

# Os'mose ASBL

Leaflet for working with foster families

**Erasmus Project n° 2023-1-HU01-KA210-ADU-000159639**

## Table of contents

<b>1. OS'MOSE.....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>1.1. HISTORY.....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>1.2. TYPES OF DOG.....</b>	<b>7</b>
1.2.1. SERVICE DOGS FOR PEOPLE WITH REDUCED MOBILITY .....	7
1.2.2. ALERT SERVICE DOGS FOR DIABETICS.....	7
1.2.3. RESPONS SERVICE DOGS FOR PEOPLE WITH EPILEPSY.....	8
1.2.4. ASSISTANCE DOGS FOR CHILDREN .....	8
1.2.5. FACILITY DOG.....	8
<b>1.3. CRITERIA FOR OBTAINING AN ASSISTANCE DOG .....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>1.4. WORKING PHILOSOPHY .....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>1.5. BREEDS AND BREEDERS .....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>1.6. WORKING METHOD / SPECIALITY .....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>1.7. SUCCESS RATE.....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>2. HOST FAMILY PROGRAM.....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>2.1. CONDITIONS.....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>2.2. PROCEDURE .....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>2.3. PRIOR TO RECEIVING THE DOG .....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>2.4. TRAINING .....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>2.5. SOCIALIZATION .....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>2.6. HEALTHCARE &amp; FOLLOW-UP .....</b>	<b>14</b>
2.6.1. PARTNERSHIP UVH.....	14
<b>2.7. COSTS + COVERAGE .....</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>3. DAILY WORK SCHEDULE WITH FOSTER FAMILIES.....</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>3.1. REFERRING INSTRUCTOR.....</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>3.2. GROUP SESSIONS.....</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>3.3. INDIVIDUAL SESSIONS .....</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>3.4. CUES .....</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>3.5. MEETING THE FUTURE CLIENT .....</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>3.6. WORKING FOR AND WITH THE CLIENT .....</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>3.7. ASSESSMENTS.....</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>4. APPENDICES.....</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>4.1. APPENDIX A: FOSTER FAMILY COMMITMENTS.....</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>4.2. APPENDIX B: GDPR.....</b>	<b>21</b>

4.3.	APPENDIX C: AUTHORIZATION FOR PUBLICATION (PHOTO CONSENT) .....	22
4.4.	APPENDIX D: CHARTER FOR FOSTER FAMILIES .....	23
4.5.	APPENDIX E: CONTRACT TO PLACE .....	24
4.6.	APPENDIX F: GUIDE FOR FOSTER FAMILIES .....	26
<b>1.</b>	<b>GENERAL INFORMATION.....</b>	<b>31</b>
1.1.	THE ORGANIZATION.....	31
1.2.	HOW THE ORGANIZATION WORKS .....	31
1.2.1.	COMMITTEE AND STAFF.....	HIBA! A KÖNYVJELZŐ NEM LÉTEZIK.
1.2.2.	OS'MOSE AT A GLANCE.....	HIBA! A KÖNYVJELZŐ NEM LÉTEZIK.
1.3.	VOLUNTEERING .....	32
1.4.	ANY PROBLEMS? .....	32
1.5.	CHARGES.....	32
1.6.	LESSONS.....	33
<b>2.</b>	<b>EMERGENCY PROCEDURE AND EVACUATION PLAN.....</b>	<b>34</b>
<b>3.</b>	<b>ACCESSIBILITY .....</b>	<b>35</b>
3.1.	WHAT THE LAW SAYS .....	35
3.2.	CAPE AND CARD .....	36
3.3.	ADI .....	37
<b>4.</b>	<b>TERMINOLOGIE .....</b>	<b>38</b>
<b>5.</b>	<b>DOG CARE.....</b>	<b>40</b>
5.1.	WATER & FOOD .....	40
5.2.	VETERINARY SURGEON.....	41
5.3.	REGULAR CARE .....	42
<b>6.</b>	<b>SOURCES OF RISK FOR DOGS .....</b>	<b>45</b>
6.1.	INGESTION .....	45
6.1.1.	CHOCOLATE .....	45
6.1.2.	AVOCADOS .....	45
6.1.3.	MACADAMIA NUTS .....	45
6.1.4.	GRAPES, RAISINS, AND GOOSEBERRIES .....	45
6.1.5.	HOUSEHOLD PLANTS .....	45
6.1.6.	RAT POISON, SLUG KILLER, ANTI-FREEZE .....	46
6.2.	OTHER DANGERS .....	46
6.2.1.	HEATSTROKE .....	46
6.2.2.	INSECT BITES & STINGS.....	46
6.2.3.	LA DILATATION ET LA TORSION D'ESTOMAC.....	46

<b>6.3.</b>	<b>IF A PROBLEM ARISES ...</b>	<b>47</b>
<b><u>7.</u></b>	<b><u>L'APPRENTISSAGE DU CHIEN</u></b>	<b><u>48</u></b>
<b>7.1.</b>	<b>THE LANGUAGE OF DOGS</b>	<b>48</b>
7.1.1.	SIGNS OF STRESS	50
<b>7.2.</b>	<b>HOW DOES A DOG THINK?</b>	<b>51</b>
<b>7.3.</b>	<b>EVOLUTION OF BEHAVIOUR</b>	<b>52</b>
<b>7.4.</b>	<b>ESSENTIAL THOUGHTS</b>	<b>53</b>
<b>7.5.</b>	<b>HOW TO SPEAK TO THE DOG?</b>	<b>54</b>
<b>7.6.</b>	<b>THE 4 D RULE: DURATION – DISTANCE – DISTRACTION – DIVERSIFICATION</b>	<b>55</b>
<b>7.7.</b>	<b>REWARD</b>	<b>55</b>
7.7.1.	PLAY	56
7.7.2.	TREATS	56
7.7.3.	PETTING	57
7.7.4.	VOICE	57
<b>7.8.</b>	<b>SANCTION?</b>	<b>57</b>
<b><u>8.</u></b>	<b><u>HOW WE WORK</u></b>	<b><u>59</u></b>
<b>8.1.</b>	<b>POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT &gt; &lt; RAINBOWS AND UNICORNS</b>	<b>59</b>
<b>8.2.</b>	<b>LEARNING THROUGH SPONTANEOUS BEHAVIOUR</b>	<b>59</b>
<b>8.3.</b>	<b>CLICKER</b>	<b>60</b>
<b><u>9.</u></b>	<b><u>GOOD MANNERS FOR DOGS</u></b>	<b><u>61</u></b>
<b>9.1.</b>	<b>THE DOG SHOULD NOT JUMP UP</b>	<b>61</b>
<b>9.2.</b>	<b>THE DOG MUST NOT STEAL</b>	<b>61</b>
<b>9.3.</b>	<b>THE DOG MUST NOT BEG</b>	<b>61</b>
<b>9.4.</b>	<b>THE DOG MUST NEITHER NIP NOR LICK</b>	<b>62</b>
<b>9.5.</b>	<b>RESPECT FOR PEOPLE (ADULTS AND CHILDREN)</b>	<b>62</b>
<b>9.6.</b>	<b>THE DOG MUST NOT APPROACH OTHERS (DOGS OR PEOPLE)</b>	<b>63</b>
<b><u>10.</u></b>	<b><u>DAY TO DAY LIFE (OF A FUTURE ASSISTANCE DOG)</u></b>	<b><u>64</u></b>
<b>10.1.</b>	<b>HOW TO TIRE A DOG OUT</b>	<b>64</b>
<b>10.2.</b>	<b>WORK TIME</b>	<b>64</b>
<b>10.3.</b>	<b>PROHIBITIONS</b>	<b>65</b>
<b>10.4.</b>	<b>CRATE</b>	<b>66</b>
<b>10.5.</b>	<b>A DOG'S PLACE</b>	<b>67</b>
<b>10.6.</b>	<b>SOCIALISATION</b>	<b>67</b>
<b>10.7.</b>	<b>LEARNING TO BE ALONE</b>	<b>69</b>
<b>10.8.</b>	<b>DAILY WALKS</b>	<b>69</b>
<b>10.9.</b>	<b>THE LIFE OF YOUR FUTURE ASSISTANCE DOG</b>	<b>70</b>
<b>10.10.</b>	<b>THE TRANSITION</b>	<b>72</b>

10.11.	POSSIBLE REFORM OPTIONS .....	72
10.12.	APPENDIX G: CUES BROCHURE FOR FOSTER FAMILIES.....	74
<b>1.</b>	<b>PREAMBLE .....</b>	<b>83</b>
<b>2.</b>	<b>TABLE OF CUES .....</b>	<b>85</b>
<b>3.</b>	<b>GOALS OF DURATION – DISTANCE – DISTRACTION - DIVERSIFICATION .....</b>	<b>87</b>
<b>4.</b>	<b>CUES FROM THE SECOND MONTH.....</b>	<b>89</b>
4.1.	OKAY! .....	89
4.2.	WAIT! .....	90
4.3.	BEHIND!.....	90
4.4.	RECALL .....	91
4.5.	INSIDE .....	94
4.6.	DON'T TOUCH.....	94
<b>5.</b>	<b>SPONTANEOUS BEHAVIOR .....</b>	<b>95</b>
5.1.	“BUSY-BUSY!” .....	95
5.2.	FETCHING .....	96
5.3.	WALKING WITH/WITHOUT THE LONG LEASH .....	99
5.3.1.	WALKING WITH THE LEASH .....	99
5.3.2.	WALKING WITHOUT LEASH .....	101
5.4.	FORMAL WALKING (AFTER 4 MONTHS).....	101
5.4.1.	“STOP” POSITION .....	102
5.5.	POSITIONS AND MAINTAINING THEM .....	103
5.5.1.	SIT! .....	104
5.5.2.	LIE.....	104
5.5.3.	STAND UP .....	105
5.5.4.	TO HEEL.....	106
5.5.5.	HOLDING POSITIONS NEXT TO HANDLER .....	106
5.6.	CAR .....	107
5.7.	YOUR PLACE .....	108
5.8.	BARK/QUIET .....	109
5.9.	CALM IN PUBLIC .....	109
5.1.	HOME .....	110
<b>6.</b>	<b>CUES AFTER 4 MONTHS .....</b>	<b>112</b>
6.1.	HOLDING POSITIONS AT A DISTANCE .....	112
6.2.	OUT .....	113
<b>7.</b>	<b>CUES AFTER 7 MONTHS .....</b>	<b>114</b>

7.1.	DOWN.....	114
7.2.	CLIMB UP .....	114
7.3.	GO.....	115
7.4.	SIT BEFORE .....	115
<b>8.</b>	<b><u>CUES AFTER ONE YEAR .....</u></b>	<b><u>116</u></b>
8.1.	UNDER .....	116
8.2.	ROLL .....	117
8.3.	LAP.....	117
8.4.	TUG .....	119
8.5.	PUSH.....	119
8.1.	COLLAR.....	120
<b>9.</b>	<b><u>SPECIFIC CUES .....</u></b>	<b><u>122</u></b>
9.1.	UP!.....	122
9.2.	GO TO [...]!.....	123
9.3.	"LIGHT!" .....	124
9.4.	PAW .....	124
9.5.	"SAY HELLO!" & "CHECK!" .....	124

## 1. Os'mose

### 1.1. History

Os'mose is a non-profit organization created in 2010 and officially recognized by the Belgian government as an ASBL (*Association Sans But Lucratif*: Non-Profit Organization). Since its creation, Os'mose has trained service dogs for people in wheelchairs, practiced cynoactivities® and managed its functions and finances. Over the years, the organization has increased the range of its dogs to now help people with epilepsy, diabetes, children with autism, rare/orphan diseases or dogs for specific projects. All these types of dogs will be described in the next point.

Like any organization, Os'mose was formed solely thanks to the enthusiasm and investment of numerous volunteers. Currently, it relies on the work of 6 employees, but volunteers are still essential for daily management.

### 1.2. Types of dog

Os'mose currently (2023) trains 5 different types of dog:

#### 1.2.1. Service dogs for people with reduced mobility

These dogs mainly accompany people in wheelchairs, but they can also help people who are (still) walking but experiencing great difficulty or those suffering from a progressive illness, knowing that the person will eventually be in a wheelchair.

The main qualities of these dogs are to be very calm in public, not to pull on the leash and to fetch any objects that may have fallen or are out of reach. In addition to these basic cues, dogs may be able to open/close doors, press buttons to turn a light on/off or call an elevator, or even help undress or carry a laundry basket from one room to another.

#### 1.2.2. Alert service dogs for diabetics

As the name suggests, these dogs help people with diabetes. They are trained to detect and prevent future hypo or hyper blood sugar in the client.

While sensors exist that measure blood sugar levels, some even directly connected to an insulin pump, there are downsides to everything, including technology.

Such machines can malfunction, but they are also often late. The values often indicate a level taken a few minutes earlier as they only measure every 15 minutes or so. This means that there can be a sudden change without the person being warned.

This can't happen with a dog. With his sense of smell working constantly, he instantly senses the change in the person's condition and can immediately warn them that their blood sugar level will fall/rise even though the machine is still giving a normal reading.

### 1.2.3. Respons service dogs for people with epilepsy

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These may be termed response or alert service dogs.

Although smell plays a key role in detecting future seizures, it is not the only element, and at present we do not yet know how or why a dog is able to detect an epileptic seizure. For this reason, we are primarily committed to training response service dogs, i.e. dogs that are trained to react in the event of loss of consciousness. In addition, these dogs can bring a bag of medicine, press an alarm button to notify a family member or emergency services and even stimulate their partner to revive them.

However, if the relationship is good enough between the client and his dog (and with a sufficient number of seizures) then the dog will certainly begin to warn his partner of an impending loss of consciousness.

### 1.2.4. Assistance dogs for children

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These dogs can be trained both for children with disorders on the autism spectrum and/or children with rare or so-called 'orphan' diseases.

Such dogs can offer different functions, but they are mainly trained to help improve communication or motor skills while allowing each child to face the outside world with more peace of mind.

### 1.2.5. Facility Dog

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Unlike assistance dogs, which are trained to help a single person, these specific project dogs are managed by one person (the reference person) but in their duties they will help several people as in the following examples:

- Institutional dogs: go to a retirement home or a day or residential service for people with disabilities. These dogs allow you to work on fine motor skills, walking or even communication without forgetting that the dog is a wonderful relational link.
- Legal assistance dogs: accompany police officers as part of their duties. These are police officers who are part of special services such as victim support or hearings in cases of moral crimes. Dogs make arriving at the police station smoother and allow for less stressful hearings.

## 1.3. Criteria for obtaining an assistance dog

Required criteria common for all types of dog trained by Os'mose:



- Have an enclosed garden
- Commit to attending a training session at Os'mose twice a week for about a year (6 months before receiving your dog and six months after)
- Commit to the correct care and treatment of your future dog for its entire life

Specific criteria to obtain:

- A service dog or alert dog:
  - o Live within a 100 km radius of an Os'mose center
  - o Be in clear need of increased autonomy
- An alert service dog for diabetics: be a type 1 (insulin-dependent) diabetic
- Alert dog for epileptics: suffer several crises per month

#### 1.4. Working philosophy

Respect for mutual well-being within human/dog pairs is at the heart of the organization's philosophy. The essential virtues are always those of benevolence, friendly cooperation, patience and understanding; positive reinforcement being the common denominator.

Assistance dogs within a foster family are worked according to everyone's pace, keeping the foster family at the center of the project; the dog remains in its host environment until the end of its training. During the last six months, the foster family is integrated into the final process with the future client and the instructor.

When the dog arrives at his client's home, he receives specific and personalized follow-up for several months, effectively making him a "tailor-made dog"

This work, the fruit of numerous training courses, numerous exchanges, and constant re-evaluation, has made the organization the national and international reference it is today.

#### 1.5. Breeds and breeders

Although having tried other breeds, Os'mose now works exclusively with dogs from the Retriever group: Golden (the majority of our dogs), Labrador, Flatcoated.

The organization collaborates with several family breeders (regularly the same ones) to ensure the quality of the dogs, both physically and in terms of their behavior.

We have a volunteer who is in contact with all the Belgian breeders, as well as with some from abroad. This person ensures that the dogs come from the best bloodlines, while evidently meeting our specific needs.

We test dogs at 6-7 weeks of age to estimate their potential future behavior.

## 1.6. Working method / speciality

To the best of our knowledge, we are the only organization operating this way: the future assistance dog remains within the same foster family throughout their training. The latter is responsible for providing all the socialization and all the specific cues for the dog's future function.

Although this is a big responsibility for the host families, they are well supported, since the instructors see them on average twice a week.

At the end of the training, working in a “foster family – client – instructor” triangle will allow the project to be finalized in the best possible way. All this will be explained below.

## 1.7. Success rate

Thanks to our particular methodology, we have an average success rate of 85%. This is possible due to several factors:

- Have several possibilities for the dog's profession (assistance, alert, awakening, specific)
- Work closely with great breeders
- Monitor the dogs (and therefore the host families) very closely from the start and therefore be able to quickly adjust the training if we see any problems.

## 2. Host family program

As mentioned in the previous point, future assistance dogs – regardless of their orientation – are trained entirely by foster families. This requires a significant commitment/investment on their part and therefore specific criteria are necessary to hosting their new family member.

### 2.1. Conditions

Firstly, having already had a dog or being a dog trainer is not a prerequisite for becoming a foster family. Indeed, while having previously owned a dog may have helped develop a certain basic feeling for the relationship, it can also have led to bad habits that are then difficult to uproot. Thus, starting from a blank page is sometimes more interesting.

The most 2 most important criteria are therefore proximity and time. We work with foster families who live no more than 50km from our centre and with enough time available for the dog. For a period, we used to ask that families not work full time, but we realized that this point was not necessarily indicative of commitment. Indeed, sometimes people working part-time fail to find the time or the will to fully commit to a project, whereas people working full-time are perfectly able to do so.

Since then, we have been working differently with potential foster families during the first interview. For example, we ask them to fill out the following grid (the same for people wishing to receive an assistance dog):

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday

Once the grid is filled with daily activities (work, leisure, children, etc.) we ask them to insert moments with the dog (walks, training time, meetings with Os'mose instructors, visits to the vet, etc.) We also ask them if they have already notified work (or school) of the potential arrival of a dog. Having completed this table, it becomes clear whether time management with a dog in training is possible or not.

A foster "family" does not have to be a conventional unit, but may also be a couple, single person, or single parent.

We allow two people to work with the dog at the same time, but never three. It can be both people in a couple, or a parent and child, if the child is sufficiently mature.

### 2.2. Procedure

1. The interested person contacts us by telephone, e-mail and/or fills out the form on the website. If the person meets the first conditions (live nearby, be ready – on paper – to commit) then we move on to the next step.
2. The project manager meets the potential foster family. Together they evaluate the request, the motivation, and fill in the timetable mentioned previously. We will also give a USB key with videos talking about the journey of foster families and a paper outlining the broad outlines of the commitment of a foster family (see Appendix A). We then ask that the person (or people) contact us within 15 days to tell us if they are ready to move on to the next step.
3. The person comes to the center to do an individual work session (with a dog in training or an ambassador dog) and to talk with the instructors. If all goes well for both parties, then we can commit to working together.

### 2.3. Prior to receiving the dog

- Choice of name: Unless a dog is sponsored (financially) or adopted (by a celebrity), we ask the foster family to choose the puppy's name, but with certain conditions:
  - o It must begin with a particular letter (for 2024 = P, 2025 = Q ...)
  - o It must have a maximum of two syllables
  - o Not be a 'human' name
  - o Care must be taken of its literal sense (no Jump or Arrow...)
- Theory lesson: A few weeks before the puppy's arrival in its new home, several foster families will come to Os'mose for a theoretical lesson in which they will learn the basics of caring for a puppy, with a particular focus on health monitoring and what you can and can't do with a future assistance dog. Foster families will then receive the Foster Family Guide (Appendix F).
- Practical sessions: After completing the theoretical lesson, future foster families will visit Os'mose three times. The aim is to begin work with the referring instructor (each foster family is followed by the same instructor from beginning to end of the dog's training). If possible, people will start with an easier dog and then move on to a more challenging one, each in separate sessions. They will then come once to the Saturday morning group classes.
- Receive the equipment: When they come to the center for individual work, foster families will receive all the equipment they need to welcome the puppy home:
  - o 2 feeding bowls
  - o 1 leash
  - o 1 pouch + treats
  - o 1 cage
  - o 1 rug
  - o 1 brush
  - o Collar

- 1 Licky mat
- Tug + other games
- Logbook
- Cues booklet
- Chewy treats
- 1 “Royal Canine” food bag

Later, once we begin to work with the clicker: clicker + short leash

Host families are given the cape only after they have completed one (or 2 if necessary) "stressful" outings (in public) with the instructors.

