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As with other breeds, begin socializing your Airedale at an early age. Socialization will begin to lay the groundwork for a happy and obedient companion by increasing the dog's confidence. Airedales can tend to be "dog aggressive" which makes socialization and obedience training a must. Your dog must respect you but you have to earn that respect. Your puppy needs a consistent set of rules to live by. For example, will he be allowed on the couch or not? Consistent rules will produce a reliable companion. Puppy classes, if available, are a good idea.

Airedales do not respond well to harsh methods of training. They want to make you happy, but they have to UNDERSTAND what is expected of them. PATIENCE!

Several hints for successful training are:

1) Don't bore your dog. Airedales will not become "robots." He will go check out an interesting onlooker before repeating the same "silly" heeling pattern over and over.

2) Remember that Airedales are "thinkers." Don't ask them to do foolish things. The only time my old girl ever broke a down was because the "judge person" was foolish enough to set the dogs up in the sun so that the judge could stand in the shade on a hot July afternoon.

3) Use positive motivation. It doesn't matter how silly you feel, he has to feel as though he is making you happy. Be creative. Remember, Airedales are thinkers, not robots.

4) Approach each "training" session as an opportunity to learn more about your companion. Try to look at each command from your dog's point of view. This way of thinking will increase the mutual respect that should develop while training.

5) Increase your chances for success by working with people who appreciate and understand terriers. Do NOT allow any obedience instructor or anyone else to compare your Airedale to those "perfect" Shelties, Borders and German Shepherds. I heard a story of a woman working an Airedale in an obedience class taught by a Border Collie trainer. During one class, they were working on heeling patterns. The instructor was busy pointing out the Airedale's inability to follow the pattern as the instructor and Border Collie tumbled over a jump while the Airedale watched from a perfect sit just in front of the jump. The "stupid" terrier just "smiled."

You must be very flexible in training your Airedale. Expect the unexpected and know your companion. Do not try to put a square peg into a round hole. It is a very common MISCONCEPTION that Airedales cannot be trained. In my honest opinion, Airedales simply require more ingenious and patient trainers.

Thanks to the following people who directly contributed their time and efforts toward this FAQ.

Kathy, Lori and the kids

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Kathy Dowd and Lori Valentine ([MoonDance](#)) are members of the Airedale Terrier Club of America, and work together to breed, train, and show (conformation and obedience) Airedale Terriers.

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Please visit the [K9web](#) for lots of useful dog related information.