

# The ART Of Dog Training

Dan Goldstein, owner of Vail Dog Training, teaches owners how to teach their dogs.

## FUN FACT

Consistency is key! Always use the same word, and even the same kind of intonation, when asking dogs to do something.



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After traveling around the country to study under trainers whose work he had already been following for several years, Dan Goldstein started Vail Dog Training in 2013.



Goldstein's group classes focus on the participants helping each other simulate real-world distraction scenarios. (Location: Eagle Elementary School parking lot)

a way that they are naturally receptive to, it's figuring out their unique learning style and motivating them in ways that speak to them as an individual, and it's about creativity and sensitivity towards the dog."

After completing his training, Goldstein started Vail Dog Training LLC in 2013. He offers private training sessions (one-on-one with owner and dog) and group classes, and recently introduced a successful group class called "Training Around Distractions."

"My goal is to keep the vibe light and fun while focusing on all the participants helping each other simulate real-world distraction scenarios," Goldstein explains. "I have a pretty big list of games and scenarios that we run through progressively week by week, and I'm coming up with new ones for this spring!" He says those classes will resume once the weather gets warmer and the snow melts—usually by April.

## TRAINING CAN BE FUN

Throughout his 14 years of hands-on experience, and studying the work of other

prominent trainers around the country, Goldstein feels that he has seen a lot. As a result, he is able to provide a higher level of guidance to his clients that they wouldn't be able to find by researching on the internet or reading books on dog training.

"There's no two ways about it—dog training is an art – and it's nice to have a variety of tricks and techniques to draw from," he says. "I try to help my clients find ease in the process and enjoy getting people started off on the right foot from the moment their puppy, or new adoptee, arrives in the household."

He adds, "Having a gameplan from the beginning is one of the best ways I can help people maximize their dog's learning potential, and also help them prevent bad habits from forming. Working with an experienced trainer who can guide you through the process will definitely save a ton of time and unnecessary frustration."

Because Goldstein believes that a dog's owner is their biggest "influencer" (their parent, their best friend, their teacher), he has learned that the way to get effective

and long-lasting results from dog training is for him to teach the owner how to train their dog. He adds, "The best teachers produce the best students and I want to make sure that my clients are the best teachers they can possibly be."

An additional aspect of Goldstein's training is "helping people to right the ship if they have already tried certain methods of training, but their dog doesn't seem to be responding." He points out that even though there is a lot of conflicting information about dog training out there, and so many different styles and approaches to sort through, there is no need for people to navigate that space on their own.

"I'm usually able to quickly diagnose what exactly is missing from their current training approach, and how they can more effectively teach the subject to their dog," Goldstein says. "Once we find the approach that speaks to your dog's individual learning style, results can start to happen really quickly." **MTN**

While there is no question that Eagle County is a dog-friendly town, training a new furry friend can be a challenge. Whether you are training your very first dog, or the first puppy you've had in a while, sometimes a little help from a professional can go a long way.

A Vail Valley resident since 2002 and an Eagle resident since 2017, Dan Goldstein has always had a strong connection with animals. So much so that, while working his banking job in 2010, he began volunteering at the Eagle Animal Shelter on the weekends.

"I felt a strong sense of fulfillment connecting with all the animals there," says Goldstein. "I started going to the

shelter every Saturday, walking anywhere between four and 15 dogs past the softball fields and around the banks of the Eagle River. Some days I would walk 11 miles, making sure that every dog got their turn to get out of their pen."

He continues, "Those Saturdays were the most rewarding part of my life at the time. Although I didn't know it then, it was changing the direction of my life and career."

## NEW PATH

When Goldstein got out of the banking business in April 2013, he realized he had been ready for a career change for a while. He also knew that he wanted to help animals by becoming a professional

dog trainer so he traveled around the country and studied under trainers whose work he had already been following for several years.

"I was fortunate enough to connect in-person with some of the most talented, experienced, and profound trainers who were at the top of the game," Goldstein explains. "Each of them had a slightly different approach and philosophy about the best way to train a dog, but they all had a deep understanding of dog training after having worked in the field for decades."

Following his time learning from these trainers, Goldstein says he quickly discovered that dog training is an art. "It's the art of communicating with dogs in a way they can clearly understand, it's teaching them in



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