- They will also sign all the necessary papers:
  - GDPR (Appendix B)
  - Authorization for publication (photo consent) (Appendix C)
  - Charta (see Appendix D).
  - The day the puppy arrives home, we sign a placement agreement (see Appendix E)

## 2.4. Training

As soon as the puppy comes home, the foster family will have at least two classes a week: one individual class and one group class. Most group classes are held at the Os'mose center. Individual classes can be held at Os'mose, in the foster family's home, at a train station, shopping mall, downtown or in a park. Of course, when necessary, or depending on which cues are to be learned, more regular meetings between foster families and instructors can be arranged.

## 2.5. Socialization

Socialization is obviously a very important period for all puppies, but we have to make sure it happens gradually. Indeed, excessive socialization or poor integration into life can lead to serious consequences, such as irremediable fears.

That's why we recently decided to stop issuing the cape (working harness) to foster families as soon as the puppy arrives home. The first "stressful" outing(s) (city, shopping, etc.) will be made with an instructor. Only when the instructor is satisfied with the puppy's outdoor behavior will the family receive the harness and be able to socialize the puppy themselves.

Here's a grid to help foster families socialize their puppies (can be found in the Foster Family Guide)

Transport	Train	Shops	Clothing	Other – various	Escalators
	Bus		For animals		Lifts
	Tram (optional)		Supermarkets		Malls
	Car (everywhere)		Butchers, Bakery		Horns
Noises	Vacuum cleaner	Animals	Non-Food (Home Depot, Ikea)		Wheel chairs
	Television		Birds		Motorbike noise
	Radio		Fish		Street Market
	Electric iron		Ducks		Market
	Kitchen mixers		Dogs – cats		School exit
	Tools or cutlery falling		Sheep – pigs – cows		Walker - crutch – walking stick
	Crumpled plastic bags		Horses – donkeys		Stairs (metal, wood, clear path, ...)
	Loud music		Rabbits		Heights (bridge)

## 2.6. Healthcare & Follow-up

Contact with Vinciane / Caroline / UVH

For some years now, we have been giving very special and intense attention to our dogs in training at all levels.

This begins with their selection, as already mentioned above in the paragraph dedicated to dog breeds. The person who is the link between the breeders and the organization is also in constant contact with our foster families. She keeps a strict calendar and informs each person when it's time to give antiparasitics, when it's time to go to the doctor or when it's time, for example, to go for a dysplasia test.

### 2.6.1. Partnership UVH

We have built a very important partnership with the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine in Liège. This University is located just ten minutes from the center, and ours is truly a win-win relationship. Every 15 days, students come for half a day to practice their consultation skills. It's an exercise that's rarely, if ever, part of the curriculum, and yet it's such a very important part of their future profession (indeed, many students have difficulty communicating with humans!)

The students are always accompanied by their teacher, a veterinary surgeon specializing in nutrition.

While this project enables the students to improve their school curriculum, it also allows us to have more regular and intensive monitoring of our dogs in training. The veterinary surgeon who monitors the students also charts the dogs' growth, so that she can adapt their diet and work to their needs. And if she sees the slightest abnormality, the dog goes straight to our vet.

## 2.7. Costs + coverage

Os'mose covers the entire cost of dog training, which in 2023 represented roughly €23,000. These costs include the purchase of the puppy, food, rewards, bowls, collars, leads, capes, harnesses, veterinary care, insurance, administrative charges, ... The dog is then provided to the client free of charge, while always remaining the property of the organization.

### 3. Daily work schedule with foster families

#### 3.1. Referring instructor

It is agreed that the instructors follow the dogs from start to finish. They monitor all the stages in the training process of the future assistance dog.

When allocating the dogs, we try to consider their geographical location, so that an instructor can have all the dogs they follows in the same region.

As a reminder, foster families are located within a maximum radius of 50 kilometers from the center.

#### 3.2. Group sessions

As well as training assistance dogs, Os'mose also runs a dog club open to anyone with a family dog. This dog club is for all breeds, and although the trainers are not the same as those for assistance dogs, they work according to the same philosophy.

This also allows us to have a variety of different dogs for the socialization of our assistance dogs. Every other Saturday, our instructors give classes specifically for assistance dogs. They mainly work on leash walking, positions, patience and interaction with other dogs. On the other Saturday, the foster families go to the Canine School classes. This allows the dogs to experience breeds other than just retrievers.

In addition to working with assistance dogs, the Canine School also enables us to work on another important value at the organization: integration. Having mixed family dog/assistance dog classes means that many people can be made aware of disabilities and illnesses in a short space of time. After the course, many people stay in the cafeteria. From that moment on, there's no difference between people; we simply share a drink together, whether we're disabled or not. Everyone has their own identity beyond being defined by their illness or disability.

#### 3.3. Individual sessions

During their working week, the instructors meet all their dogs at least once. Appointments can be at the Os'mose center, in a shopping mall, downtown, in a park, or at the foster family's home or workplace.

In principle, we meet with families individually, but, if need be, we'll increase the number of appointments, whether at the request of the foster family or because the instructor feels it's necessary. There are also times when these appointments will be increased as a matter of course:



When the puppy arrives home, when taking its first outings, or when we start clicker training for the short leash walk.

The location of appointments will depend on the requirements of the dog and/or the foster family, as well as what needs to be worked on.

At the end of the training (during the last six months), we will also alternate between sessions with the dog's client and appointments in the dog's familiar environment.

### 3.4. Cues

For about 15 months (i.e. from 2 to 17 months), all dogs will learn the same basic cues that are essential to becoming a good assistance dog.

As soon as the dog arrives home, a series of cues are immediately worked on and implemented:

- Crate (inside / wait / finished)
- Don't touch!
- Behind if the way is narrow
- Wait! At the house's door, crate's door or between two spaces like the kitchen and living room
- Fetch and carry objects
- Play (in a particular way to prepare the dog to open and close doors)

As soon as the puppy arrives home, we ask foster families to reinforce the following spontaneous behaviors:

- Lead walking to prepare for leash walking
- The basic positions: sit, lie down, stand
- Your place
- Calm down! in public
- Car!
- "Busy busy"

For all cues, see Appendix G

### 3.5. Meeting the future client

Once the staff has decided that one or more dogs are ready, we'll think about which client they should work with - depending on the dog's character, aptitudes and foster family life. Once we've reached agreement, there are 2 possibilities for presenting the dog to the future client:

- If there's only one dog to present, we'll present it unofficially. We'll ask the future client to come to a group class and we'll say hello with several dogs, including the one we've potentially envisaged.

- If several dogs can be presented at the same time, we bring in the different people for whom we've imagined the dogs. Each person takes each dog in hand and performs 2 - 3 exercises.

The aim of these presentations is to see how the dog appeals to the person. Even if the dog is highly competent, unless you notice a special connection between the dog and the person you have in mind, there's no point in continuing. If the dog you have in mind doesn't meet the criteria or the spark is not there, you'll need to introduce another one.

### 3.6. Working for and with the client

As soon as the match is made between dog and client, we can begin the specific work. We'll reassess the needs (these may change or evolve between the time the request was made and the time we start working), refine them and begin to work on the specific cues. This is when we work on detection for dogs intended for diabetics, opening doors for people in wheelchairs or pressing an alarm for people with epilepsy, etc.

This specific work is also carried out by the foster family, always with the support of the instructors (as a reminder, foster families can never initiate a new cue without the instructors).

While the foster families are busy learning these special cues, we'll start to create the relationship between the dog and its future owner. The client will come to each group class just to give his future dog a cuddle after class, but also to give a few treats (free of charge, without having asked for anything beforehand). After several weeks, as soon as the dog sees the client, he'll be happy - delighted!

During this time, we take the opportunity to give the theory lesson and make sure that everything is in place at its new home to welcome the dog.

When the relationship between the dog and the future client is strong enough, the latter will start to give a few easy cues (sit, down, wait...) in an easy environment, then everything will become more and more complex (cues, environment, requirements...).

When a good relationship is established AND the dog reacts well to the cues, the transition will begin, with the dog gradually going to stay with his future owner every week: first for an hour, then for half a day, 1 day, 1 day and 1 night .... There are several reasons for this:

- So that the foster family can slowly get used to the dog's absence
- The dog acclimatises to its new environment
- That the client slowly gets used to having a dog at home and living with it
- At each home visit, the client can say what did or didn't go well, which enables us to work based on these comments and adapt the cues if necessary.

This process is carried out at everyone's pace, without ever forcing or rushing anything. The dog will move house for good once everyone is ready.

### 3.7. Assessments

During their training, the foster family/dog-in-training pair will have several assessments at Os'mose's centre or outdoors to assess the dog's skills.

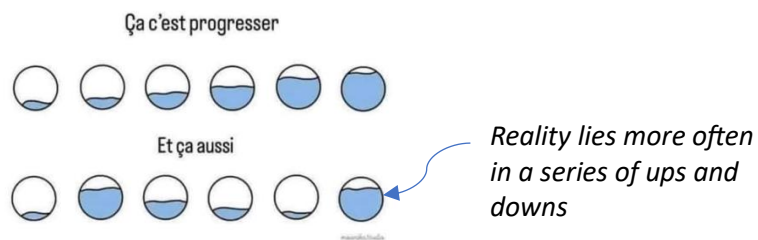
This will also make it possible to target a specific area of work based on the results.

## 4. Appendices

### 4.1. Appendix A: Foster family commitments

#### Foster family commitments

- The foster family is responsible for the well-being of the dog entrusted to them by Os'mose. Os'mose will provide all guidelines regarding the welfare and education of the dog.
- The dog will stay with the foster family for an average of 22 months. During the last six months of training, work will be carried out according to the specific needs of the dog's client. A slow transition will then begin, involving regular meetings with the client (supervised by the educator) until the dog's final departure to its new partner.
- During this period, most of the dog's costs will be covered by Os'mose.
- The family must respect all decisions made by Os'mose.
- The keys to good training: patience / perseverance / motivation / pleasure / accepting the ups and downs because:



An unforgettable life experience!

**GDPR<sup>1</sup>**

You are (circle one):

- a client of an assistance dog
- a foster family of a future/current/former assistance dog
- other volunteer

As such, we are in possession of certain personal and/or medical data.

We inform you that your data is secure and will not be passed on to partners or third parties, nor will it be sold to other organisations or companies.

By signing this document, you agree that Os'mose may store your data:

Family Name: .....

First Name: .....

Location .....

Date

Signature .....

followed by the words “read and approved”

However, you may unsubscribe from our database, obtain its deletion and limit its processing by sending us a written, dated and signed request, accompanied by proof of your identity, to the following address:

Os'mose ASBL  
Chemin du Halage, 31  
4130 ESNEUX  
[www.os-mose.be](http://www.os-mose.be) [info@os-mose.be](mailto:info@os-mose.be)

With our best regards.

---

<sup>1</sup> 25 May 2018, the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) came into force. European Regulation n°2016/679, known as the General Data Protection Regulation of 14 April 2016.

#### 4.3. Appendix C: Authorization for publication (photo consent)



Chemin du Halage, 31  
4130 Tilff  
0471 45 43 23  
info@os-mose.be  
[www.os-mose.be](http://www.os-mose.be)

### Authorization for publication

Last name:

First name:

Position within Os'mose ASBL: dog trainer - committee - foster family - client -  
volunteer - dog club member

I, the undersigned ....., hereby authorize Os'mose ASBL to use and distribute photos or videos of me free of charge. Provided that these photos and/or videos have been taken within the framework of Os'mose (dog club, various courses, dog activities, events, etc.). These photos/videos may be used for:

- publication on the Os'mose ASBL website ([www.os-mose.be](http://www.os-mose.be)) and on the organization's social networks
- publication in the Os'mose magazine (Entre Chiens et Nous)
- publication in a newspaper article if it is dedicated to highlighting Os'mose ASBL

Date & signature:



#### 4.4. Appendix D: Charter for foster families

##### **Charter for Os'mose foster families**

The non-profit organization (ASBL) Os'mose thanks you warmly for accepting this important mission to serve as foster family for a future service dog.

By becoming a volunteer, you undertake to represent Os'mose ASBL and the values we promote at all times and in all places.

- The foster family will not hesitate to communicate any problem before it becomes disproportionate.
- The education method is essentially based on positive reinforcement: inappropriate gestures and behaviour are prohibited.
- The foster family works on a voluntary basis, no benefits either in cash or kind are expected in return for their work.
- The foster family represents Os'mose and will therefore behave in a civil and respectful manner in all circumstances; they undertake to show courtesy during any intervention in the company of the dog for which they are responsible, regardless of the location (club or outside).
- Os'mose is, in all situations, the one and only reference for the education and training of one of its dogs; advice and other indications will therefore be respected.
- Any media interventions in the company of - or concerning - an Os'mose dog must always be approved in advance by the ASBL.
- When wearing the Os'mose colours (cape and access card), the dog will always be clean and well groomed.
- Service dogs, even in training, are allowed everywhere (references to the Walloon decree are provided); if the dog is refused access to a public place, the foster family undertakes to ensure that this right is respected in a polite manner. If the ban on access is maintained, Os'mose will be informed as soon as possible so that it can refer the matter to the BADF (Belgian Assistance Dogs Federation).
- The dissemination - particularly via social networks - of photos, anecdotes, exchanges of experience, etc. relating to dog training will always be done in a constructive spirit.
- The civic purpose of Os'mose ASBL lies essentially in the integration and well-being of people with reduced mobility; each foster family will therefore strive to develop and promote these values.

Name, date and signature of the foster family

## Contract to place a future assistance dog in a foster family

### ***Between***

The non-profit organization ASBL OS'MOSE, whose head office is located at 4130 TILFF, Chemin du Halage 31, here represented by Marie Claire Dubois

### ***and***

.....  
the foster family

### ***the following is agreed:***

1. OS'MOSE's corporate purpose is to promote a system of assistance for people with reduced mobility, epilepsy, or diabetes by providing free assistance dogs, trained by OS'MOSE with the help of a host family.
2. That ..... is willing to take on the role and responsibilities of a foster family.
3. The ASBL OS'MOSE entrusts to the foster family, who accepts, a puppy meeting the following identification references:  
Name:  
Microchip:  
Race:  
Sex:  
Date of birth:
4. The animal will remain in the care of the foster family for a period of 18 to 24 months, from the ..... starting date
5. Throughout this period, OS'MOSE will pay all costs relating to the animal's food, veterinary fees and equipment, in accordance with the terms and conditions communicated to the foster family.
6. In return, the foster family will respect all the directives of the ASBL OS'MOSE concerning type of food, veterinary follow-up and education of the dog.



7. The foster family agrees to take part in the training sessions provided by the organization.
8. The foster family undertakes to comply with all instructions given by the OS'MOSE educator. They will also accept a temporary exchange of the dog – for a period decided by the staff - with a view to perfecting the training of the assistance dog, either with an educator or with another foster family.
9. The foster family undertakes to systematically refer any important information concerning the animal, such as changes in its reactions, inability to respond to certain commands, health problems, etc. to the ASBL OS'MOSE.
10. The foster family undertakes to surrender the animal, immediately upon request, to the ASBL OS'MOSE or to the person designated by the latter.
11. **The foster family will assume legal and material guardianship** of the dog for the entire period that it is entrusted to them. To this end, they must take out civil liability insurance with an insurance company and provide OS'MOSE with a copy of the policy. The ASBL will not reimburse any damage - minor or major - caused by the dog while in the foster family's care.
12. If the foster family does not respect its commitments, OS'MOSE will have the right to consider the present agreement terminated to its detriment and grievances, and consequently to take back the animal without any further justification.

The foster family has received:

- The dog's health card
- Cage, bowls, food, toys, kibble container

Signed in Tilff, date ..... , in duplicate

For the ASBL OS'MOSE

For the foster family

(s) MC DUBOIS

(s)



## RÉSUMÉ

Vanessa Wey

## Table des matières

<b>1. OS'MOSE.....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>1.1. HISTORY.....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>1.2. TYPES OF DOG.....</b>	<b>7</b>
1.2.1. SERVICE DOGS FOR PEOPLE WITH REDUCED MOBILITY .....	7
1.2.2. ALERT SERVICE DOGS FOR DIABETICS.....	7
1.2.3. RESPONS SERVICE DOGS FOR PEOPLE WITH EPILEPSY.....	8
1.2.4. ASSISTANCE DOGS FOR CHILDREN .....	8
1.2.5. FACILITY DOG.....	8
<b>1.3. CRITERIA FOR OBTAINING AN ASSISTANCE DOG .....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>1.4. WORKING PHILOSOPHY .....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>1.5. BREEDS AND BREEDERS .....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>1.6. WORKING METHOD / SPECIALITY .....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>1.7. SUCCESS RATE.....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>2. HOST FAMILY PROGRAM.....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>2.1. CONDITIONS.....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>2.2. PROCEDURE .....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>2.3. PRIOR TO RECEIVING THE DOG .....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>2.4. TRAINING .....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>2.5. SOCIALIZATION .....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>2.6. HEALTHCARE &amp; FOLLOW-UP .....</b>	<b>14</b>
2.6.1. PARTNERSHIP UVH.....	14
<b>2.7. COSTS + COVERAGE .....</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>3. DAILY WORK SCHEDULE WITH FOSTER FAMILIES.....</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>3.1. REFERRING INSTRUCTOR.....</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>3.2. GROUP SESSIONS .....</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>3.3. INDIVIDUAL SESSIONS .....</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>3.4. CUES .....</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>3.5. MEETING THE FUTURE CLIENT .....</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>3.6. WORKING FOR AND WITH THE CLIENT .....</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>3.7. ASSESSMENTS.....</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>4. APPENDICES.....</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>4.1. APPENDIX A: FOSTER FAMILY COMMITMENTS.....</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>4.2. APPENDIX B: GDPR.....</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>4.3. APPENDIX C: AUTHORIZATION FOR PUBLICATION (PHOTO CONSENT) .....</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>4.4. APPENDIX D: CHARTER FOR FOSTER FAMILIES .....</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>4.5. APPENDIX E: CONTRACT TO PLACE .....</b>	<b>24</b>

<b>4.6.</b>	<b>APPENDIX F: GUIDE FOR FOSTER FAMILIES .....</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>1.</b>	<b>GENERAL INFORMATION.....</b>	<b>31</b>
<b>1.1.</b>	<b>THE ORGANIZATION.....</b>	<b>31</b>
<b>1.2.</b>	<b>HOW THE ORGANIZATION WORKS .....</b>	<b>31</b>
1.2.1.	COMMITTEE AND STAFF.....	HIBA! A KÖNYVJELZŐ NEM LÉTEZIK.
1.2.2.	OS'MOSE AT A GLANCE.....	HIBA! A KÖNYVJELZŐ NEM LÉTEZIK.
<b>1.3.</b>	<b>VOLUNTEERING .....</b>	<b>32</b>
<b>1.4.</b>	<b>ANY PROBLEMS? .....</b>	<b>32</b>
<b>1.5.</b>	<b>CHARGES .....</b>	<b>32</b>
<b>1.6.</b>	<b>LESSONS.....</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>2.</b>	<b>EMERGENCY PROCEDURE AND EVACUATION PLAN.....</b>	<b>34</b>
<b>3.</b>	<b>ACCESSIBILITY .....</b>	<b>35</b>
<b>3.1.</b>	<b>WHAT THE LAW SAYS .....</b>	<b>35</b>
<b>3.2.</b>	<b>CAPE AND CARD .....</b>	<b>36</b>
<b>3.3.</b>	<b>ADI .....</b>	<b>37</b>
<b>4.</b>	<b>TERMINOLOGIE .....</b>	<b>38</b>
<b>5.</b>	<b>DOG CARE .....</b>	<b>40</b>
<b>5.1.</b>	<b>WATER &amp; FOOD .....</b>	<b>40</b>
<b>5.2.</b>	<b>VETERINARY SURGEON.....</b>	<b>41</b>
<b>5.3.</b>	<b>REGULAR CARE .....</b>	<b>42</b>
<b>6.</b>	<b>SOURCES OF RISK FOR DOGS .....</b>	<b>45</b>
<b>6.1.</b>	<b>INGESTION .....</b>	<b>45</b>
6.1.1.	CHOCOLATE .....	45
6.1.2.	AVOCADOS .....	45
6.1.3.	MACADAMIA NUTS .....	45
6.1.4.	GRAPES, RAISINS, AND GOOSEBERRIES .....	45
6.1.5.	HOUSEHOLD PLANTS .....	45
6.1.6.	RAT POISON, SLUG KILLER, ANTI-FREEZE .....	46
<b>6.2.</b>	<b>OTHER DANGERS .....</b>	<b>46</b>
6.2.1.	HEATSTROKE .....	46
6.2.2.	INSECT BITES & STINGS.....	46
6.2.3.	LA DILATATION ET LA TORSION D'ESTOMAC.....	46
<b>6.3.</b>	<b>IF A PROBLEM ARISES ... ..</b>	<b>47</b>

