

# Body Blocking and Personal Space

First, you can use the body block to keep your dog out of your personal space.

- For a pushy dog who think they need to be as close to you as possible when you are cooking or eating lunch.
- Dogs who push their way to the door when someone's coming in.
- Dogs who are always barking out the window at something.
- The one who keeps poking you with a toy.
- Jumping on people or tables.
- Tries to play tug while standing on your leg?

This is why we use the body block, to make them take a step back from things, get their attention, and to get a little breathing room.

More importantly, you can use body blocking to keep your dog away from something. It can take a lot of practice with your dog like keeping them away from a lifelike stuffed dog, or your front door. With practice and some quick feet, you can become a barricade between your dog and anything that they shouldn't be interacting with—a person they're barking at, a dog you'd rather not meet, something out the window, or a suspicious item on the ground at the park.

What you are doing in these **cases is taking the space before your dog can.**

**Imagine that there is something behind you** that the dog shouldn't have. Your dog is facing you, and he/she really wants it. They steps forward to go around you. You step forward into that space. The dog backs off, and you do the same. Ideally, the dog will stay put, and you can praise/treat. If you have a dog who is extremely persistent, they will try to go around you. You step in front of them. And so on.

(Note: space is an important resource to your dog. Ss don't be a bully and keep putting pressure on. Use the tiniest movement that gets the reaction you need. For a sensitive dog, that might just be rocking slightly forward. **Keep this interaction completely calm, quiet, and neutral. No hands, no feet.**

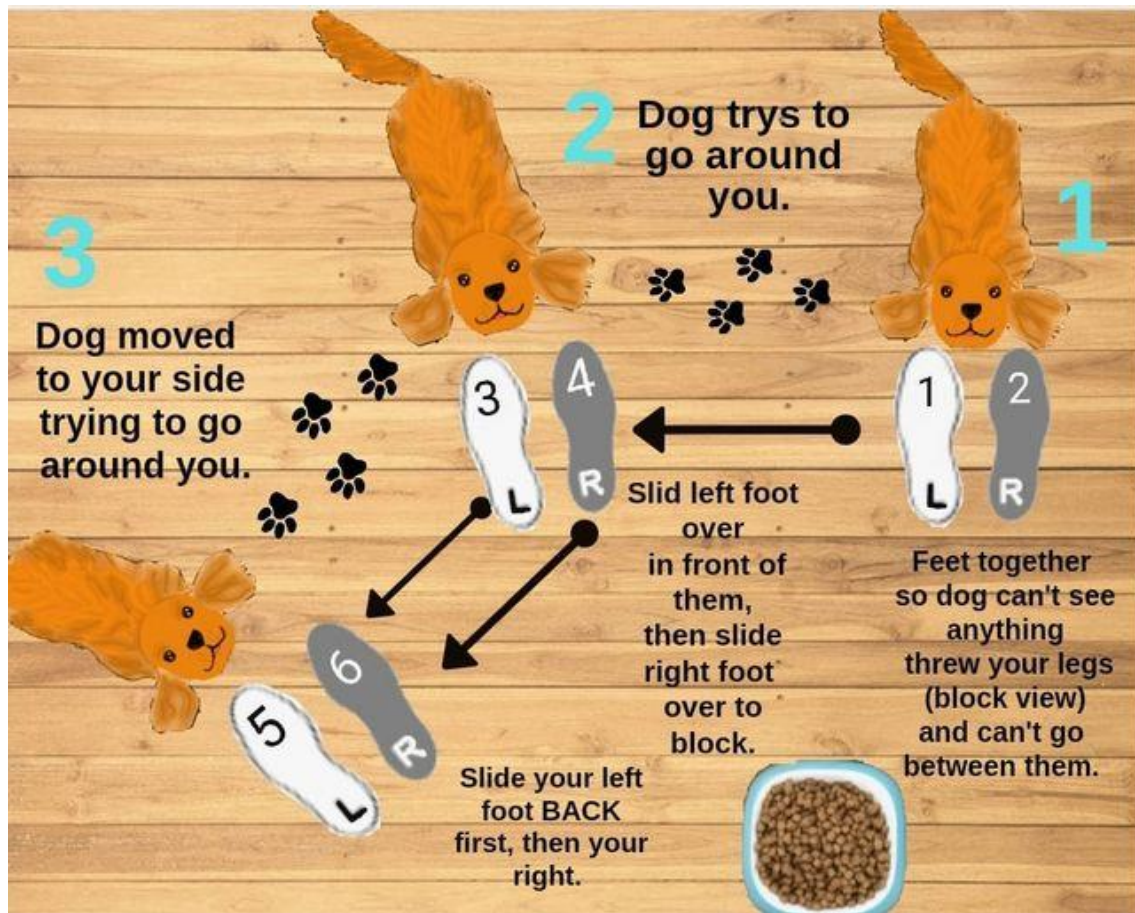
Also, use your good judgment about what your dog can handle emotionally before you try this, because dogs can read it as aggression, while others think it is a game.

The thing that amazes me about this exercise is how fast it works. Because this is a dog thing, rather than a human-invented cue, they get it, on an instinctual level.

### Here is a diagram of BODY BLOCKING!

I know many people have problems understanding how to do it. Regardless of what it is, an open door, a treat, or another animal, this is how to move with your dog.

Inside or outside your home, blocking your dogs view from something that is setting them off, allows their focus to be shifted onto you. This is because they got excited and they essentially get tunnel vision, muting you out. So it doesn't matter if you keep pulling on their leash or yelling at them, you are not even being heard. Once we cut off their focus by standing in the way visually, it makes our dog forced to look at us as if to say “What are you doing your standing in my way, I can't see!” and that is exactly what we want!



This is a photo of a client's dog. A young lab pup who can't stop begging, stealing food out of hands, and counter surfing. Teaching some basic boundaries made a remarkable difference for his 1<sup>st</sup> training session.



Training tip\* Using **blue painters' tape** to make a clear line is extremely helpful, for both people and dogs. **Blue** is one of the few colors a dog can see, and it is easy for everyone else to see it too. Plus is very affordable, and easy to remove after use!

[Here is video](#) on our YouTube channel of a client working with her dog who insists on being the first one to the door. It is a great demonstration of body blocking and setting boundaries for your dog!

