



**DOG
TRAINING
ELITE**

Dog Training Elite Chattanooga
Service Dog Training Team
9515 Old Lee Hwy STE B 151
Ooltewah, TN 37363

- ❖ Having a service dog comes with a huge commitment of time and responsibility. The handler should be spending a consistent portion of time every day working with the dog in the home and in other locations as needed. Once in the training pipeline, these dogs can be viewed like a professional athlete. The professional requires a lot of practice and training to maintain their skills and be the best they can be.
- ❖ Owning a service dog is like owning a Ferrari, you'll get lots of attention and not all of it is good attention. Being prepared to educate people about your service dog will be a daily responsibility as you advocate for your dog. Also, you need to make sure your dog is trained and prepared for the highest level of obedience when in public. The service dog is a reflection of the handler.
- ❖ The service dog is a very “cute” medical device. People will want to engage you in public and ask for pets or other interactions. Be polite, but let them know that your dog is working or in training to be a service dog. Limit interactions from other people as much as possible. A service dog needs to focus on its handler as much as possible and not be looking for positive interactions from other people.
- ❖ Dogs are not machines and they can miss cues for providing service, particularly if distracted.
- ❖ Using a vest as a cue to be in working mode can be helpful for the dog, the handler, and the general public.
- ❖ A service dog or service dog in training should be viewed more as a healthcare item for an individual with a disability and not a household pet. This concept might be challenging for other household members to grasp. That being said, it still can be part of the family, but do be mindful that the dog is meant to serve a particular purpose for a disabled individual. Dogs also cannot be expected to be “on-duty” 24/7. They do need breaks and time to just be a dog.
- ❖ The service dog handler needs to be the one who has the most time with and focus of the dog. Limit others giving treats or too much attention to the dog.
- ❖ Other dogs in the household can be a bad influence if not properly trained. This can significantly hinder your progress and possibly lead to the service dog picking up undesirable or unacceptable behaviors.
- ❖ The service dog is a special animal - highly trained and very skilled, but is still a dog. It can play with other well behaved dogs while monitored and not specifically on duty of course.



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- ❖ Structured elimination process will be extremely helpful later on when you are taking your service dog into public spaces. Make sure to work on “potty on command” on a regular basis. If you ever take a dog on a flight, you will be very glad that your dog has learned this.
- ❖ Think about your dog’s habits in your home and consider how the dog is most likely to behave in another home, room, or other space for prolonged periods. Does your dog know boundaries? Does the dog chew on random things? Uncontrollable barking? Occasional “accidents”? Just because you have a service dog, does not mean you will not be responsible for any damage they might cause. The dog can be required to be removed from any public space if they are a nuisance.
- ❖ Be the best representative of a service dog team you can be. However, remember that your dog is a living creature and will not always be perfect. They have bad days, off days, sick days, and can make mistakes. Try not to stress over that, because you are a team learning and working together and you will both have times where things are not going to be flawless.
- ❖ Owning a service dog is a rewarding but demanding commitment that requires time, patience, and understanding. It’s a partnership that, when navigated correctly, can greatly enhance the quality of life for individuals with disabilities.