<b>7.</b>	<b><u>L'APPRENTISSAGE DU CHIEN</u></b>	<b>48</b>
<b>7.1.</b>	<b>THE LANGUAGE OF DOGS</b>	<b>48</b>
7.1.1.	SIGNS OF STRESS	50
<b>7.2.</b>	<b>HOW DOES A DOG THINK?</b>	<b>51</b>
<b>7.3.</b>	<b>EVOLUTION OF BEHAVIOUR</b>	<b>52</b>
<b>7.4.</b>	<b>ESSENTIAL THOUGHTS</b>	<b>53</b>
<b>7.5.</b>	<b>HOW TO SPEAK TO THE DOG?</b>	<b>54</b>
<b>7.6.</b>	<b>THE 4 D RULE: DURATION – DISTANCE – DISTRACTION – DIVERSIFICATION</b>	<b>55</b>
<b>7.7.</b>	<b>REWARD</b>	<b>55</b>
7.7.1.	PLAY	56
7.7.2.	TREATS	56
7.7.3.	PETTING	57
7.7.4.	VOICE	57
<b>7.8.</b>	<b>SANCTION?</b>	<b>57</b>
<b>8.</b>	<b><u>HOW WE WORK</u></b>	<b>59</b>
<b>8.1.</b>	<b>POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT &gt; &lt; RAINBOWS AND UNICORNS</b>	<b>59</b>
<b>8.2.</b>	<b>LEARNING THROUGH SPONTANEOUS BEHAVIOUR</b>	<b>59</b>
<b>8.3.</b>	<b>CLICKER</b>	<b>60</b>
<b>9.</b>	<b><u>GOOD MANNERS FOR DOGS</u></b>	<b>61</b>
<b>9.1.</b>	<b>THE DOG SHOULD NOT JUMP UP</b>	<b>61</b>
<b>9.2.</b>	<b>THE DOG MUST NOT STEAL</b>	<b>61</b>
<b>9.3.</b>	<b>THE DOG MUST NOT BEG</b>	<b>61</b>
<b>9.4.</b>	<b>THE DOG MUST NEITHER NIP NOR LICK</b>	<b>62</b>
<b>9.5.</b>	<b>RESPECT FOR PEOPLE (ADULTS AND CHILDREN)</b>	<b>62</b>
<b>9.6.</b>	<b>THE DOG MUST NOT APPROACH OTHERS (DOGS OR PEOPLE)</b>	<b>63</b>
<b>10.</b>	<b><u>DAY TO DAY LIFE (OF A FUTURE ASSISTANCE DOG)</u></b>	<b>64</b>
<b>10.1.</b>	<b>HOW TO TIRE A DOG OUT</b>	<b>64</b>
<b>10.2.</b>	<b>WORK TIME</b>	<b>64</b>
<b>10.3.</b>	<b>PROHIBITIONS</b>	<b>65</b>
<b>10.4.</b>	<b>CRATE</b>	<b>66</b>
<b>10.5.</b>	<b>A DOG'S PLACE</b>	<b>67</b>
<b>10.6.</b>	<b>SOCIALISATION</b>	<b>67</b>
<b>10.7.</b>	<b>LEARNING TO BE ALONE</b>	<b>69</b>
<b>10.8.</b>	<b>DAILY WALKS</b>	<b>69</b>
<b>10.9.</b>	<b>THE LIFE OF YOUR FUTURE ASSISTANCE DOG</b>	<b>70</b>
<b>10.10.</b>	<b>THE TRANSITION</b>	<b>72</b>
<b>10.11.</b>	<b>POSSIBLE REFORM OPTIONS</b>	<b>72</b>
<b>10.12.</b>	<b>APPENDIX G: CUES BROCHURE FOR FOSTER FAMILIES</b>	<b>74</b>

<b>1. PREAMBLE .....</b>	<b>83</b>
<b>2. TABLE OF CUES .....</b>	<b>85</b>
<b>3. GOALS OF DURATION – DISTANCE – DISTRACTION - DIVERSIFICATION .....</b>	<b>87</b>
<b>4. CUES FROM THE SECOND MONTH.....</b>	<b>89</b>
4.1. OKAY! .....	89
4.2. WAIT! .....	90
4.3. BEHIND!.....	90
4.4. RECALL .....	91
4.5. INSIDE .....	94
4.6. DON'T TOUCH.....	94
<b>5. SPONTANEOUS BEHAVIOR .....</b>	<b>95</b>
5.1. "BUSY-BUSY!" .....	95
5.2. FETCHING .....	96
5.3. WALKING WITH/WITHOUT THE LONG LEASH .....	99
5.3.1. WALKING WITH THE LEASH .....	99
5.3.2. WALKING WITHOUT LEASH .....	101
5.4. FORMAL WALKING (AFTER 4 MONTHS).....	101
5.4.1. "STOP" POSITION .....	102
5.5. POSITIONS AND MAINTAINING THEM .....	103
5.5.1. SIT! .....	104
5.5.2. LIE.....	104
5.5.3. STAND UP .....	105
5.5.4. TO HEEL.....	106
5.5.5. HOLDING POSITIONS NEXT TO HANDLER .....	106
5.6. CAR .....	107
5.7. YOUR PLACE .....	108
5.8. BARK/QUIET .....	109
5.9. CALM IN PUBLIC .....	109
5.1. HOME .....	110
<b>6. CUES AFTER 4 MONTHS .....</b>	<b>112</b>
6.1. HOLDING POSITIONS AT A DISTANCE .....	112
6.2. OUT .....	113
<b>7. CUES AFTER 7 MONTHS .....</b>	<b>114</b>
7.1. DOWN.....	114
7.2. CLIMB UP .....	114

7.3.	Go.....	115
7.4.	SIT BEFORE .....	115
8.	<b>CUES AFTER ONE YEAR .....</b>	<b>116</b>
8.1.	UNDER .....	116
8.2.	ROLL .....	117
8.3.	LAP.....	117
8.4.	TUG .....	119
8.5.	PUSH.....	119
8.1.	COLLAR.....	120
9.	<b>SPECIFIC CUES .....</b>	<b>122</b>
9.1.	Up!.....	122
9.2.	GO TO [...]!.....	123
9.3.	“LIGHT!” .....	124
9.4.	PAW .....	124
9.5.	“SAY HELLO!” & “CHECK!” .....	124

## 1. General information

### 1.1. The organization

The non-profit organization (ASBL) Os'mose was officially launched in November 2010 with a single goal in mind: **the integration of people with disabilities.**

Why *Os'mose*? Figuratively speaking, to designate a reciprocal and intimate influence: that which arises from the mutual complicity and harmony between a person and their dog, especially in the case of someone with a disability.

Our social purpose?

- To give disabled or sick people back some of their autonomy and thus contribute to their social reintegration.
- Giving mentally handicapped children access to the outer world.
- To set up stimulating and motivating activities in day care centers for handicapped children, improve the well-being of elderly people in retirement homes, all with the help of dogs specially trained for these tasks.

### 1.2. How the organization works

The organization is divided into two sections:

1. Assistance dogs,

## 2. Dog school club for family pet owners

### 1.3. Volunteering

For the entire organization, only 6 employees are hired for the equivalent of 4 full-time jobs. The rest of Os'mose's staff are volunteers, from monitors to bar staff, event organizers and, of course, the foster families.

This is important because it also means that, although everyone does what they can, with the best will in the world, everyone has a job to do. We need to be forgiving if there are occasional miscommunications or other problems. So don't hesitate to let us know if you have any concerns.



### 1.4. Any problems?

If you have a problem with a member of Os'mose, we ask you to discuss it as soon as possible with a member of staff. If a serious problem persists, please speak to the committee.

You can address a complaint to one or more members of the committee (first to the President, then to the other members). You can make your complaint in writing (by post or e-mail) or by telephone:



Thank you for respecting the privacy of committee members and for not divulging their contact details.

### 1.5. Charges

The ASBL covers all the costs involved in educating an assistance dog in a foster family (veterinary care, food, training materials, etc.), except for travel expenses to the course, treats and any damage caused by the dog.



Similarly, if your dog causes damage outside your home (damage to other people's property, for example), your family's liability insurance will come into play. That's why this insurance is compulsory.

By way of illustration, the complete training of an assistance dog costs €23,000, but the dog is provided entirely free of charge to its future owner.

The necessary funds are raised from service clubs (Lions, Rotary, Kiwanis, etc.), private donations and events.

Os'mose organizes events throughout the year, some of which are recurrent, such as:

- Official allocation of assistance dogs: the month varies from year to year.
- Operation Cuberdons: May.
- Rand'Osmoses: 1st Sunday in September.
- Night walk: October 31.



## 1.6. Lessons

Foster families are required to attend Saturday morning classes. Classes are usually held at the center, on average every other Saturday. The schedule varies according to the dog's age and progress. Occasionally, classes are held outdoors (themed classes, events, demonstrations).

During the week when there are no group classes organized specifically for assistance dogs, host families take part in group classes organized by the Canine School either on Saturday mornings or Tuesday evenings (provided no individual classes have taken place during the day).

You will also benefit from individual lessons with one of our dog trainers. These can take place at your home, at work or outside (urban or rural environment) during the week.

**Instructor of assistance dogs:**

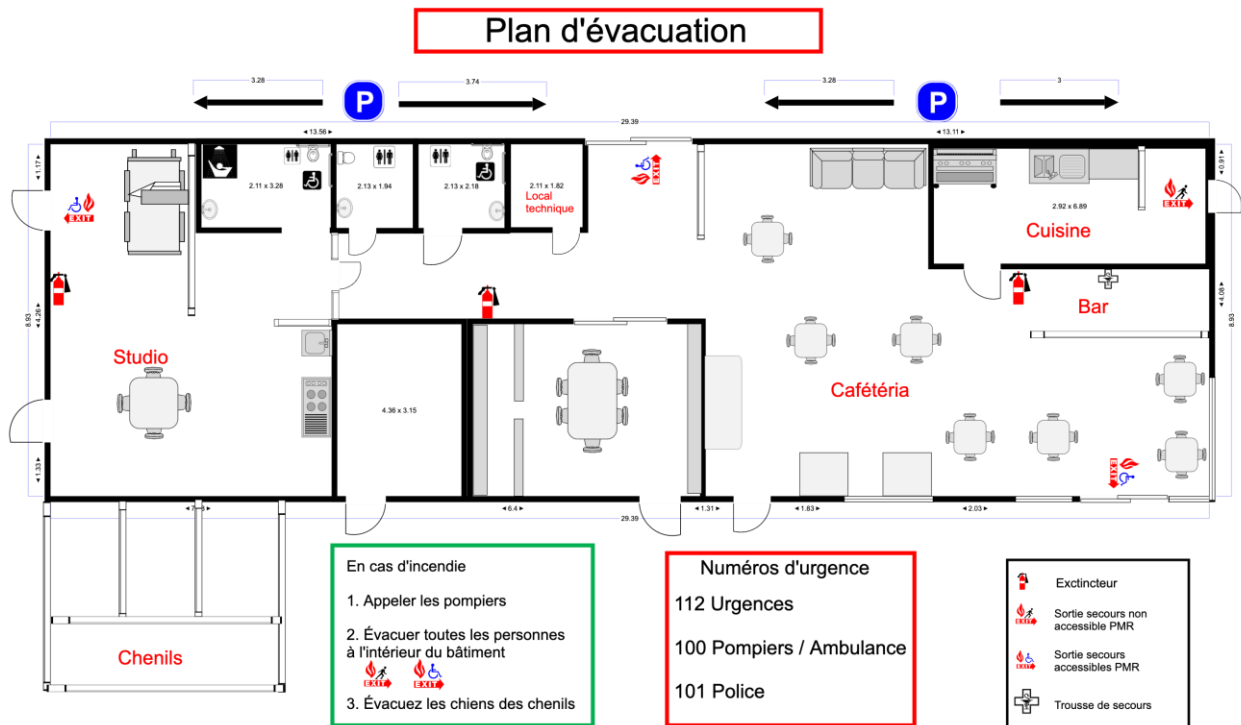
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**These are the only people who can advise you on dog training.** If you have any questions about your dog's training, they're the ones to ask. This is all the more important as we sometimes change cues or the way we practice. Information from other clients or foster families could therefore turn out to be wrong as far as you and your dog are concerned.



## 2. Emergency procedure and evacuation plan



### In the event of fire

In the event of fire detection (alarm, smoke, smell): notify the person in charge, who will take charge of allocating roles for emergency actions. To know more:

1. Turn off gas and electricity;
2. Control the fire if possible- without endangering yourself;
  - a. Evacuate, checking that every room is empty. Close all doors and windows. Follow emergency exit signs;
  - b. Check that there are no dogs left in the kennels;
  - c. One person takes a first-aid kit and waits for people outside then goes with them to the rally point: Tennis Bellerive;
  - d. If possible: evacuate any vehicles parked in front of the building;
  - e. One person to call for help if necessary and wait in front. Consult the 'Internal emergency Plan' (PIU);
3. At the muster point, check that everyone is present and that no one is injured;
4. If dogs were present on site: notify the persons concerned;
5. Contact the insurer;
6. Contact the Committee.

## 3. Accessibility

### 3.1. What the law says



The law specifies that access **cannot be refused to a trained assistance dog** in places accessible to the public (restaurant, cinema, shopping center, butcher's shop, sports hall, museum, etc.).

The dog must nevertheless wear a **distinctive sign** (cape or harness) and come from an **organization recognized by a Belgian region** and/or an international organization. The handler must also be in possession of the assistance dog's **identification card**. If all these conditions are not met, access may be legally refused.

#### Wallonia

- 23rd November 2006: Decree on accessibility for disabled people accompanied by assistance dogs to establishments and facilities intended for the public;
- 19th September 2013: CAWASS- Walloon Code of Social Action and Health, CHAPTER III: Accessibility for disabled people with assistance dogs to establishments and facilities intended for the public;
- 23rd July 2021: the 'Kama' Decree aims to improve access to assistance dogs in hospitals, which was very complicated in Wallonia compared to Flanders.

#### Brussels

- 18th December 2008: Order relating to access by assistance dogs to places open to the public. Amendment to the Ordinance of 19th April 2012.

#### Flanders

- 20th March 2009: Decree on access to public places for people with assistance dogs.

Unfortunately, there is still a gap between theory and practice. Most of the refusals of access that still occur stem from a lack of information on the part of retailers and/or employees about the laws in force. Then, as everywhere else, there are those who act in bad faith and come up with excuses such as *"the FASFC is going to be a problem" (which is not true!)* or *"there may be someone with allergies in my establishment"* or *"you're not blind, you don't need a dog!"*

In 2017, Os'mose organised a unique event on the theme of accessibility. The event brought together political figures, assistance dogs from various organisations, journalists from all over the country, as well as UNIA, FASFC and COMEOS.



Since then, Os'mose has been working hard to make public places more accessible to assistance dogs. Despite evident improvements, we still need to work with hospitals to ensure that clients can be accompanied by their dog in all circumstances.

If you are refused access, even if you have been able to enter after negotiations, please let us know immediately. We keep statistics on such refusals and negotiations. These figures enable us to work with politicians. It is therefore essential to keep us informed.

In addition, when a refusal is reported, we contact the establishment in question. UNIA (formerly the Centre pour l'Égalité des Chances/Centre for Equal Opportunities) also sends a letter to the establishment concerned.



Being turned down can be frustrating, but don't get angry with the people in front of you. Bear in mind that, on the one hand, they are often ignorant of the law and, on the other, you also represent Os'mose. It's important for us to cultivate a positive atmosphere.

Stickers are available if you want them. You can give them to businesses that welcome assistance dogs so that they can stick them on their windows.

### 3.2. Cape and card

The distinctive sign of an assistance dog is its cape when it is in training (with the "L" symbol on the side) and its harness when it is officially allocated. Your dog must wear its cape every time it goes out (not for a walk in the woods, of course!).



As soon as your dog arrives home, you should put his cape on inside. Put it on for a few minutes each day so that he gets used to it and finds it "normal". When you put it on for the first time, the puppy may scratch, roll or freeze.



The cape is by no means a cue for work. The dog must respond to cues, whether he's wearing his cape or not. Once he's used to it, you shouldn't put it on him in the house when you train him.

You should always carry the assistance dog's identification card with you. This will be given to you a few days after the puppy arrives at your home. To be valid, the card must have a photo of the dog next to you (like a passport photo). Say "cheese"!



Please note that this card has a limited validity period, so make sure you renew it in good time.

### 3.3. ADI



Since 2015, Os'mose has been **accredited** by ADI (Assistance Dog International), the world's highest authority for assistance dogs. Being accredited means that the organization is recognized not only for the **quality** of the work done by its assistance dogs, but also for its **general operation** and for the **attention it pays** to both the people who benefit from a dog and the foster families who train them, as well as to the volunteers and staff who help run the organization and its events.

Certification is valid for **5 years**, after which a **2-to-3-day review** is required to **maintain** the label.

To maintain the high quality of our work, every year we take part in international conferences in Europe and America, and exchange ideas with numerous foreign organizations. What's more, Vanessa- our director- is also an accreditor. She visits other organizations in Europe to certify them.

It's thanks to all this upstream work that Os'mose can also work a great deal downstream with the political world on the recognition of assistance dogs and accessibility.

## 4. Terminologie

Most people think of an assistance dog as a guide dog for the visually impaired.

Historically, guide dogs have existed in Belgium for over 100 years, compared with a few decades for other types of dog.

It is therefore important to understand and use the correct terminology when referring to assistance dogs:

- **Assistance dog:** a generic term for all types of dogs that work with disabilities.
- **Guide dog:** dog for the blind or partially sighted.
- **Service dogs:** dog for those of reduced mobility (mainly in wheel chairs).
- **Alert service dog:** dogs for those with epilepsy or diabetes.
- **Social dog:** dog for autistic children or those suffering from a so-called 'orphan' disease.
- **Hearing dog:** dog for the deaf or hard of hearing.

Os'mose trains all the above types of dogs except guide and hearing dogs.





When a puppy enters training, we can never say for whom it will be destined and therefore cannot determine what its orientation will be. We'll have to wait until the dog is about 15 months old before we can decide.

We need to be sure that the dog is healthy and well-behaved before we can present him to anyone. The introduction process will be explained to you in due course.

Os'mose also sets up partnerships with institutions for specific projects. This means that a dog trained at Os'mose could have a purpose other than assistance dog.

For example, we have a dog placed in an retirement home or in a police station as a "judicial assistance dog". These projects are not a demotion or failure for our dogs. We are convinced each time that the dog is "made for it".

Os'mose also works with **Rahna**. Although it does not itself train assistance dogs, this Luxembourg organisation enables people with disabilities to benefit from an assistance dog. To do this, Rahna calls on foreign organisations such as Os'mose or Handi'chiens to hand over one of their dogs to the client (from Luxembourg or across the border) for whom Rahna makes the request. This is why some of our Os'modogs may cross a border to live their future life.

Service dog		Social dogs	
Rosita and Kairo	Tasks	Romain et Ioda	Tâches
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bring out-of-reach objects</li> <li>Open/close doors</li> <li>Turn on and off the lights</li> <li>Help undressing</li> <li>Call for help</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Help with walking</li> <li>-Helping to develop communication</li> <li>-Foster peace of mind</li> </ul>
Alert service dog epilepsy		Alert service dog diabetes	
Sandrine et Héros	Tâches	Mattéo et ID	Tâches
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Reassure in all circumstances</li> <li>-Make the disability visible</li> <li>-Press an alarm button in case of fainting</li> <li>- Preventing future seizure in some cases</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Accompany Mattéo everywhere (even school!)</li> <li>- Warn him of low or high blood sugar levels</li> </ul>





## 5. Dog care

### 5.1. Water & Food

Dogs should always have plenty of water, as kibble/treats make them thirsty. Don't give them milk.



Divide their daily ration into three meals (morning, midday and evening) and then into two meals (morning and evening) from 6 months onwards. Make sure you feed your dog when it has finished working, walking and/or playing.

