me yell for you to do so and then I will ask if you are ok.

Many students will be learning to integrate their dogs with other dogs and the group walk allows for an environment of understanding for that. Scuffles between dogs can be expected and you will be learning to oversee these and step in as necessary. If a scuffle becomes a full on fight ALWAYS pull your dog away if it is off-leash by the hind legs and NEVER by its collar. If I am close by I will take the lead to break it up.

# Thus there is an assumption of risk associated with any activity where dogs are allowed to run loose together. Your participation is your endorsement of that environment. If there are any problems with any dogs or students, please bring them to my attention. I do have a first aid kit in the van and additional emergency supplies at my facility for any minor concerns. Know that all problems can be worked out or greatly improved upon. Confrontations between students will not be tolerated. Therefore “helicopter parents” are asked to drop that style or kindly refrain from participating on the walk.

**When arriving:** Please park perpendicular to the power lines to ensure more parking spots. Please keep your dog restrained by leash or voice and cross the road. Walk up the power lines and towards the rear of the water treatment plant. There is a parallel road to the power lines. Keep walking down this hill to ensure the noise of the dogs does not bother my neighbors. You may let your leash go if you are able to recall him or her. If you are waiting for me to arrive please use a few treats to distract your dog if it tends to get over-stimulated by the arrival of other people and dogs. At that point we will stop for any announcements, issues and concerns.

Expect for me to be working some of the dogs I will be bringing. Other boarders may run over to the gathering area. This is your time to work on encounters with loose dogs. If you are already, having difficulty with this move further down so you won’t be first to meet those dogs. We will walk for approximately 2 miles. We will stop several times to regroup and to give the dogs water if needed.

As people walk at different speeds please do your best to stay together. If you get too far ahead stop or walk back to the rest of the group so that the dogs don’t spread too far away from their owners. Do your best to keep an eye on your dog and to not let your conversation distract you from that. If you need to leave at any other point during the walk please tell someone to tell me before you leave so I know and 2nd so that I can ensure no other dogs follow you.

It is encouraged to call for a dog that suddenly sprints after something or runs the wrong way and to vocally break up any tiffs between dogs. Remember not to pull your dog by the collar and never grab someone else’s dog by the collar either. As everyone knows not to reach out to dog’s they don’t know it is your responsibility if you do so and are nipped. Remember to tap your leg and let the dog tell you if it wants to be patted.

If you see anyone up ahead who is not part of our group, please stop and call out for those folks (especially if they are on bikes or horseback) to stop if they are close to us so that our group can grab their dogs. We generally will walk in another direction when any other party is encountered.

Before heading back to the parking lot, there will be a final gathering stop where you stopped in the beginning. It is here where you should re-leash your dog if needed. Please allow me to load the dogs that I have brought into my van before heading towards the parking lot. That way my entourage will not follow you to your cars.

Thanks!