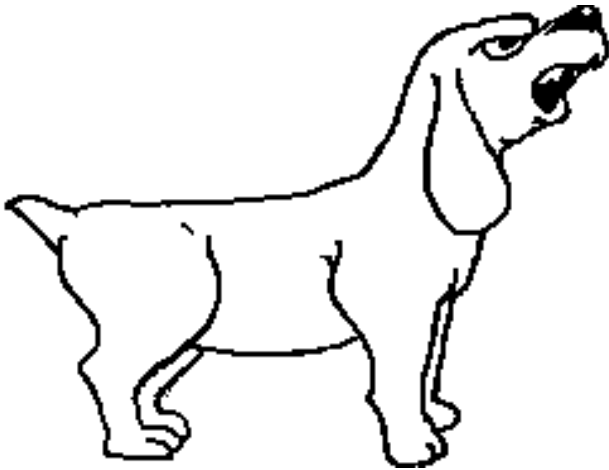


# Elands Veterinary Clinic.

CLIENT INFORMATION SHEET.

## DOMINANT DOGS.



**Elands Veterinary Clinic.**

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**D**ogs are pack animals - they must have an established hierarchy/pecking order and do not expect equality. It is natural for them to push to the highest social position (TOP DOG). Owners are regarded as "one of the pack", and dominant dogs will take advantage of owners who they regard as "weaker" than themselves. In nature two rivals fight for dominance and the stronger takes over, thus owners must be **TOP DOG** and enforce this position using the following guidelines.

**1. IGNORE THE DOG** - unless you initiate the contact. If your dog pushes for attention you must ignore him. Later, call him and command "sit", then stroke him, when it suits you.

**2. BASIC TRAINING** - sit, stay, come etc. Probably easiest by attending training classes, which also help to socialise your pet with other dogs and people. Practising at home is essential. Involve the whole family.

**3. FURNITURE IS OUT OF BOUNDS!** - Never let your dog come up to your height on chairs beds etc. as it raises his social position. Take away your dog's own bed so that he does not have his own territory to defend.

**4. YOU GO FIRST** - through doors and up stairs. On the lead a pulling dog is in control of you! - he must learn to "heel", if necessary using a Halti®. Again basic training is vital.

**5. AVOID CONFRONTATION.** - If you give a command make sure you can safely enforce it or don't give it at all. Thus you are always in control. Reinforce good behaviour, such as allowing claw clipping, by petting.

**6. REMOVE DOG'S TOYS.** - games must be initiated by **YOU** with chosen toys which you remove after the game. Never play competitive, rough and tumble games such as tug-of-war. "Sit" - "fetch" etc. is better.

**7. FOOD** - No begging or table scraps. The dog must eat after the family, preferably with his bowl in view so that he learns to wait until last. He must "earn" his food by obeying a command, e.g. "sit", before he is fed.

**8. DOMINANT** male dogs should be castrated.

## PREVENTION IS BETTER THAN CURE.

I. Avoid breeds with a higher proportion of dominant individuals e.g. rottweiler, cocker spaniel, golden retriever, etc. and always view the parents before buying a puppy.

II. Bitches are less dominant than dogs.

III. Handle from an early age - teeth, claws etc. - and reward good behaviour.

IV. Attend puppy socialisation classes so that the learns good manners towards strangers and other dogs.

V. Never allow a threat to go unchecked. e.g. nipping/mounting.

VI. Avoid rough-and-tumble games as they increase excitability, competition and dominance.

VII. Basic obedience training.