 **If your dog is likely to play or run a lot, feed him after exercise to avoid any risk of stomach torsion, which is DEADLY for dogs!** 

If the dog gets excited (playing or otherwise) after eating, its stomach could turn. If this occurs, see a vet as soon as possible.

That's why it's vital that your dog stays calm after eating. Ideally, feed your dog in their crate after they've had a walk and/or done some exercise so that they're tired.



How to recognize a twisted stomach?

- **Stomach is tense and bloated,**
- Dog **doesn't want to eat/drink** anymore,
- Dog is **apathetic**.

If you attend training class early in the day, don't feed your dog in the morning. Apart from the risk of torsion, they'll be less inclined to work if they're full.

#### How do you go about feeding?

Puppies should be given 3 portions of food a day:

- You feed the first and the last into the bowl in the normal way (with the cues "*don't touch*" - "*okay!*").
- Put the middle portion in your treat bag. This will provide rewards throughout the day.

If the entire pouch has not been used during the day, pour it into the evening bowl so that the puppy receives the total amount of food it needs.



Don't forget to wash the bowls regularly before adding water or kibble.



Don't give **anything** outside of mealtimes, and if you do give a few extra **treats** (during training sessions, for example), **reduce** the evening ration.



A dog that is **too big** is a dog whose **health is in danger** (fat around the heart, extra weight on the hips and therefore risk of joint problems, etc.). Letting a dog get too big will **shorten its life!**



Os'mose has enjoyed a unique partnership with Royal Canin since 2021. Your dog will only receive this food (unless a specific need is prescribed by the vet).

To facilitate **cues** and to ensure that you do **not run out of food**, please let us know that you will need a new bag of kibble when you have approximately **one third** of your used bag left. The food is delivered to the center. You can collect it during an individual or group lesson.

## 5.2. Veterinary Surgeon



The health booklet always stays with the dog. Please do not misplace it. Later it will be given to the future client.

The organisation's vet is Dr Caroline El Allaf.

Address: rue des 2 Églises, 53- 4120 Neupré. Tel: 0478 43 02 86

Consultations: Monday to Friday from 9am to 10am or by appointment from Monday to Saturday. Dr El Allaf's surgery is the place to go for vaccinations, sterilisation or if your dog is ill.

In an emergency, if Dr El Allaf is unavailable, you should go to the Clinique Universitaire Vétérinaire du Sart-Tilman. Always give advance notice of your arrival:

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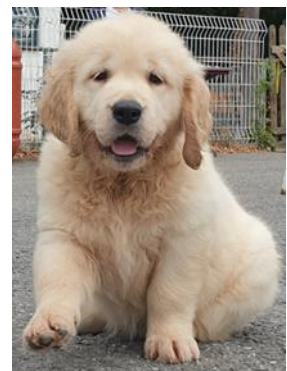
The Os'mose reference person for "healthcare and monitoring" is Vinciane Goffinet (antiparasitic monitoring, planning sterilisation, etc.)

**Nevertheless, keep an eye on the dates** when you must visit the vet to vaccinate your dog (dates entered in the health booklet by the vet himself).

All our dogs are **neutered** at around 7 months. Around the age of one year, **x-rays** of the hips are taken to check that the dog is not suffering from **dysplasia**. Vinciane will tell you when and where to make an appointment.

Vinciane is also the privileged contact person with our breeders. She will inform you of the birth of your future puppy, as well as the date of its arrival.


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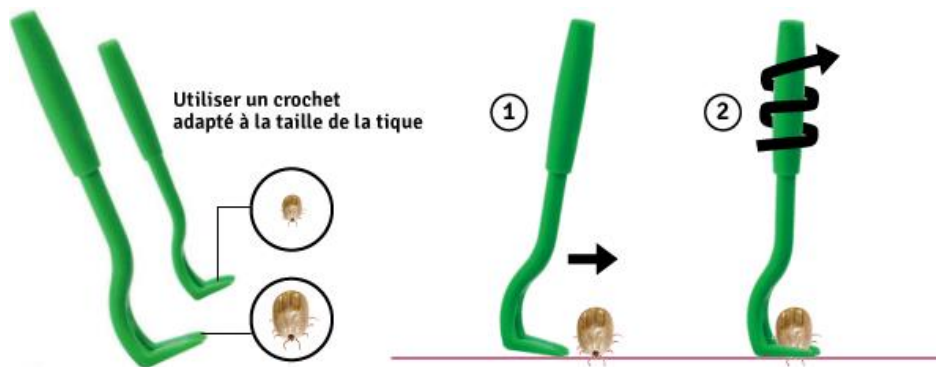


### 5.3. Regular care

#### Flea and tick repellent (provided by Os'mose)

From **April to October**, preventive treatments should be given approximately every 4 weeks (e.g. with Nexgard)


 In summer, **check your dog carefully** for ticks! If it has one, it's essential to remove it using the special **hooks** sold at the chemists. Make sure you have removed the **entire** tick. **NEVER** use **ether** to remove a tick. The product anaesthetises the tick, which releases its poison before falling asleep.



#### Deworming (provided by Os'mose)

There are different types of dewormer (Drontal, Parazan, Veprafen, Anthelmex, etc.). The choice of dewormer is made on the advice of your vet, and may change from time to time.

Worming medicine should be given **once a month** until the dog is **6 months** old. Thereafter, the dog should be dewormed **twice a year**: in early **spring** ( $\pm$  April) and in early **autumn** ( $\pm$  October).

 Warning! There must be an 8-day interval between Nexgard and deworming!

#### Ears

**Keep an eye on them** and, if necessary, clean them with **Otoclean** (or a similar product) or sweet almond oil. If you notice any **brownish, smelly liquid**, **go to the vet!**



After a walk in the countryside in the tall grass, check to see if any grass spikelets have stuck inside the ear or elsewhere (e.g. between the fingers, in the nose, under the eyelid, etc.) as these are very dangerous! Spikelets can penetrate orifices or under the skin, creating lesions and/or infections that may require surgery if they are not removed in time.

Ear scabies: the main symptoms are a nauseating smell and a brownish liquid draining from the ear. If these symptoms appear, a veterinary visit is necessary.



## Coat



**Brushing** your dog is **indispensable**, at least **2x per week**. Your relationship is also reinforced by this special moment of closeness and care.

Dogs don't usually smell bad unless they're sick. Dead hair has a bad smell, which is why regular brushing is so important.



Moreover, if knots are not removed, they thicken and sometimes end up so close to the skin that they create wounds.



Do not bathe or use soap: this removes the protective layer of undercoat which takes 3 months to regenerate.

In addition, the dog must learn to be calm during care, so that in future a vulnerable person can also look after it without endangering themselves.



## Eyes

They should be cleaned with a compress and boric water once every two weeks.

If they are too red or oozing, the dog may have conjunctivitis or another infection. You need to go to the vet.





## Teeth/breath

This is something to watch out for! Although dogs rarely develop cavities, you can give them ox nerves to chew on to help prevent tartar, but don't overdo it. You'll also be helping your dog to meet its chewing needs, as chewing activity is essential to its equilibrium.

## Paws (especially the pads)

As well as the spikelets, check for any stuck thorns. This is also an opportunity to handle your dog as you would at the vet. Make sure there are no cracks or cuts in the pads after long walks.

 If the roads and paths have been salted, rinse paws with lukewarm water. Pay particular attention to the pads and the space between the toes.

 **Don't twist** your dog's paws. Their bones are fused together, unlike ours, which means they cannot be twisted.

## 6. Sources of risk for dogs

### 6.1. Ingestion



Some dogs have a tendency to pick up anything they find on the ground. This is especially true of assistance dogs. That's why it's vital to be vigilant about what your dog might ingest, because some substances that are harmless to humans can be lethal to dogs.

#### 6.1.1. Chocolate

**Never** give **chocolate** to a dog! Chocolate contains theobromine, which is **deadly** to dogs.

#### 6.1.2. Avocados

Avocados contain a substance called "persin" which can act like a poison. It causes vomiting and diarrhea.

#### 6.1.3. Macadamia nuts

These may cause a series of symptoms, including weakness, overheating and vomiting..

#### 6.1.4. Grapes, raisins, and gooseberries

These fruits can cause kidney failure in dogs. Even small amounts can cause problems in some dogs.

#### 6.1.5. Household plants

Some of the most toxic plants for dogs include:

- ♣ Azaleas and rhododendrons: these pretty, flowering plants contain toxins that can cause vomiting, diarrhea, coma and even death.
- ♣ Tulips and daffodils: the bulbs of these plants can cause stomach problems, convulsions and heart damage.
- ♣ Lily of the valley: the whole plant is poisonous and remains so even when dried out. The water in which it is immersed is itself harmful. Substances that irritate the digestive tract and are particularly toxic to the heart cause potentially fatal problems.
- ♣ Sago: eating just a few seeds can be enough to cause vomiting, convulsions and liver failure.

- ♣ Other species include yew, holly, mistletoe, lily, arum, hydrangea, oleander and boxwood ...



#### 6.1.6. Rat poison, slug killer, anti-freeze ...

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Dogs are attracted to these substances, even though they are highly toxic. If your dog ingests them, an emergency visit to your vet (or a clinic) is essential!

Furthermore, ingesting snails and slugs is also dangerous, and can lead to serious illness with an uncertain prognosis.

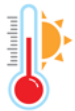


Foods such as onions, garlic, raw potatoes, alcohol and peach or apricot pits are also dangerous. What's more, dogs should never be given cooked bones, chicken bones (even raw) or fish bones.

### 6.2. Other dangers

#### 6.2.1. Heatstroke

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Never leave your dog in direct sunlight! Least of all in the car in fine weather, even with the windows open!

Dogs only sweat through their paw pads and by panting. This makes it difficult for them to regulate their temperature. Heatstroke could be fatal. If temperatures are high, don't hesitate to dab your dog with water.

If it's very hot, make sure the ground isn't too hot for your dog's paws: put the back of your hand on the asphalt. Can't leave it there for 10 seconds? Then your dog's paws must not touch the ground! There's a very real risk of burning your dog's paw pads.

#### 6.2.2. Insect bites & stings

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Significant epidermal reactions may be observed in dogs. In general, the skin swells strongly at the site of the sting.

#### 6.2.3. La dilatation et la torsion d'estomac.

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If the dog gets excited after eating (while playing, for example), its stomach could turn, which can be fatal! A vet must be called in as soon as possible!

Signs of stomach torsion: apathetic dog, unable to eat or drink, tense, swollen stomach.

See point 5.1 *Water & food* in this guide for more details

### 6.3. If a problem arises ...

If you have any problem whatsoever with your dog, inform an Os'mose staff member immediately.



## 7. L'apprentissage du chien



When a dog makes a mistake, it's often the owner's fault!



When a puppy arrives in a family, everyone often gets very soft-hearted. While being affectionate is not wrong in itself, the consequences of being too soft-hearted can be particularly harmful.

We let the puppy do as he pleases, thinking that it's his age and that he'll change later. But behaviour learned at a very young age, whether positive or negative, can stay with a puppy for life!

Dogs are creatures of habit and will reproduce the same behaviour when they reach adulthood. It's easier to establish good habits than to break bad ones.

An undesirable action must therefore be prohibited from the outset!

A dog has no concept of "a **little**" or "a **lot**". It's all or nothing, it's **black or white**: there's no such thing as **grey** with a dog! It's vital to always give the **same response** for the **same action** and to always demand the **same response** from the dog in the **same context**.



"Yes" is "yes", "no" is "no"! And that is valid for the dog's entire life!

Be vigilant! Dogs are opportunists on the lookout for every mistake or weakness in their owner. Give an inch and your dog will definitely take a mile!

**A dog's behaviour is 20% spontaneous and 80% learned!**

**Spontaneous behaviour:** a set of instinctive or innate behaviour present at birth or potentially present at birth, hereditary and specific to the species. Example: a dog wags its tail.

**Learned behaviour:** all those actions acquired by the individual over the course of a lifetime through a learning process. Example: sitting, lying down.

**Imitation:** beware, your dog may also act by imitation. For example, if you dig up flowers in front of your puppy, he may try to do the same.

### 7.1. The language of dogs



Between humans, we adopt verbal, non-verbal (gestures, body movements) and paraverbal (tone and modulation of voice) language. When we want to communicate, we naturally use speech. Our other senses are also alert: our ears to listen, then our eyes to observe and finally, if necessary, our nose.

Dogs have a completely different set of priorities! They first use their nose, then their eyes and finally their ears. We should be aware that dogs do not speak (verbal language) ...



Their means of communication (with each other and with us) is the position of their body and head, as well as barking and growling, but also the detection of odours secreted by both fellow dogs and humans.

When you want to communicate with your dog, it's the tones of your voice and the movements of your body that he perceives best, better than the vocal cue itself. But that doesn't mean you should neglect specific vocabulary!

Dogs are keen observers: the direction of your shoulders, the position of your head or your hips are all clues for them. Your body is like a steering wheel for your dog.

#### To illustrate:

You want the dog to get into the car. You stand in front of him, in front of the open boot. You call to him to get in: "Fido, car!" He looks at you but doesn't comply. Your dog is not afraid to get into the car, which he has already climbed into before. He's not in any pain. Nor are there any distractions on the horizon.

#### Let's see what's happening:

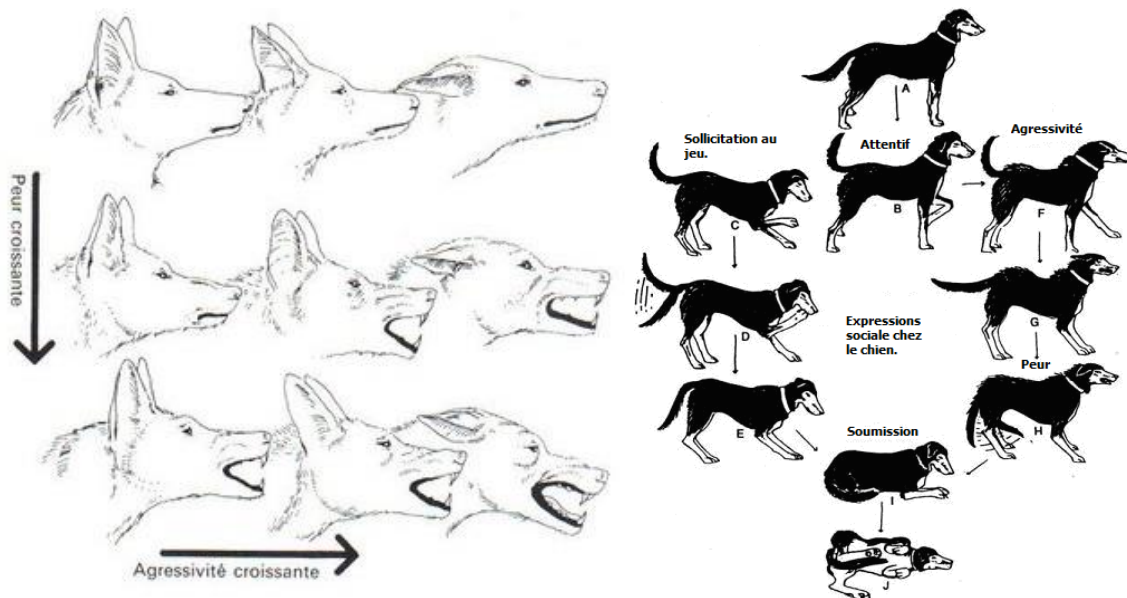
Your verbal communication tells him to jump in the boot. But your body language says the exact opposite! By facing the dog and obstructing access to the boot, you are asking him **not** to jump in. Given two contradictory pieces of information, it's a safe bet that the dog will go for what he understands best: **body language**! Your dog will interpret this as you not wanting him to jump into the boot.

There's no point in repeating "car" (the official cue) ten times over, or even shouting it. Humans often use their voices too much! Instead, you should turn your body towards the vehicle and clear the approach so that the dog complies.

In addition, a study by Professor Mills (England) shows that dogs are also capable of differentiating between **emotions on human faces**. For example, you should avoid working with your dog if you're upset, tired or ill! As one of our foster families nicely put it: "our emotions are expressed through the lead".

If dogs learn to **decode** us, it is also important for their owners to be able to **decode** their dogs. This is essential in training a dog, but also to avoid unpleasant misunderstandings.

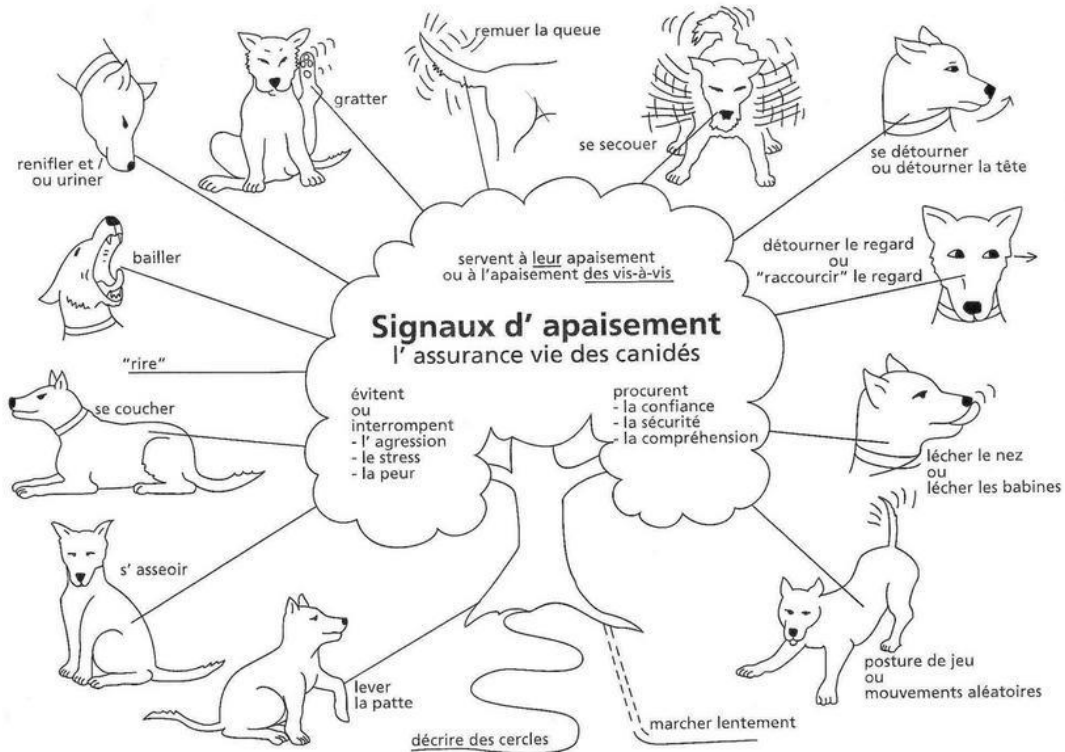
Here are two illustrations to help you understand your dog's physical attitudes:



#### 7.1.1. Signs of stress

Dogs communicate mainly through gestures, so be on the lookout for behaviour. Certain signs emitted by the dog may indicate discomfort, slight fear, or even considerable anxiety. These are known as appeasement signals.

Be careful, however, not to interpret everything and anything as a sign of discomfort. Certain movements and attitudes can also be perfectly normal behaviour. For example, yawning can be a sign of anxiety or simply a sign of tiredness. You should always analyse a situation as a whole.



## 7.2. How does a dog think?



Dogs learn and react By association ('Pavlov's principle').

For those who don't know the story, this scientist noticed that a dog drooled when it was given its bowl. He rang a bell every time he fed the dog. One day, he didn't feed the dog, but rang the bell anyway. The dog started drooling. This is what is known as 'conditioning' or learning by association.

It's the same principle for walking. Often, when you pick up the lead, your dog is already excited because he knows that **lead** means **walk**.

When a puppy comes home, 99% of owners start by teaching him to sit. In the dog's mind, this is what happens: *"My bottom's on the ground and my master's all happy. What's more, I've got food or a cuddle. That's fine! So I'll keep doing it"*. The puppy then hears the word *"sit"* every time his bottom is on the floor. In the end, the puppy makes the organisation *"sitting = bottom on the ground = happy handler = reward"*.



It is therefore essential to reward your dog every time he does something right, but above all to act immediately. Rewarding 30 seconds later is too late!

The only way to teach a dog is through **motivation**, never brutality! **NEVER hit a dog!** Always end on a positive note.

Develop "handler's love", i.e. the dog's pleasure at seeing his handler's joy. As well as **affection**, the best way to establish a relationship is to **play** a lot with your dog.

### 7.3. Evolution of behaviour

During its first two years, a dog goes through a series of phases that have a greater or lesser influence on its behaviour. As with humans, dogs go through phases of independence, puberty, and adolescence.

