

Jumping on Furniture/Counter Surfing

Jumping on Furniture when not Invited

Depending on dominance, it is up to you if you would like your dog on your bed or furniture. I recommend not letting very dominant dogs on either or until your dog is thoroughly obedience trained and responding reliably to an “off” command.

Allowing your dog on your furniture sometimes but not when company is over, cannot work. This is an “All or None” behavior. Later on when your dog has been through “Nothing in Life is Free” and there are no Dominance Issues and he has been reliable responding to all Basic Obedience, you can then teach your dog to come onto furniture “When Invited”, but for now “All or None”.

Management is Crucial

You must know where your dog is at all times. Try using Baby Gates for training. If he decides to jump on the couch when you’re not around and isn’t reprimanded, it will be a setback.

1. I recommend giving your dog his own personal Doggie Bed. You can train him to lay on this instead of the furniture. Every time your dog steps on, walks on, or lays on it, reward him generously with a verbal “YES” and a treat.
2. If you catch your dog about to jump on the couch, stop him in his tracks, give a verbal “NO” and redirect him to his Doggie Bed. When he lays on that, reward him with a verbal “YES” and treat.
3. If you do not catch your dog, and he is already on the furniture, give the cue “OFF”, when his four feet hit the ground, be ready with a reward. He will associate, being on the ground (instead of the furniture) with the reward. Redirect him to his Doggie Bed. He will eventually associate what the meaning of “OFF” means with getting down and a reward.

Jumping on Counters (Counter Surfing)

Once your dog has been rewarded (example food) for jumping on a counter or table top, you must make that behavior “Extinct”. You can do this by – supervision and stopping the action being Reinforced (Rewarded). For a Behavior to become Extinct, you must Wipe It From His Memory. This may take some time. In the meantime you must manage his Behaviors.

Management is Crucial

You must know where your dog is at all times. Try using Baby Gates and Leashes for training. If he decides to jump on the counter or table when you’re not around and isn’t reprimanded, it will be a setback.

1. Along with Management. If your dog does manage to jump up on the counter or table, correct him with a verbal “AH” and remove him physically while saying “OFF”, as soon as all four feet hit the ground say “YES” and treat, implying being on the ground gets rewarded. Eventually (if your dog is not still being rewarded with food off the counter or table) he will associate being on the ground and getting treats is a “Good Thing”.

Jumping on Furniture/Counter Surfing cont.

2. Booby Traps: You can try several types of Booby Traps. They must not involve you as a person in any way (being in the area or seen). If you are the one reprimanding your dog with a Loud Noise, He will associate the noise and you with his actions. They may still jump on the counter when you are not around (You = Booby Trap). *We want him to think he caused this "Bad" thing himself and won't jump on them when you are or aren't around.*

*Cans or stacked up pots and pans – try stacking pop cans or pots and pans – several levels high, in a couple spots on the counter. You can encourage your dog by placing something "Tasty" just out of reach. When your dog jumps on the counter or table, he will startle himself, associating jumping with loud, bad things . You must be out of sight!

*Shake can – you must be out of sight. You can use a pop can full of pennies, taped on the top. Shake this to startle your dog and stop him in his tracks, when your dog tries to jump. Remember he must not see you though. That darn Association thing again.

*Store Bought Booby Traps – The use of a Giant Store Bought Mouse Trap looking contraption. It has a big red flap that slaps and jumps when touched. This works well for less fearful dogs, a slight slap on the paw sometimes works.

3. Leadership. Whose counters are they? Out in the wild, many years ago – the Leader wouldn't allow the Followers access to anything until given permission. The Followers wouldn't even attempt to "claim" something belonging to the Leader. Ask yourself – am I 100% leader. Stick to your Leadership Skills and Program to show Authority. To claim what is rightfully yours, you must set an invisible boundary. Use your strong, calm, authoritative body language to portray your intentions of owning the Counter. Bump your dog out of the boundaries with a loud "AHHHH!" and walk back to claim what is yours. You may need to do this repeatedly for your dog to begin to respect you. Persistence is necessary. Your dog must take you seriously. No yelling – silence is best, and remember to be calm and firm.