The ages with which these behaviours are associated vary from vet to vet, ethologist to ethologist, behaviourist to behaviourist, no doubt because these are living beings, not machines ... it's not an exact science.

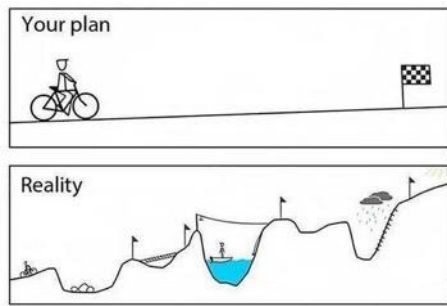
Be that as it may, puppies learn the most from an early age. That's why it's important to take them out **soon** after picking yours up from the breeder! Keep the puppy at home (and in the garden) for **two or three** days while it gets used to you. Then take it **out into the world!**

Of course, you won't be able to go everywhere, and you'll need to remain **vigilant** as he won't yet have had all his vaccinations. For example, you might want to avoid places like busy street markets until your puppy is fully vaccinated but do get **out and about!**

Similarly, you should be careful to create **positive** experiences by **gradually** immersing the dog in new situations. To take our example again, you won't go to a busy flea market at 11am on a sunny Sunday with a 3-month-old puppy. Instead, you'll start by visiting a small market at a reasonable time of day.

During the first three weeks following the dog's arrival at your home, we ask you to take the puppy out in **suitable** places: come to the Os'mose center, walk around the block, go for a walk along a **country lane**. The puppy will not accompany you to a **shop** during the first **three** weeks or to your place of **work**.

Socialising doesn't mean over-stimulating! What's more, your dog **must also be able to rest AND learn to be left alone**.



While respecting the dog and its **rhythm**, teach it **as much as possible before it is 5 months old**, so that it learns **for life**. Be careful, the dog will retain the **positive** as well as the **negative**.

Even if your dog develops well and listens better and better, you should be aware that one day he will question everything and act **as if he no longer listens** to you. Some cues may have been learned, but you'll have to **repeat** them again and get

the dog into position. It's not serious, it's one of his crises. It's like **adolescence**: for some, it goes almost unnoticed, for others the crisis is very strong. For some, the crisis will last a long time, for others it will only last a short while.

The important thing is to know that it exists. It doesn't matter as long as you've trained your dog well beforehand. Just keep training him and everything will fall into place. Be careful, though, not to attribute any of his mood swings (yes, yes, they have them too) to adolescence.

#### 7.4. Essential thoughts

Your new mantra is:

*What i do, i do for a disabled person.*

What do we mean by this? The future client may have great difficulty moving or speaking. This means that as the dog learns, you will have to speak more and more softly and move more and more slowly in order to get as close as possible to the likely living conditions of your dog's future guardian.

The key words in learning are: Patience- Consistency- Perseverance- Coherence.

Remember, it's easier to establish good habits than to break bad ones: establish good habits from the outset.

A few golden rules:

- 🐾 Don't get **angry** and **don't shout**.
- 🐾 Learn to **think ahead**.
- 🐾 Don't repeat the same cue ten times over. A cue given twice must suffice.
- 🐾 Use the right cues (the right vocabulary): '**sit**' is not the same as 'ok, you can sit now'.

- 🐾 Always use the same terms for the same cues. Later, the client will receive the same cue book and the dog will have to understand what is being asked of him.
- 🐾 Don't let **ANYTHING** get past you! You must be consistent. For the dog, it's black or white. The rules can't vary according to the mood or who is looking after the dog. Otherwise, the dog will become anxious, ill-tempered and stressed.
- 🐾 Don't **overdo** it. Adapt your praise to your dog's temperament. If he's rather lively, reward him calmly. If he's more lymphatic, stimulate him more enthusiastically.
- 🐾 Ask family members to respect these cues and to apply them if they need to give them.
- 🐾 Do **not over-protect** or 'helicopter parent' your dog.
- 🐾 Do **not do more** than you are told. The instructor will give you the cue sequences to learn as you go along.



💡 If you have any questions, don't hesitate to ask **THE TEACHERS**. There are no dumb questions! It's better to spend a few minutes discussing a problem than to let bad habits take root.

## 7.5. How to speak to the dog?

**A voice of authority does not require loudness!**

Your dog is very sensitive to the tone of your voice. It's not the strength of the voice but the intonation that counts. If you say '*bad dog*' in a gentle voice, your dog will be happy. If you say '*good dog*' in a dry, angry voice, he'll lower his ears!

Use a **firm, calm** voice to give a cue, a **soft, caressing** voice to encourage and congratulate, a **dry, hard** voice to correct, etc. It is important, from the outset, to have **consistent** intonation and words.



Dogs have **auditive abilities 50 to 100 times superior** to humans. This difference in volume is particularly important when a puppy is first learning within a foster family. When it reaches the end of its training, your dog should be used to responding to cues when they are given in a low voice.

Bear in mind, therefore, that there's **no point in shouting at your dog** to get him to obey; you still need to have the **type of voice** to do it.

## 7.6. The 4 D rule: Duration – Distance – Distraction – Diversification

The 4 Ds rule must be applied for each new cue to be taught to a dog:

**D**

Duration  
Distance  
Distraction  
Diversification

Any **new cue** should be worked on by **rewarding** the dog **as soon as it has performed** the desired cue. The handler is **as close as possible** to the dog. This takes place in a **calm environment** (outside the canine school).

As soon as the dog **acquires** a cue under these conditions, the **4 Ds are added in turn**. Be careful, this doesn't happen in three days! The 4 Ds can be added **randomly**.

For example: when the dog sits at each cue, I add a distraction: someone walking by when I ask him to sit, a dog walking nearby, an object falling and making noise. Then I add duration. I no longer reward the dog immediately after he sits, but I wait two seconds, then 3", then 4", etc. Finally, I add distance in two ways: either by moving away when the dog sits, or by telling the dog to "sit" when I'm 50 cm from him, then 1m, 1m50, etc.



During the learning process, the context will influence the 4 Ds. You won't be able to demand the same thing at home as you would outdoors, or at the centre during individual or group lessons. This means that although you might ask your dog to stay for 1 minute at a distance of 1 metre at home, outdoors it might be 30 seconds at a distance of 30 centimetres.

When the dog is older, the requirements should be the same regardless of the context.

As for diversification, this involves varying the locations (house - center - woods), the times (morning, midday, evening) and also the way in which a cue is requested (intonation of voice, body position: standing - sitting - lying down, etc.).

## 7.7. Reward

**Congratulations must be included in 100% of the exercises requested and completed!**

As soon as your dog **obeys** a cue, you **MUST praise** it. Don't forget that it reacts by association. If it understands it's being rewarded by acting in a certain way, it will reproduce that behaviour.



The reward can be: **play, food, a caress and ALWAYS the voice** (except during clicker sessions).

The reward (food) is necessary for the puppy (dog) to learn. However, over time it should disappear completely to make way for voice and/or stroking alone.

#### 7.7.1. Play

---

The **relationship** you have with your dog is the **basis of his training!** What are the keys to a good relationship? Obviously, **feeding** your dog is one of them. It's instinctive: dogs need food to survive. He'll be grateful if you give him some.

However, it is **ESPECIALLY playing** with your dog that will make you accomplices and thus facilitate a better education! So don't be too lazy or stingy about playing with your dog.

Note that when you play with your dog, you're building a relationship, but it's also a form of work. Because you need to be able to control your dog's excitement. If you're playing, avoid letting your dog get too excited by pausing the game regularly.



Do not let the dog shake its head or turn its body. In reality, play will be used to teach the dog to open/close doors or to undress (the "tug" cue, see cue guide). So certain bad habits must not be acquired.



Don't play with sticks or balls! This ban is explained later in this leaflet.

#### 7.7.2. Treats

---

Treats can be used to quickly teach your dog the cues (sit, down, walk on lead, recall, etc.) but be careful, the aim is not to walk your dog around with kibbles for the rest of its life!

You should therefore **reward** your dog **systematically** at first. When you see that your dog has understood the desired cue, you should give it every second kibble, then every third, and so on. If it's to reinforce "position holding" (see cue guide), give the kibble initially after one second, then after two seconds, then three, etc. The aim is to remove the kibble as quickly as possible. The aim is also to withdraw the gestures as quickly as possible (to indicate the position to the dog) and then the food reward as a reward.





The dog's treat may simply be its usual kibble. For some dogs, this works and is sufficient. If not, there are special treats for working dogs. Be careful, if you give a lot of 'food' rewards during a training session, reduce the amount in the dog's bowl, otherwise you run the risk of making the dog obese.

If you're going to work your dog, especially with kibble, don't feed it first. If the dog is full, he will have no reason to please you (don't worry, an adult dog can go around 14 days without eating).

On days when you come to the dog club, give him his daily ration in the evening only (or only twice for puppies)

#### 7.7.3. Petting

---

Stroking and patting is mainly used to **reward** static positions and for **recall**. Do not pet your dog while walking. It's very complicated. By stroking it, you are **not controlling** the dog, who could pull hard just then..

Be careful to measure the **intensity** of your stroking according to the **cue**. If the dog is in a static position (sitting, lying down, standing), opt for a very **gentle**, delicate stroke to prevent the dog changing position. If you're working on recall, be more **playful**. When your dog comes to you, shower it with caresses: '**celebrate** its success'!

#### 7.7.4. Voice

---

Encouragement, praise, growling: the voice in its different tones is an integral part of a dog's training.

Even if you reward your dog by **playing**, **stroking** or giving him a **treat**, you'll still be **praising** him by voice. Eventually, **voice** will be your dog's **only reward**.

### 7.8. Sanction?

The term 'punishment' does not have the same value (or the same references) in the canine world as it does in the human world.

If a child does something stupid and is sent to his room, even long after he's done it, he'll understand why he's being isolated.



If you lock a dog up because he's done something he shouldn't, the only thing he'll understand is that you're isolating him! Do NOT do this! dogs don't understand that they've done something wrong, especially if it happened without you seeing it.

On the other hand, if your dog does something **wrong** and you catch it **in the act**, sanction it by using '**NO**' with a serious and **severe intonation**. But be careful **not to overuse** your 'no'. Often, there is a more **appropriate** cue, such as '**down**' if the dog has climbed onto the sofa.

A few minutes (20 seconds according to some specialists) after committing a reprehensible act, the dog loses awareness or memory of what it has just done. So punishing him afterwards **serves no purpose** other than to make him wary of you.



*Experiment:* a dog used to tear up newspapers and books. Systematically, when the master came home, he would punish the dog. Over time, the dog continued to tear things up, but his attitude when his master returned was different: he lowered his head, avoiding meeting his master's gaze and looking as if he felt remorse. Far from it! The proof: as a test, a few days later, the dog was removed from the room. During this time, the owner shredded newspapers himself, as his dog was wont to do. When the dog came into the room

and saw the shredded paper on the floor, he immediately cowered on the floor and didn't dare move. Conclusion: the dog associated the punishment not with the act he had committed but with the situation and attitude of the owner when he returned.

## 8. How we work

### 8.1. Positive reinforcement > < rainbows and unicorns

Over the last ten years, working methods have been considerably improved, moving from coercive methods to positive reinforcement. We now have a working method where **positive reinforcement** takes precedence over punishment.

However, this does not mean that we live in a **carefree world of 'rainbows and unicorns'** and that dogs do not require a framework. It is **essential to impose limits**.



During training, we ask you to be very gentle and positive, **rewarding every good action** as much as possible rather than **sanctioning bad ones**.

This doesn't mean that your dog has the right to do what it likes and that you shouldn't get angry from time to time, but be careful how you go about it.

The section of this booklet entitled 'Sanctions' is not there just for information purposes but is there to be used. So if your dog crosses the line (jumps, chews, pushes, etc.), you should tell him as soon as possible.

### 8.2. Learning through spontaneous behaviour

As soon as the puppy arrives home, we ask each foster family to be attentive to spontaneous behaviour so that they can reinforce it.

In practice, when the puppy is naturally lying down, sitting, standing or in its own place, you give it a kibble, vocally associating the name of the position each time. Example: the dog is lying down and you give him a kibble while simultaneously saying 'lying down, good boy/girl'.

The same goes for walking on the lead, being calm in public, barking, house, bodily needs and position stops. All this will be explained by your instructor and detailed in the cues guide.

As a reminder, you will keep a portion of your dog's daily food ration in your treat bag. This will be used to reward any spontaneous behaviour during the day.

The remainder of the pouch not used during the day will be poured into the evening bowl so that your dog receives the quantity of food he needs at the end of the day.

### 8.3. Clicker



For **certain cues** (walking on a leash, closing a door, pushing a button), we use a clicker. This is a **specific working tool** to teach the dog in the **gentlest** and most **positive** way possible.

We ask you **not** to use it in **circumstances other than those in which you are working with an instructor**. It is also essential to **follow the instructions** given so that it is **effective**. The main instruction is that you **must not speak at all** when using the clicker. This requires a great deal of **concentration** on the part of both **dog and handler**.

Thanks to this working tool, the dog will follow and work far more spontaneously as an adult. This will make the transition to his new owner much easier.

## 9. Good manners for dogs

All dogs need to learn good manners. Manners are even more important for assistance dogs. Here are a few basics that should never be forgotten.

### 9.1. The dog should not jump up

#### How?

Simply ignore your dog when he jumps up at you (for example when you come home and it's happy to see you). **Give it a caress once all four feet are on the ground.** Put this rule into practice from day one, as soon as your puppy arrives home.



#### Why?

A large dog that jumps uncontrollably onto a person in a chair can knock the chair over. A dog that doesn't jump is less likely to fly onto tables. A dog that doesn't jump means no risk of muddy paws on Sunday clothes or guests, no knocking over children...

don't worry, teaching a puppy not to jump poses no problem when the time comes to teach him "up" and "knees" **after 12 months** (i.e. when his bones can take it).

### 9.2. The dog must not steal

#### How?



Tell the dog 'don't touch' when he is interested in the food, when he tries to sniff what is on the table, etc..

Don't **tempt** your dog too much, don't push it into error before it's 'perfected'. If it learns to enjoy stealing straight away, it will be very difficult to correct. So don't leave meat on the edge of the work surface if you're not sure the dog won't steal. And the first time you do this, keep a discreet eye on the dog, ready to intervene. Like all training, it must be **gradual**.

#### Why?

After all, it's easier not to see your sandwich disappear from the table when you turn your back for a moment! We often think that a golden retriever is inevitably a thief. It's not true: **education** (or lack of it) plays a big part.

### 9.3. The dog must not beg

How?

- 🐾 Do **not take any notice** of your dog while you are at a table.
- 🐾 **Never** give it anything while you are at a table.
- 🐾 **Coach** your guests and family beforehand!

Why?

A dog must learn to not eat with you or from your plate. There is nothing more disagreeable than a dog drooling and making sad eyes at you while you are eating.

#### 9.4. The dog must neither nip nor lick

How?

Say “**no**” to your dog and **withdraw your hand**. Then caress it again and **congratulate** it when it doesn’t lick.

Why?

Some people can’t stand being licked. And don’t forget, your dog is destined for someone else.



A dog that nips can hurt when it gets excited. When children are involved, they become pawns in a game for the dog, which no longer has any limits. This can even happen to the most affectionate and gentle dogs.

#### 9.5. Respect for people (adults and children)

How?

**React** when the dog jostles you, by putting it back behind you for example. Don't let it get **between** you and an obstacle by pushing you. React when it pushes a child.

Why?

It's part of the dog's **respect** for you. It's also much more **comfortable**. And if you (or the future client) have children, this will prevent **accidents**.

## 9.6. The dog must not approach others (dogs or people)

### How?

- 🐾 Do **not** allow the dog to **meet** other dogs on its own initiative. Never allow the dog to make contact with **another dog** while it is on the **lead**.
- 🐾 Don't let the dog go to other people. Explain why and ask the people you meet not to pet the dog. The dog learns very quickly to say 'hello' and you can then allow people to come into contact with the dog only under **certain conditions**.

### Why?

If the dog has acquired the bad habit of pulling towards all dogs and all people, it will do the same when it is with its client. It runs the risk of knocking him/her over or overturning the chair by pulling too hard.



## 10. Day to day life (of a future assistance dog)

### 10.1. How to tire a dog out

We often hear that to get your dog to exercise enough, you must make it run a lot, go for long walks or keep playing fetch. Not true! On the contrary, you run the risk of getting it even more excited, even over-stimulating it.

The best way to “tire” a dog is to make it **think**. Do several exercises with him. This is the best way to get him to sleep afterwards. Examples: concentrating while walking on the lead, repeating sit or lie down, learning new cues, maintaining position s, etc., ...

### 10.2. Work time

Firstly, unlike guide dogs, assistance dogs must be able to work **at any time**. As a reminder, the dog's **harness or cape** must not be an **indicator** of working time.

When they put on their harness, guide dogs know that they are in ‘work’ mode. The rest of the time, they are at rest. For assistance dogs, it's different. They must be able to pick up an object or open a door at home (and therefore without a cape) just as much as they have to walk on a lead without pulling outside (with a cape).



From a very early age, it's important to space out training sessions with your dog and not **over-stimulate** it. Favour **several** short sessions rather than just one big session per day.



**Make the most** of the moment when you are about to give the dog its **bowl**. It's waiting for food, so it'll be ready to do more **exercise** for you (or let's be honest, to get rewards). For example: prepare the ration. Then ask your dog to ‘sit’, ‘lie down’ and ‘stand up’ before putting the bowl on the floor. Give it a kibble for each cue it performs. Then, as you do every time you put the bowl down, say ‘don’t touch’ and then ‘okay!’ once the dog can eat. The bowl will be his reward.

Later, you'll work on **duration**. Once you've asked your dog to ‘sit’ or ‘lie down’, you'll wait several seconds before feeding it, then several minutes, etc. (see the 4 D rule).

During the day, **play** with it from time to time when it's small. That way, you're already working on object relationships and recall.

When your dog's older, you'll innocently drop a spoon or a bunch of keys at any time of day and ask it to bring them back to you. The same will happen every time your dog learns a new skill (undressing, opening or closing a door, etc.).



In short, we'll be asking you to become increasingly clumsy and/or lazy as your dog develops.

### 10.3. Prohibitions



#### Swimming

Golden Retrievers were actually bred to retrieve water-fowl when hunting. So they naturally love water. It's in their genes. However, if we don't let them swim, they won't develop a taste for it. You should therefore avoid letting your dog go in the water (sea, lake, river, etc.). Otherwise, if it is with a person in a wheelchair along a towpath bordering a river, it will tend to want to dive in, which is a real **danger** for the disabled person.





### Ball and 'fetch' games with sticks

It is forbidden to play with balls of any size. Dogs, once they get the taste for them, tend to get very excited every time they see a ball (golf, tennis, football). They quickly become unmanageable, which would not be serious in itself for an able-bodied person, but can quickly become disturbing or even dangerous for a less able-bodied person. Imagine if the dog pulled his handler in a wheelchair because it was desperate to catch the ball.



The same goes for sticks. Apart from the over-excitement, it's also particularly **dangerous**. Dogs have been known to impale themselves on sticks as they pass through their jaws or get them stuck across their jaws.



### Stairs/Cars

Until +/- 5 months, do not let the dog go up or (even less) down **steps**. When the assistance dog is with the disabled person, its hips will be hard at work. It is therefore important to protect them, especially as Golden Retrievers can sometimes be fragile in this area (dysplasia). Your dog won't be able to jump into the car until it's old enough. It will then have to be carried into the vehicle. When you put him in the car, give him the right 'car' cue.



To prevent your dog getting **car sick**, you need to get it used to the car **gradually**. Start by putting it in the car with a few treats, for example. The next day, repeat the same scenario, but this time leave the engine running. The next day, go round the block and give him something to eat on the way home, and so on. The dog needs to associate the car with something **pleasant**.

## 10.4. Crate

At night, or when you are unable to take your dog/puppy with you, it will be placed in its crate. However, never leave the dog alone for more than half a day!



The 'Dog Residence', its indoor kennel (metal cage) is designed to encourage positive reinforcement. Your dog should NEVER be put in the cage as a punishment for misbehaviour!

It's important to get your puppy **used to it slowly**: feed it inside, play with it in the crate. Only leave it in there for a few minutes the first time.



It's also a place to put your dog when you're cleaning or if someone who's afraid of dogs comes to the house. In any case, it's important that the dog learns to be in the crate despite our presence in the house.

## 10.5. A dog's place

Puppies and dogs don't belong on the **sofa**, and even less in your **bed**. They sleep on the floor, on a rug or in their cage. They do **not** sleep in the bedroom.



It will be much easier to teach your dog to sleep in the client's room, if necessary, than to unlearn this habit if the dog, for whatever reason, should not sleep in the client's room.

## 10.6. Socialisation

When a puppy arrives in a foster family, no one knows where it will be when it reaches adulthood, or what it will face.

It is therefore important that the dog encounters as **many different situations** as possible during its training. However, we would remind you to wait **3 weeks** before taking your dog on **stressful** outings (city center, shops, cinema, etc.). The first outing of this kind should be **accompanied by an instructor**.



After that, it is essential to repeat these discoveries so that the dog has fully assimilated them. Taking the bus just once is not enough!

Here is a non-exhaustive list of everything your dog needs to see/know. You will also find this table in the form of lists to be completed in your dog's logbook.

Transport	Train	Shops	Clothes	Various other challenges	Escalators
	Bus		Pet shops (feed, etc.)		Lifts
	Tram (optional)		Super markets		Malls
	Car (everywhere)		Butchers, bakers		Horns
Household noises	Vacuum cleaner		Non-Food (Ikea etc.)		Wheel chairs
	Television	Animals	Birds		Motorcycles (noise)
	Radio		Fish		Flea markets
	Iron (clothes)		Ducks		Farmers market
	Kitchen machines		Cats		School exit
	Falling kitchen utensils		Sheep, pigs, cows, chickens (farm) etc.		Walker frame – crutch – walking stick
	Rustling of plastic bags		Horses, ponies, donkeys		Stairs (metal, wood, transparent ...)
	Loud music		Rabbits, guinea-pigs ...		Lattice-work bridges, gantries etc.



If you have the slightest problem with any of these elements (a dog that is frightened or more excited than usual), let us know immediately, even if you have managed to calm the dog down.



Bear in mind that your dog will have to be able to react to all the cues (retrieve, walk on lead, positions, etc.) in **all** the situations mentioned.

## 10.7. Learning to be alone

Nothing is more annoying and miserable than a dog that cries and barks when its owner is away. It's absolutely vital your dog learns to be left alone.

Dogs are pack animals. They love company. They therefore need to **learn gradually**. It's unconscionable to leave a puppy alone all day.



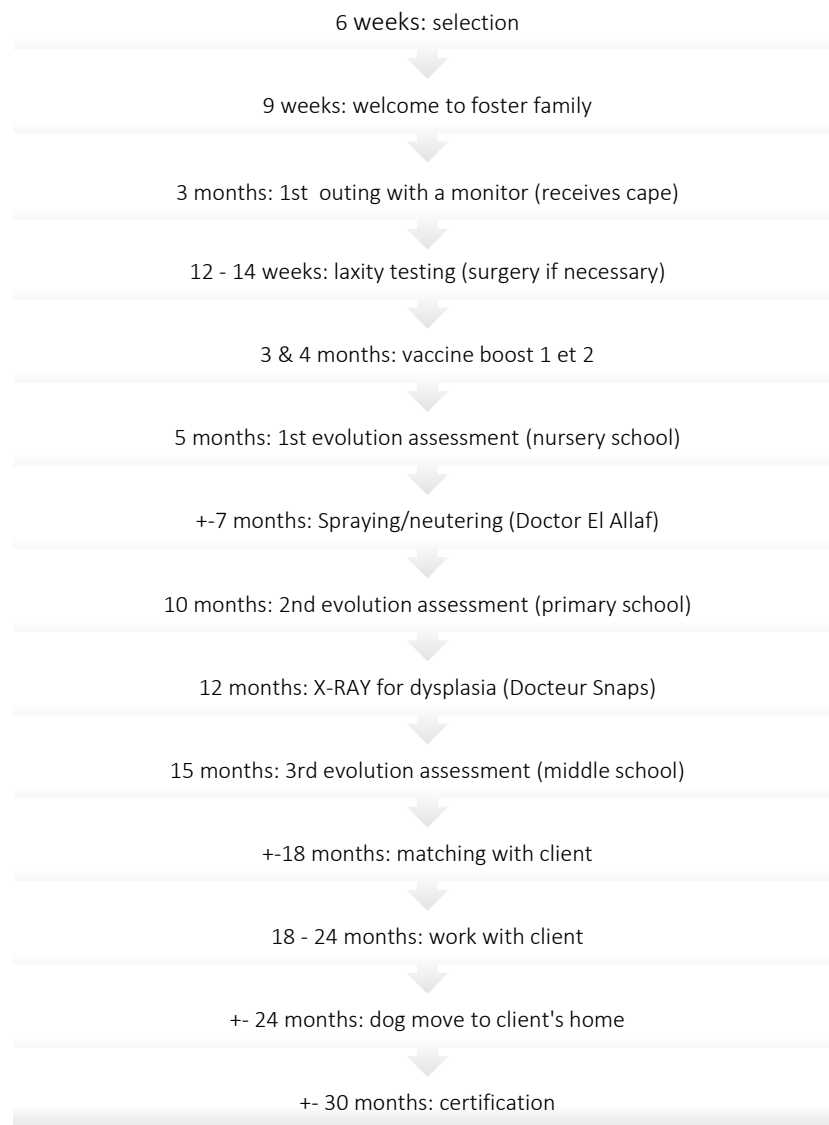
It's important to make **coming** home and **going** out a routine. **Don't make a fuss** about the dog every time you come home or make **long speeches** every time you leave. A **calm, neutral attitude** is the best solution.

As there can be no stressful outings during the first 3 weeks, this will be an **opportunity** for your dog to learn about solitude.

## 10.8. Daily walks

When it's still a puppy, prefer **3 x 10-minute** walks rather than 30 minutes on a lead. Respect your dog's growth and don't over-stimulate it.

## 10.9. The life of your future assistance dog



## 10.10. The transition

Once the 'matching' has been done, i.e. once you know where your dog will go, the transition phase begins.

First of all, the future client will come as regularly as possible to cuddle their future dog. These cuddles will take place at Os'mose or at the place where we teach if we're outside.

During this time, the trainers will gather all the information they need to begin the dog's specialisation. Each person has specific needs depending on their disability, their illness or the project they are planning. From then on, the dog's education will be specially adapted to the dog's future life.

As the weeks go by, the relationship between the future owner and the dog in training will become stronger and stronger. It's time to start the theoretical training for the future client.

Once the relationship has been established and the theory has been digested, the client will begin to give his future dog cues (from the simplest to the most complicated).

Finally, 'alternating custody' begins. The dog will first spend an hour in his new home, then half a day, then a day, then a day and a half, etc. This will be done at everyone's own pace. This will also be an opportunity to fine-tune any last points that might pose a problem.

Once everyone is ready (foster family, client, dog), the home transfer will take place.

Note that the dog, even if it is offered free of charge to the client, will always remain the property of the organisation. This allows us to keep control of the dog and ensure that it is well cared for throughout its life.

## 10.11. Possible reform options

Since the organisation's inception, only 15% of dogs have not been certified (as opposed to 50% in the majority of other organisations).





It's always a sad moment, and we do everything we can to prevent it, but unfortunately it can happen. The reasons may be physical (too much dysplasia) or behavioural (over-stressed dogs, lively, fearful, etc.).

Although all dogs are tested and closely monitored, this does not prevent some of them from not making it to the end of the course.

In such cases, Os'mose asks the foster family if they wish to keep the dog. If they don't, the organisation will look for another home for the dog. The dog will be placed in the name of the person adopting it, whether this is the foster family or another person.

10.12. Appendix G: Cues brochure for foster families

Cues for an assistance dog  
Last updated on 07 July 2023





## Table des matières

<b>1. OS'MOSE.....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>1.1. HISTORY.....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>1.2. TYPES OF DOG.....</b>	<b>7</b>
1.2.1. SERVICE DOGS FOR PEOPLE WITH REDUCED MOBILITY .....	7
1.2.2. ALERT SERVICE DOGS FOR DIABETICS.....	7
1.2.3. RESPONS SERVICE DOGS FOR PEOPLE WITH EPILEPSY.....	8
1.2.4. ASSISTANCE DOGS FOR CHILDREN.....	8
1.2.5. FACILITY DOG.....	8
<b>1.3. CRITERIA FOR OBTAINING AN ASSISTANCE DOG .....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>1.4. WORKING PHILOSOPHY .....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>1.5. BREEDS AND BREEDERS .....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>1.6. WORKING METHOD / SPECIALITY .....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>1.7. SUCCESS RATE.....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>2. HOST FAMILY PROGRAM.....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>2.1. CONDITIONS.....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>2.2. PROCEDURE .....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>2.3. PRIOR TO RECEIVING THE DOG .....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>2.4. TRAINING .....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>2.5. SOCIALIZATION .....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>2.6. HEALTHCARE &amp; FOLLOW-UP.....</b>	<b>14</b>
2.6.1. PARTNERSHIP UVH.....	14
<b>2.7. COSTS + COVERAGE .....</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>3. DAILY WORK SCHEDULE WITH FOSTER FAMILIES.....</b>	<b>16</b>

3.1.	REFERRING INSTRUCTOR.....	16
3.2.	GROUP SESSIONS .....	16
3.3.	INDIVIDUAL SESSIONS .....	16
3.4.	CUES .....	17
3.5.	MEETING THE FUTURE CLIENT .....	17
3.6.	WORKING FOR AND WITH THE CLIENT .....	18
3.7.	ASSESSMENTS.....	19
4.	<b>APPENDICES.....</b>	<b>20</b>
4.1.	APPENDIX A: FOSTER FAMILY COMMITMENTS .....	20
4.2.	APPENDIX B: GDPR.....	21
4.3.	APPENDIX C: AUTHORIZATION FOR PUBLICATION (PHOTO CONSENT) .....	22
4.4.	APPENDIX D: CHARTER FOR FOSTER FAMILIES .....	23
4.5.	APPENDIX E: CONTRACT TO PLACE .....	24
4.6.	APPENDIX F: GUIDE FOR FOSTER FAMILIES .....	26
1.	<b>GENERAL INFORMATION.....</b>	<b>31</b>
1.1.	THE ORGANIZATION.....	31
1.2.	HOW THE ORGANIZATION WORKS .....	31
1.2.1.	COMMITTEE AND STAFF.....	HIBA! A KÖNYVJELZŐ NEM LÉTEZIK.
1.2.2.	OS'MOSE AT A GLANCE .....	HIBA! A KÖNYVJELZŐ NEM LÉTEZIK.
1.3.	VOLUNTEERING .....	32
1.4.	ANY PROBLEMS? .....	32
1.5.	CHARGES.....	32
1.6.	LESSONS.....	33
2.	<b>EMERGENCY PROCEDURE AND EVACUATION PLAN.....</b>	<b>34</b>
3.	<b>ACCESSIBILITY .....</b>	<b>35</b>

<b>3.1. WHAT THE LAW SAYS .....</b>	<b>35</b>
<b>3.2. CAPE AND CARD .....</b>	<b>36</b>
<b>3.3. ADI .....</b>	<b>37</b>
<b><u>4. TERMINOLOGIE .....</u></b>	<b><u>38</u></b>
<b><u>5. DOG CARE .....</u></b>	<b><u>40</u></b>
<b>5.1. WATER &amp; FOOD .....</b>	<b>40</b>
<b>5.2. VETERINARY SURGEON .....</b>	<b>41</b>
<b>5.3. REGULAR CARE .....</b>	<b>42</b>
<b><u>6. SOURCES OF RISK FOR DOGS .....</u></b>	<b><u>45</u></b>
<b>6.1. INGESTION .....</b>	<b>45</b>
6.1.1. CHOCOLATE .....	45
6.1.2. AVOCADOS .....	45
6.1.3. MACADAMIA NUTS .....	45
6.1.4. GRAPES, RAISINS, AND GOOSEBERRIES .....	45
6.1.5. HOUSEHOLD PLANTS .....	45
6.1.6. RAT POISON, SLUG KILLER, ANTI-FREEZE .....	46
<b>6.2. OTHER DANGERS .....</b>	<b>46</b>
6.2.1. HEATSTROKE .....	46
6.2.2. INSECT BITES & STINGS.....	46
6.2.3. LA DILATATION ET LA TORSION D'ESTOMAC.....	46
<b>6.3. IF A PROBLEM ARISES ... ..</b>	<b>47</b>
<b><u>7. L'APPRENTISSAGE DU CHIEN .....</u></b>	<b><u>48</u></b>
<b>7.1. THE LANGUAGE OF DOGS .....</b>	<b>48</b>
7.1.1. SIGNS OF STRESS .....	50

7.2.	HOW DOES A DOG THINK? .....	51
7.3.	EVOLUTION OF BEHAVIOUR .....	52
7.4.	ESSENTIAL THOUGHTS.....	53
7.5.	HOW TO SPEAK TO THE DOG? .....	54
7.6.	THE 4 D RULE: DURATION – DISTANCE – DISTRACTION – DIVERSIFICATION .....	55
7.7.	REWARD .....	55
7.7.1.	PLAY .....	56
7.7.2.	TREATS .....	56
7.7.3.	PETTING .....	57
7.7.4.	VOICE.....	57
7.8.	SANCTION?.....	57
8.	<u>HOW WE WORK .....</u>	<u>59</u>
8.1.	POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT > < RAINBOWS AND UNICORNS.....	59
8.2.	LEARNING THROUGH SPONTANEOUS BEHAVIOUR .....	59
8.3.	CLICKER.....	60
9.	<u>GOOD MANNERS FOR DOGS .....</u>	<u>61</u>
9.1.	THE DOG SHOULD NOT JUMP UP .....	61
9.2.	THE DOG MUST NOT STEAL .....	61
9.3.	THE DOG MUST NOT BEG .....	61
9.4.	THE DOG MUST NEITHER NIP NOR LICK .....	62
9.5.	RESPECT FOR PEOPLE (ADULTS AND CHILDREN) .....	62
9.6.	THE DOG MUST NOT APPROACH OTHERS (DOGS OR PEOPLE) .....	63
10.	<u>DAY TO DAY LIFE (OF A FUTURE ASSISTANCE DOG).....</u>	<u>64</u>
10.1.	HOW TO TIRE A DOG OUT .....	64
10.2.	WORK TIME .....	64

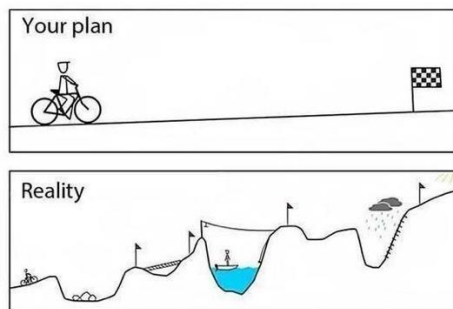
10.3.	PROHIBITIONS .....	65
10.4.	CRATE .....	66
10.5.	A DOG'S PLACE .....	67
10.6.	SOCIALISATION.....	67
10.7.	LEARNING TO BE ALONE.....	69
10.8.	DAILY WALKS .....	69
10.9.	THE LIFE OF YOUR FUTURE ASSISTANCE DOG .....	70
10.10.	THE TRANSITION .....	72
10.11.	POSSIBLE REFORM OPTIONS .....	72
10.12.	APPENDIX G: CUES BROCHURE FOR FOSTER FAMILIES.....	74
1.	<u>PREAMBLE .....</u>	<u>83</u>
2.	<u>TABLE OF CUES .....</u>	<u>85</u>
3.	<u>GOALS OF DURATION – DISTANCE – DISTRACTION - DIVERSIFICATION .....</u>	<u>87</u>
4.	<u>CUES FROM THE SECOND MONTH.....</u>	<u>89</u>
4.1.	OKAY! .....	89
4.2.	WAIT! .....	90
4.3.	BEHIND!.....	90
4.4.	RECALL .....	91
4.5.	INSIDE .....	94
4.6.	DON'T TOUCH.....	94
5.	<u>SPONTANEOUS BEHAVIOR .....</u>	<u>95</u>
5.1.	"BUSY-BUSY!" .....	95
5.2.	FETCHING .....	96
5.3.	WALKING WITH/WITHOUT THE LONG LEASH .....	99



5.3.1.	WALKING WITH THE LEASH .....	99
5.3.2.	WALKING WITHOUT LEASH .....	101
<b>5.4.</b>	<b>FORMAL WALKING (AFTER 4 MONTHS).....</b>	<b>101</b>
5.4.1.	“STOP” POSITION .....	102
<b>5.5.</b>	<b>POSITIONS AND MAINTAINING THEM .....</b>	<b>103</b>
5.5.1.	SIT! .....	104
5.5.2.	LIE.....	104
5.5.3.	STAND UP .....	105
5.5.4.	TO HEEL.....	106
5.5.5.	HOLDING POSITIONS NEXT TO HANDLER .....	106
<b>5.6.</b>	<b>CAR .....</b>	<b>107</b>
<b>5.7.</b>	<b>YOUR PLACE .....</b>	<b>108</b>
<b>5.8.</b>	<b>BARK/QUIET .....</b>	<b>109</b>
<b>5.9.</b>	<b>CALM IN PUBLIC .....</b>	<b>109</b>
<b>5.1.</b>	<b>HOME .....</b>	<b>110</b>
<b><u>6.</u></b>	<b><u>CUES AFTER 4 MONTHS .....</u></b>	<b><u>112</u></b>
6.1.	HOLDING POSITIONS AT A DISTANCE .....	112
6.2.	OUT .....	113
<b><u>7.</u></b>	<b><u>CUES AFTER 7 MONTHS .....</u></b>	<b><u>114</u></b>
7.1.	DOWN.....	114
7.2.	CLIMB UP .....	114
7.3.	Go.....	115
7.4.	SIT BEFORE .....	115
<b><u>8.</u></b>	<b><u>CUES AFTER ONE YEAR .....</u></b>	<b><u>116</u></b>
8.1.	UNDER .....	116

8.2.	ROLL .....	117
8.3.	LAP .....	117
8.4.	TUG .....	119
8.5.	PUSH.....	119
8.1.	COLLAR .....	120
<b>9.</b>	<b>SPECIFIC CUES .....</b>	<b>122</b>
9.1.	UP!.....	122
9.2.	GO TO [...]!.....	123
9.3.	"LIGHT!" .....	124
9.4.	PAW .....	124
9.5.	"SAY HELLO!" & "CHECK!" .....	124

## 1. Preamble



Above all, two essential rules must be respected:

1. **Never** start a new cue without being asked to do so by an instructor (even if you think it's the right time and even if you think you know how to practice it),
2. If you have a **problem** with the progress of a cue, no matter how small, please **speak** directly to an **instructor**. Instructors are the only people who can give you advice. If you have the slightest question or encounter the slightest difficulty, they are the **only people** you should talk to.

When are we sure a cue is acquired?

- the dog reacts to the **first** cue in any context, with the **softest** voice possible and **independently** of the position and proximity of its master (sitting/standing/lying, close or far away, etc.),
- the dog no longer requires a kibble as reward for responding to a cue,
- the dog achieves all the goals fixed for each cue (time, distance and/or distraction).

Always keep in mind that:

- A given **cue** must **ALWAYS** be executed! **3** reasons for non-execution: cue **unknown**, not **executable**, **unclear**. So pay close attention to what you're asking your dog to do (e.g. a 2-month-old puppy can't sit for 3 minutes at a time).
- The cue must be **executed** and **maintained** until the **next** cue or the **release** cue ("all done") is spoken.
- Don't **repeat** the cue **ten** times! The **maximum** is **twice**. Give the dog **time** to do it.
- Always use the **right** cues (the right **vocabulary**): "**sit**" is not "ok, sit down".
- Always use the **same terms** for the same cues. They will be the ones adopted by the **future client** too.



Before giving your dog a cue, make sure you have its **attention** first. There's absolutely no point in giving a cue to a dog who's more interested in what's going on elsewhere than in what you're asking him to do. Saying the dog's **name** is a way of getting its **attention** before giving it a cue (and not to make it come towards the owner). Say the dog's **name** and wait for it to **look** at you. Then ask it to sit, for example. The 'name' is **always** followed by a **cue**.

The more **constant** and **consistent** you are, the better you will teach the dog to **act correctly** and the **quicker** the dog will respond to cues correctly. And never forget that you are training the dog to be able to work alongside a **disabled person** in the future.

On the following pages, you will be shown photos marked "wrong" or "right" (above the photos). Among other things, they show positions taken by the dog and considered to be wrong. If your dog chooses one of these positions, you need to **correct** the wrong one so that it adopts the right position, and you need to do this **every** time your dog shows you a wrong position. It's **essential** not to let anything slip by!



Don't hesitate to regularly consult the "*guide to foster families*" and more particularly chapter 5 on "*training the dog*".



GUIDE D'UN CHIEN EN FAMILLE  
D'ACCUEIL

RÉSUMÉ

Bases à connaître pour  
accueillir un futur chien  
d'assistance en famille  
d'accueil. Guide à consulter  
régulièrement.

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## 2. Table of cues

Here's a table summarising the timing for learning the various new cues. This table should be kept carefully and displayed prominently.

From 2 months		
Okay!	Recall	Wait
Don't touch	Behind	In
Spontaneous behaviors		
Bark/silence	Place	Positions (& keep them)
Stop position	Busy busy	Calm in public
Walk on long leash	Voiture	Bring back objects
home	Natural following	
After 4 month	Après 7 month	Après 1 an
Stay in position	Sit in front	Tug
	Va	Knees
Oust	Go up	Under
Formal walk	Go down	Push
		Roll
		Collar


which is a waste of time. What's more, it's more difficult to break a bad habit and establish a new one than to introduce the right behaviour from the start.

If you notice that you need to start learning a new cue, talk to an instructor. However, you should be aware that this table represents a working basis that can be modified according to the development of each dog/handler pair..

As a reminder: NEVER start learning a cue on your own, even if you think the time is right and/or you think you know how to teach it. If you start off on the wrong foot, you'll have to start all over again,



### 3. Goals of duration – distance – distraction- diversification

 The "**4 D's rule**": we invite you to review this in your "**foster family guide**". This rule will be used constantly throughout your dog's training.

The table below gives a few examples (not an exhaustive list) of the level and addition of difficulties relating to the development of your dogs. This is what the evolution of a cue refers to when "*weak - medium - strong distractions*" are mentioned.

Weak	Medium	Strong
Dogs more than 2m ahead	Another dog passes less than 1m in front and behind	Dogs passing close by
People pass more than 2 metres ahead	People pass less than 1 metre ahead and behind	Someone pats the dog from in front or from behind without warning
Someone claps next to the dog	Someone claps at a distance	Someone calls the dog
Someone jumps up and down next to the dog	Someone jumps up and down at a distance	The dog is surrounded by other dogs
Someone crouches down next to the dog	Someone crouches at a distance	Someone throws a toy next to the dog
A ball is thrown at 5 metres from the dog	A ball is thrown 1 metre from the dog	A ball is thrown right next to the dog
There are other animals in the distance (dogs, ducks, horses ...)	The dog keeps 2 m away from other animals	The dog is close to other animals
Going into a shop at off-peak times	Going to small local markets	Going to the shops at peak times, to the fair, to a crowded street market, to major events ...
	Keeping your back to your dog when leaving it	Going to a school exit at 'school's out'
	Food is placed where the dog is about to walk or close by	Someone offers the dog food

			Within sight		Hidden	
	Age	Distance	Duration	Distraction	Duration	Distraction
Wait	4 months	1 m	1 min	weak		
	8 months	5 m	3 min	medium	1 min	weak
	12 months	5 m	5 min	medium	2 min	medium
	18 months	10 m	8 min	strong	2 min	strong
Maintain position at side	4 months					
	8 months		3 min	strong		
	12 months		5 min	strong		
	18 month		10 min	strong		
Maintain position at a distance	4 months					
	8 months	5 m	2 min	weak	30 sec	weak
	12 months	5 m	3 min	medium	1 min	medium
	18 months	5 m	5 min	strong	3 min	strong
"Wait" Car	4 months					
	8 months	30 cm	1 min	weak		
	12 months	1 m	2 min	strong	1 min	weak
	18 months	5 m	5 min	strong	5 min	medium
Sit	4 months					
	8 months	5 m	5 min	medium	1 min	weak
	12 months	5 m	8 min	strong	2 min	medium
	18 months	10 m	15 min	strong	5 min	Strong



## 4. Cues from the second month

### 4.1. Okay!

This cue is the cue **most used** on a daily basis (e.g. after a reminder, to leave one's place or a position, to eat or even announce free walking, etc.) and therefore the **most important** of all the dog's vocabulary. "Okay!" is the **liberating cue**. It always signals the **end of an exercise** and the break from the previous cue.

Examples:

- put the dog's bowl down and say "don't touch", then say "okay!" when the dog can eat.
- Ask the dog to "sit" or "lie down". It may then only leave this position when asked to do so by another cue or the word "okay!". If the dog changes position or leaves, immediately put the dog back in position before releasing it with "okay!".
- In recall training, the word "okay!" is also very important. When the dog returns, reward it well, then say "okay!" so that it can go back. If it leaves before the "okay!" cue, call it back before releasing it.



The dog must have **understood** the meaning of these words by the time he's **4 months** old. Otherwise, the whole basis of his training needs to be reviewed. This seemingly innocuous term is of the **utmost** importance.



Please note that "okay!" NEVER means pulling on the leash or "exploding" with excitement. So, if you want to let your dog go, put him to heel and release the leash, keeping him in this position for a few seconds (or ask him to lie down, for example). Then say "okay". The aim is to prevent your dog from associating the click of the leash with "okay!" and a quick start.



Be careful never to pronounce the cue "okay!" while simultaneously giving a treat or petting, so that your dog doesn't associate the treat or petting with a signal to end the exercise, break the cue or let go. Otherwise, the dog will quickly make the "reward = okay!" connection and will automatically get up once the reward has been received.

*C'est Fini.*

The cue is **acquired** once the dog reacts to the cue **WITHOUT** getting excited!

## 4.2. Wait!

"Wait!" tells the dog not to go beyond a certain limit: crate door, house door, car door (before going outside), etc.



In a domestic space, the dog can do whatever it likes: stand, lie down, sit, sniff, walk. Of course, he certainly can't eat or break anything.

This cue is also used to let the dog out of its crate (calmly, without **rushing or jostling**). When you open the crate door, say the **dog's name** followed by the cue "wait!". Then release the "wait" cue by giving the dog another cue (usually "come" or "heel") or by using the release cue etc...

**Prohibition:** it is forbidden to give a **position** to the dog before asking the cue "wait". It's not "X, sit- wait", but "X, wait". As long as he doesn't exceed the limit, the dog can "**do what he wants**".

For the car: see point 5.3

## 4.3. Behind!



"Behind" commands the dog to get behind you to cross a narrow passage, a door, ... with or without leash, inside or out (narrow passage on a sidewalk for example).

**Why?**

- First and foremost, it's a question of respect. The dog can't rush to get in front of you, let alone jostle you to get there first.
- It's also a question of safety. Imagine a dog rushing every time a door opens. He could knock his master over. What's more, there may be a danger to the dog if, for example, the front door opens onto a main road.
- What's more, for a person in a wheelchair, it's generally easier to get the dog behind the door..

You need to apply this cue **100 times on 100 narrow passages**. If you do it correctly, at around **10** months (or even earlier), the dog will do it automatically without even asking, but you must be **uncompromising**!

The cue is **acquired** when the dog **spontaneously** passes behind you when it sees a **narrow** passage **without** you having to ask.



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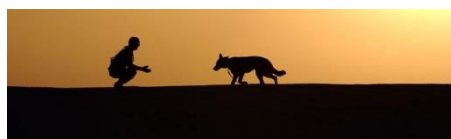
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#### 4.4. Recall



The "here!" cue is used to get the dog to come back to us, whether it's running free, retrieving an object or when it's overtaking, moving too far away or hanging back on the leash.

Recall is practised without you even knowing it, from the moment you call the dog by name to give it food, for example. The dog will then associate its name with a reward.



Instead of just saying the dog's name, add an **enthusiastic** "here!" During training, when it's back at our contact, always **reward** your dog (voice AND big cuddles AND food or play) BEFORE reattaching, if necessary. After that, voice will suffice.



Once the dog has come back to you, if you decide it can go back, you must say "okay!" The dog cannot take the initiative to leave without your agreement! The dog will only leave you when you give it permission to do so!

### Some important rules:



Change walks regularly.



Walk silently and turn around or hide to get the dog used to paying attention to you.



When you go for a walk, don't just call the dog once when you want to reattach it. Otherwise, your dog will associate the call with a signal that it's free to go and won't come back again. Call the dog regularly (without overdoing it) and reward it each time, so that it assimilates the fact that returning to the master is very positive. Then release it with "okay!".



Be sure to use the word "here". Often, the reflex is to say only the dog's name. However, the dog's name serves to attract the dog's attention and should always be followed by a cue (including at home), in this case "Fido, here!"



To learn recall, you need to be in the lowest possible body position. So get down on your knees. The best thing is to tap your thighs and make high-pitched sounds. The dog will be quickly attracted.



If the dog is busy doing something that entertains it (e.g. playing with another dog), don't do your test at this time. The dog may not respond, and you may become irritated. Wait until it has finished playing or go up to it without saying anything and put your hand on its collar to retrieve it.



Even once your dog has **learned** the recall cue, you should **NEVER**:

- **Scold** a dog that **returns** to the owner, even if it's been away for a long time because it ran away or didn't hear you. You should always praise it when it comes back to you. Otherwise, the only thing the dog will understand is: "I'm **coming back** to my master. I'm being **punished**. So, I'm **not** coming back!
- **Running towards** a dog. If you run towards your dog, you start a game of "**catch me if you can**". In this game, your dog is much too fast for you.
- **Catching** a dog on the fly. When your dog **comes back close to you**, if it **overshoots, carried away by its momentum**, let it overtake you. There's a good chance your dog will turn around right behind you (if you encourage it) and come back close to you. If you try to catch it, you **risk hurting** it. If you do, it will associate coming back to you with **pain**, and **won't come back**.

The cue is **acquired** when we ask the dog "**here!**" and it comes **straight back to us, regardless of the distractions** around it.

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## 4.5. Inside

"Inside" is the cue for the dog to enter the cage.



**REMINDER:** the crate must be a place where the dog feels **comfortable**. **NEVER** put the dog in the crate as a **punishment** for misbehavior! see Point 7.5 "Cage" of your **"Guide for foster families"**.

When the dog is in the crate, you don't disturb it, and you certainly don't let children enter the crate when the dog is inside.

The cue is **acquired** when, while standing **several metres away**, you say **"inside"** to the dog once and it **goes straight there**.

## 4.6. Don't touch



**"Don't touch!"** forbids the dog to **pick up** something in its **mouth**: pick up an **object**, pick up and/or **eat** something on the **ground**, or **start eating** from its bowl.

Let's take the example of the **bowl** again: when you give your dog the bowl, say **"don't touch"**. Wait a few seconds, then say **"okay!"**.



This cue is **not applicable** when the dog wants to **smell** another **person or dog** you pass. If necessary, say the dog's name to get its attention, followed by the cue **"here"**.



Be careful not to overuse this cue at the risk of the dog not wanting to take or pick up anything in its mouth.

The cue is **acquired** when you say the cue **once softly** and the dog **does not touch** the object of its desire. Eventually, however, the aim is for the dog not to take anything in its mouth without authorization (except when an object falls to the ground directly from the owner's hands).

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## 5. Spontaneous behavior

### 5.1. "Busy-busy!"

"Busy-busy" is the cue to encourage dogs to **relieve** themselves, which they should be able to do **with or without** a leash and on **all types of surfaces**.

Puppies relieve themselves after **sleeping, playing and eating**. Take your puppy outside regularly and systematically at these **key times**.



As soon as the pup gets into position to relieve itself, say "[name]- **busy-busy**" and then reward with "**busy-busy, good boy/girl**". If the puppy gets into position **in the house, say "no" and take it outside**. Wait for the puppy to do its business and then praise it.

Sometimes, the dog is so excited that it squats in the middle of the game. Stop it and take it out to relieve itself.

Eventually, your dog should be able to relieve itself **anywhere on the cue**.

## 5.2. Fetching



This cue is one of the **most widely used by service dogs**. The fetch ranges from telephones and glasses to keys, water bottles and soda cans.

The retriever is a waterfowl dog, said to have a soft bite. When a puppy arrives, it has an **innate** rapport with objects. You need to take advantage of this opportunity and encourage it. On the other hand, it often tends to leave with the objects it picks up rather than bring them to handler.

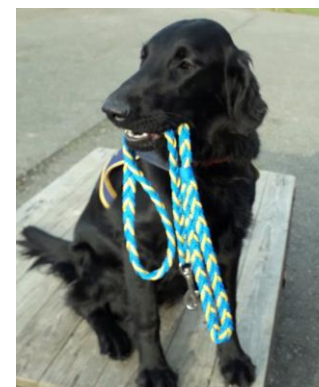
You therefore need to play with a variety of objects, especially metal ones (keys, spoons, etc.), and give your dog the **pleasure** of coming to master with an **object** in its mouth.



Reminder: never play with a **ball** or a **stick**! See "Prohibitions"- "Playing with balls and sticks" in your "Guide for host families."

During the **first two months** or so after the dog's arrival, **no object fetching cue** will be given! Just **play**, swap objects, take one back and give/throw another. The primary aim at this stage is to give the dog the pleasure of coming back to you with something in its mouth. If the dog doesn't come straight back with the object in its mouth, you can use the word "here" to call the dog back. Above all, praise and play with your dog (and the object in its mouth) when the dog is next to you.

Wait until the dog is completely in contact with you before grasping the object in your mouth (don't reach for the dog when it comes to you).



At first, you'll throw a toy (not too far away), sometimes a small spoon, for example. When the dog brings the toy back, congratulate it while leaving the object in its mouth. If you take it back too quickly, your dog will feel frustrated and may not bring it back the next time. After a few weeks, you'll simply drop the object.

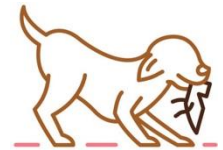


More importantly, you need to teach the dog to **keep the object in its mouth for a long time**. The disabled person may find it difficult to pick up the object quickly. If the dog drops the object too quickly, the goal is not achieved.



You don't have to throw the object across the room! Try to keep the dog about **two metres** away from you. When the dog has picked something up, encourage him to come towards you by clapping your hands and making little high-pitched sounds. When the dog is close to you, play with the object in its mouth before retrieving it and sending it something else.

If the dog takes something it's not normally allowed to take. Above all, **don't get angry**, or the dog may no longer enjoy fetching. Instead, call the dog back cheerfully and quickly exchange the object in its mouth for a toy.




**Case in point:** a dog had a new pair of furry slippers in his mouth, which he had already **ruined**. On seeing this, the foster family got **very angry** with the dog. The hypersensitive dog took two months to accept the relationship to fetching objects again.



Golden rules:

-  Never leave **valuables** lying around that the dog could damage.
-  Never give **treats** as a reward for retrieving an object. The dog may drop the object too quickly, just to take the treat.

After at least two months of play, here's the sequence that should be learned:

-  **"Take!"**: give your dog the cue to **fetch** or **pick up** an object. Be careful, the cue **"take"** does not include **returning**. Name daily objects: take your leash – the **phone** – your **bowl** – (not before 6 months) – the **clicker** (???) – the **keys**. At the end of his training, the dog will be able to differentiate between these objects.
-  **"Here!"**: as soon as the dog has grasped the object, you must encourage it to return to you "[name] – Here!"
-  **"Give"**: tell your dog to **release the object from its mouth into your hand**. Your dog must **keep** the object in its mouth **until** you say the cue to "give!" Be careful, you must first **grasp** the object in its mouth and **only then** speak the "give" cue.

For a few more weeks, make sure you always **exchange** objects. When the dog gives you something, throw him another object in exchange, which you immediately retrieve or leave for your dog to play with.

The dog should **raise his head** to present the object to you, and not **chew** what's in its mouth.

Around **7 months**, you ask the dog to "**sit**" before giving. Around **13 months**, you'll ask the dog to get up on its "**knees**" with the object in its mouth.



If the dog doesn't let go, put a **hand on its collar**, don't pull. If necessary, gently open its mouth.

The **cue is acquired** when the dog takes all the objects in its mouth, sits (in front or to heel) or kneels up (paws on your lap) and keeps the object in its mouth until you say "give".



If you drop an object in front of your dog, it must pick the object up **spontaneously**. On the other hand, if an object is already on the ground or has been dropped by another person, your dog can only pick it up **at your request**.

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### 5.3. Walking with/without the long leash

#### 5.3.1. Walking with the leash

Why is walking on a lead a **key part** of training?

The person who will receive the dog you are training will probably be **very weak physically**. It could also be a child with very little strength. That's why, if the dog **pulls**, it runs the risk of endangering its owner (causing him to fall, for example).





The aim is for the dog to **follow** its owner in **all circumstances**, despite the strongest **distractions**, without needing a verbal cue (and without **pulling** on the lead if it is tied up).

Good **leash walking** is the most **important** thing to learn, but also the most **difficult** to work on. It will only be worked on with **positive reinforcement** and mainly with **clicker** training. It is essential to **follow the instructors' advice** carefully.

Walking on a lead should be practised **daily** and in as **many different circumstances** as possible (town center, countryside, shops, markets, etc.). Remember: don't take your dog out in **stressful** places for the first 3 weeks.

Before working with the clicker (at around 4-5 months), we're going to use natural tracking: the fact that a dog naturally follows a human at an early age.

**For 3 weeks**, you'll use the lead rope for "easy" outings (only in the woods, at the Os'mose center and around your home). Here are the reactions you should expect in different situations:

-  The dog is at the end of the lead (and **pulling**): You stop. When the dog stops pulling, you congratulate it "**yesss!**" from a distance.
-  The dog is next to you (and looking away): you give it a **kibble** (without saying anything).
-  The dog is near you AND looking at you = **double reward**: treat + yessssss (in a cheerful tone).
-  If you have to go over an obstacle or a narrow/difficult passage, call the dog, keep it close to you (by giving it/leading it with kibble) and if necessary, put it behind you. When the passage is cleared, use the "okay!" cue so that the dog can be free again.

It is necessary to **reward abundantly at the beginning** of learning. This is the cue with which you should be the least stingy with rewards.

**From 3 months onwards**, the dog's walking side will be defined. In principle, this will be the left side, but if we notice that this is causing problems, the dog could be placed on the right.

From then on, you'll be able to go anywhere with your puppy, as long as you've done the first stressful outing (shops, town center, etc.) with an instructor. In this case, you'll need to shorten the lead a little. Pulling is still not permitted. The work done previously will continue but you will only reward on the chosen side (most often the left).

**Around 4-5 months**, we will take advantage of what we have learnt to work on walking with the clicker. This tool will be taught to you by the instructors. The dog will then learn to **walk strictly** (very close to its master and very attentive) or freely (which allows it to move away, smell, do its business, etc.)

### 5.3.2. Walking without leash

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In the same way as walking on a lead, you can reward your puppy when it follows you freely (natural following). This can be inside the house or out for a walk.

From the outset, when you go out, you should **alternate** times **with and without the lead**. When the puppy is older, we'll practise formal off-leash walking, where the dog follows its partner's every move.

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### 5.4. Formal walking (after 4 months)

Following on from what has already been learnt spontaneously on the lead, we will reinforce the dog's position close to you, as well as its gaze. It is at this point (after 4 months) that the use of the clicker will begin- **only with an instructor**.

The dog will learn to walk strictly (very close to the owner and very attentive to him) or freely (which allows the dog to move away, smell, relieve itself, etc.) starting with clicker training.

To start walking on a '**strict**' lead, you should always put the dog to **heel**.



When the dog is in "free walk" mode, it is **never** allowed to pull on the lead!

Achieving this objective means that when you start, the dog starts with you; when you turn or make a U-turn, it does the same and when you stop, it also **stops** and spontaneously puts itself in a **position** (sitting or lying down).

The dog must be attentive to you. However, it is not essential (at the end of training) for the dog to look at you all the time.

#### 5.4.1. "Stop" position

When you move and then **stop** without saying anything, the dog should **spontaneously move into a position next to you**, either lying down or sitting.

So every time you stop, you wait to see your dog's reaction, and as soon as it sits or lies down (next to you), you reward it immediately. With repetition, the dog will settle into a position more and more quickly. You reward with a kibble without saying anything to the dog.

Be careful, as you haven't asked/are not waiting for a fixed position, the dog may change position if you remain static for a long time. For example, you stop, the dog sits down, and you reward it. A few moments later, it lies down. There's nothing to worry about, the dog can behave thus and there's no need to put it back in the sitting position. However, it must not stand up.

If at first the dog does not respond very well, it can still be rewarded. Over several weeks, it will be necessary to refine the positions. Here's what will and won't be accepted as the dog grows up:

WRONG			



## 5.5. Positions and maintaining them



Generally, pay attention to the intonation of your voice when you ask for or praise the performance and maintenance of a static position. Also pay attention to the intensity of the caress.

#### 5.5.1. Sit!

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"Sit!" cues your dog to sit just where it is now.

From the outset, take advantage of every time your dog sits on its own to reward it. As soon as you see the dog sit, give it a kibble and say "sit" in a soft, comforting voice. Don't let your voice get too high so as not to excite the dog, as it might get up again. Be careful to praise your dog after giving it kibble, as this might otherwise cause it to get up. After 2 or 3 weeks, you should be able to get the dog to sit on cue.



**Never press down on a dog's rump** to make it sit! Firstly, you could hurt it (unintentionally). Secondly, if the dog gets into the habit of sitting when you touch its hindquarters, the client will no longer be able to lean on the dog to get up after a fall or for a transfer (from chair to wheelchair), at the risk of ending up on the floor.

#### Timing:

- 2 months: reward spontaneous sitting.
- 3 months: we start to ask for the sitting position as a cue. From then on, we work on maintaining position.
- 4 months: the kibbles are removed, and the only reward is by voice and/or caress.



#### 5.5.2. Lie

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Just like sitting, as soon as your dog arrives home, take advantage of every time it lies down to reward it. Give it a kibble and say "lie down" in a gentle but jovial tone.



**Prohibition:** it is strictly forbidden to hold the dog down by force. Holding the position must be worked on progressively and positively like everything else.

As you learn, alternate between the following methods:



-  Ask the dog to lie down from a standing position (this is more natural for the dog). The dog then "tilts" backwards.
-  If you ask your dog to lie down from a sitting position, do so on a slippery floor. The dog will then let its hindquarters slide backwards.
-  If you're outside, use a mat in wet weather: dogs don't like lying on damp ground.

Eventually, the dog should lie down on any floor and from any position (sitting or standing).

#### Timing:

- 2 months: reward spontaneous lying down.
- 4 months: you start to use the cue to lie down. From then on, we work on holding the position. The first formal cues will only be done with the instructor.
- 6 months: the kibbles are removed, and the only reward is by voice and/or caress.

The dog will lie **parallel** to the leg, without **obstructing the trajectory** and in the **direction** of motion. See photos in "Maintain positions"

#### 5.5.3. Stand up

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The "**stand up**" cue tells the dog to **stand** on its **4** legs and **stay** put.



**Praise** the dog for "**good stand up**" when you **attach the cape** to the dog or when you **brush** it.

#### Timing:

- 2 months: reward spontaneous standing up.
- 5 months: we begin using the "stand up" cue, after which we work on holding the position.
- 7 months: the kibbles are removed, and the only reward is by voice and/or caress.

This cue is also particularly useful for customers who need to be able to lean on their dog to get up or when transferring from a chair to a car, for example.

#### 5.5.4. To heel

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"To heel": a **static** position where the dog **sits** next to the handler. The dog sits **as close as possible** to the **leg** or **chair** in the **direction of travel**.



##### Timing:

- 4 months: reward spontaneous to heel.
- 5 months: we begin using the "to heel" cue, after which we work on holding the position.
- 6 months: the kibbles are removed, and the only reward is by voice and/or caress.

#### 5.5.5. Holding positions next to handler

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As soon as you formally use the words "sit" or "down" as cues, you will begin to train your dog to **hold the position** next to you. This means that the dog can only leave the requested position (sit or down) if:

-  You give another cue,
-  You release with "okay!".

To start, simply say the position, for example "sit", wait 1 second before saying "okay! Then wait 2 then 3 then 50 seconds before releasing the cue. If the dog gets up (or lies down) on its own initiative, put it back in the initial position (in our example, sitting) before saying "okay!" or putting it in another position when you decide.

As the weeks go by, you'll increase the amount of time the dog stays in the same position, but you'll also increase the number of distractions.



Remember to refer to the table in the chapter. "D for Distractions" to see how you can develop your dog's learning of positions.

As a reminder, the requirements are not the same in every context. If you can hold the position for 10 seconds at home, it might be 7 seconds at the Omose center, 5 outside and 3 on Saturday mornings at lessons. The aim is for the dog to stay in position for as long as possible, regardless of distractions.



When you have an assistance dog, whether trained or in training, many people want to **pet** it. In order not to prohibit all contact and to keep the dog under control, when someone asks you to pet it, you ask the dog to assume and **maintain a position** (sitting or lying down) and let the person stroke it. In this way, the dog will be polite, the people in front of him will be happy to pet him and **dialogue** will be made possible. The petting will be stopped **immediately** if the dog gets up or gets excited.

## 5.6. Car

"Car!" is the cue which enables a dog to get into a vehicle.



Dogs are not allowed to jump into the car **on their own** until they are **5 months** old. They must be carried to avoid the risk of **dysplasia**. During its first month, the puppy **will go to the passenger's heel** and then into the **luggage compartment at around 3-4 months**, when it is sufficiently used to the car.

This means that every time you carry your dog into the car (it doesn't matter whether it's in the front, boot or back seats), you say "car" in a **playful/encouraging tone** whenever you put the dog in.

When you open the door to let him out, you say "wait" so that he doesn't cross the limit.

Eventually, the dog should be able to get into **any part of the car**: the passenger footwell, the boot and even the back seat. All adapted cars are **different**. So think about putting the dog **everywhere** and in **different cars** as much as possible.

If your dog is reluctant to get into a car, let us know **immediately**.

The cue will be formalised after 5 months.



## 5.7. Your place



"Your place" tells the dog to get on **its mat**, in its **basket** or **any other place that has been determined** as its place and to **stay** there until the cue "okay!", or any other cue, is given (e.g. "here").

This cue can be used both **indoors and outdoors**. Examples: the dog stays in its basket while you clean or in a fitting room during a shopping session.







Unlike 'wait', 'your place' designates a **well-defined location**. However, as with "wait", **no position** is given to the dog. It can sit, stand, lie down, lie on its back and change as it pleases, but it must **remain** in the place indicated.

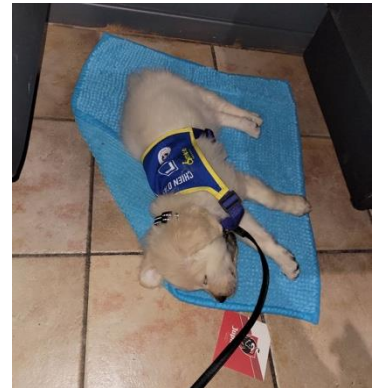
To help your dog learn, reward it every time it's on its mat at home. Reward it with a kibble and a cuddle, using the word "your place" in the same way as for positions.

If you see that your puppy is going to fall asleep or has just fallen asleep, place it on the mat or invite it to do so, rewarding it when it is on the mat. Try not to put the mat too far away from you at first. You can then move it back as your puppy grows.

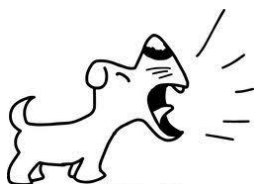
When you start the formal cue at around 5 months, you can tell your dog "your place" and then say "okay!" or "come" so that it can leave its place.

To progress with this cue, you will need, as always, to increase:

-  The distance
-  The duration
-  The distraction
-  The diversification




## 5.8. Bark/quiet



"Bark!" tells the dog to **bark** on cue.

This cue is a **warning** signal. If there's a problem at home (stuck in the garden, fallen off the chair, etc.), asking the dog to bark will tell a family member or neighbour that there's a problem.

Puppies are more likely to bark when they're excited. Take the opportunity to reward them.

 Do not reward if the dog barks in a crate or barks at other dogs or cats (among others).



As soon as your dog learns the "bark!" cue, it should immediately learn the "quiet!" cue, which tells it to be **silent**.

Nothing is more unpleasant than a constantly barking dog. If this is the case with your dog, please speak to an instructor **immediately**.



Having 'silent' dogs is a **guarantee of quality**. In particular, it allows us access to all public places. When we talk to representatives of shops, hospitals, etc., we stress that the dogs will **not be a nuisance** and that if they **bark**, it means that the person at the end of the lead is in **danger**. That's why it's imperative to otherwise remain **silent**.

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## 5.9. Calm in public

From 3 months, the aim will be to take your dog to as many places as possible (see the socialisation table in the general guide).

Once you've settled down in a place (café, restaurant, cinema, etc.), let your dog assume the position it wants and reward it accordingly.

Try to get your dog as close to you and your chair as possible. If it goes under the table, that's fine. If it stays next to you/the chair, that's fine too. Reward your dog when it's quiet. When your dog is small, it's useful to **reward it several times** so that it understands that it's good to stay calm for a long time.



## 5.1. Home



To do this, say "home" to the dog every time you come home together. Eventually, when you say "home" from a distance, the dog will understand and head towards its home.

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## 6. Cues after 4 months

### 6.1. Holding positions at a distance

On the same principle as maintaining positions next to you, to **keep the dog in a position**, there's no need to say "stay". Simply **leave without saying anything** by putting down the lead if the dog is tied up, i.e. from a distance it's easier to sit or lie down.

Once your dog has learned to hold the position next to you, you can start learning from a distance. Ask your dog for a position, then move to its head, reward it and return to your initial position. Then move to the head and take a step back. Then go directly one step further without passing by the dog's head. Then go over or around the dog ...

Remember to consult the distraction chart again.

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## 6.2. Out

"Out!" warns the dog to **move out of the way**.

It is used either on the lead when we **turn** to the dog's side or when it comes **into our path**, or when it is in the **passageway** at home. In the latter case, make the dog move **systematically** by saying "Out!". This will prevent your dog from becoming an obstacle.



Be careful, because when you're standing, your first instinct is to step over or around the dog. But this is **not possible in a wheelchair!**

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## 7. Cues after 7 months

### 7.1. Down

The "down!" cue is used to get the dog down from an **obstacle**, from its **knees** or from the **car**.



### 7.2. Climb up

The "climb up!" cue requires the dog to **climb onto** an obstacle (veterinary scale but also bench, coffee table, etc.).

Example: to stand on a low table (with a non-slip mat on top) so that the dog can be at the same height as you to brush it more easily.



### 7.3. Go

"Go!" asks the dog to cross a narrow passage, a door or to enter a lift **before its partner (with or without a lead, indoors or outdoors)** and to wait on the other side of the "boundary" crossed.



Your dog can only pass in front of you when you **permit it with a cue!** If you haven't asked it to, it must **stay behind!** This is also why the "go" cue should **only be introduced after a year**, when the dog is familiar with the "behind" cue: it should be performed perfectly and spontaneously, with or without a lead.

### 7.4. Sit before

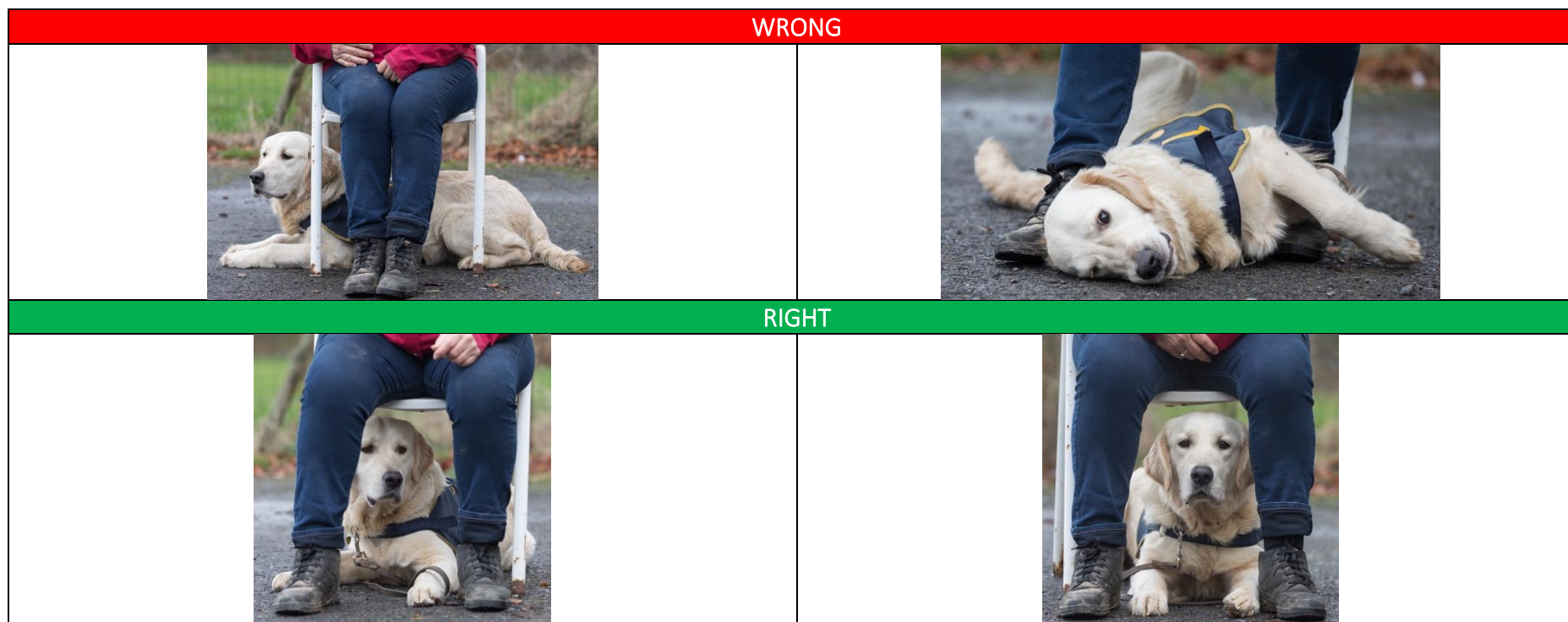
Orders the dog to sit directly in front of you, in line with its master.

## 8. Cues after one year

### 8.1. Under

This cue teaches the dog to **crawl under** a table, chair or piece of furniture and assume the **lying down** position. At first, to teach your dog, you should say "under" (showing where the dog should go) and then "down". Then it will become automatic.

Observe the **position** the dog must adopt when you ask it to go "under", and more particularly under a chair. Now imagine the dog is under a wheelchair. It will not be able to adopt the "wrong" positions.



## 8.2. Roll

"Roll!" is the cue used to ask the dog to **roll onto its back** once it is **lying down** so that its **belly** can be brushed and checked for **ticks or knots**.



Be careful not to **force** the dog into the "roll" position. When they are young, this movement can be painful, which is why this cue should not be worked on before the dog is **a year old**.



You should also take care to ensure that the type of **ground is suitable** when you plan to give this cue. You wouldn't ask the dog to "roll" in gravel!

On the other hand, if the dog **spontaneously** lands on its back, take the opportunity to congratulate it by stroking it and saying "roll! good boy/girl!"

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## 8.3. Lap

"Lap!" asks the dog to place its **front paws** on your **knees** for a **cuddle** or when **retrieving** an object. The dog initially stands **next to its master** and not facing him when it places its **forelegs flat** on both thighs.



Pay attention to the **position** of the dog's **paws**, as there is a risk of the dog **hurting or even injuring** the person on whose knees it does "lap!"

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## 8.4. Tug

"Tug!" is the cue used to

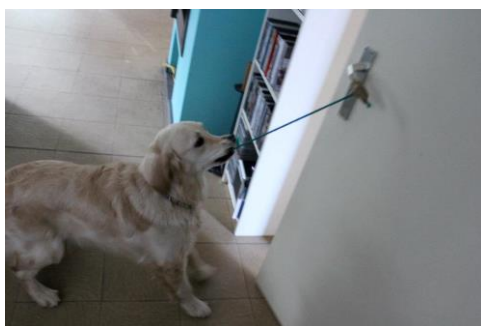
- Open the door "[name] – tug the door!". This could be an entrance door, fridge door, wardrobe door or drawer.
- Undress (jacket, hat, trousers, etc.).
- Various situations such as moving a load of washing or bringing back the wheelchair (specific cue).



Learning begins by **playing** with the dog in an interactive game. The dog will not really be able to learn the "tug" cue itself until it is **1 year old**. This action puts a lot of strain on the dog's hips. It is advisable to wait until the x-rays relating to **dysplasia** have been carried out and are conclusive.


 As soon as you **play** with your dog (even at a **very young** age), it is already **learning** to tug. That's why it's vital that your dog pulls on the **tug straight** and never **shakes** its head. If this happens, **stop** the game straight away! If the dog starts pulling the **wrong** way when opening a door or undressing, the cue will not be performed correctly. What's more, it could **hurt** the disabled person.

For the cue to be **acquired**, you need to be able to ask "tug" (the door, for example) from **2 metres** away and for the dog to pull sufficiently firmly (and straight) to **open the door completely** so that a wheelchair can pass through.



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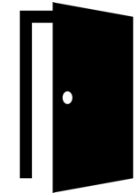
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## 8.5. Push

"Push!" cues the dog to **close** doors and drawers with its **muzzle**. This cue is learnt with **clicker training** during courses at the Os'mose center.



The dog must **not** use its **paw** to avoid damaging the door. Only its muzzle may come into contact with the surface to be pushed.



Make sure the dog **follows through with the action**: closing a door is not just pushing against it! If it pushes to open the door, make sure that the dog opens it wide enough for a wheelchair to get through.

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## 8.1. Collar



The "collar!" cue tells the dog to move its head forward to **put on the collar/ cape** or backward to take it off.

The cue is **acquired**: when you hold the collar or cape in your hand and the dog "**dips**" its **head** into it (or **withdraws** it) while your hand has **not moved**.



Unlike the harness worn by guide dogs, **the cape is not a reference for work**. The dog must be able to respond to cues, whether it is wearing its cape or not. Once the dog is used to the cape, you should no longer put it on in the house when you are training.

*Collar*





For the first few months, you simply put the collar on as you would for a family dog, without saying anything to the dog. From the age of 1, you can start to teach the dog to cue. You show the collar and ask the dog to put its head inside. If necessary, you can lure it with a kibble for a few passes. To remove the collar, the exercise is simpler and quicker to understand: take the collar in your hand, pull it slightly up to the ears (until it stops slightly) and then hold still. The dog will quickly withdraw its head so as not to be disturbed by the collar.

*Cape*

During the first 3 weeks, put the cape on your dog regularly at home so that your dog gets used to wearing it. Put it on when you're playing with it, when it's eating or when it's playing on its own. Don't put it on for too long at first, as some dogs like it less than others. So take it easy.



Like the cape, remember to **take the collar off** when you get home, both for your dog's **comfort** and to avoid **damaging** its coat. This way, you'll have more opportunities to **review** the "collar!" cue.



## NOTES

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## 9. Specific cues

Here are a few cues that could be learned depending on the client's needs, so only once the dog has been presented and it has been determined who it will be working with.

### 9.1. Up!

This cue asks the dog to put **both front paws** on a table, counter, wall or door to fetch an object from a height, pay at the cash register, push a switch ("dog's name" - "UP" - "Light"), open a door, ...

Let's take the example of **payment** at a counter. This requires the **linking** of several cues:

- 🐾 "Take!" (the purse or wallet)
- 🐾 "Up!" (paws on the counter)
- 🐾 "Give!" (give the object to the salesperson on cue)
- 🐾 "Take!" (to collect the wallet again)
- 🐾 "Down!" or "knees/paws"
- 🐾 "Give!"
- 🐾 "Down" (if the dog has made "knees" or "paws").



- Then ask the dog to come down ("down").

First, the dog needs to be taught to climb onto the counter with both front paws. The goal is reached when, standing or sitting next to the dog, you ask it "up" without showing it the counter and the dog puts its front paws on the counter.

When this is achieved, give it the wallet in its mouth, asking "take" and then "up" so that your dog puts its paws on the counter. Once on the counter, another person takes the wallet, so the cue is "give".

Some dogs don't immediately understand the idea of taking the wallet in their mouth and climbing onto the counter.

Practise this by starting the sequence in reverse, i.e:

- Tell the dog, "up",
- When its **paws** are on the counter, give it the **wallet** in its mouth ("take"),

Once your dog has **repeated** the exercise a few times, it will **learn** the sequence in **both directions**.

## 9.2. Go to [...]!



"Go to [...]! ": this cue, **followed by the name of a person**, orders your dog to go to the person named, such as when carrying an object to them or to ask for their help.

Initially, the dog must learn to **identify** the person named.

### 9.3. "Light!"

"Light" is the cue that lets you ask the dog to **press** a **switch**, whether to turn the **light** on/off or to call the **elevator**, for example.

The cue is learned through **clicker** training at the Os'mose center. It will be considered as acquired when you can say "light!" at 2 meters and



without showing the switch with your finger.

### 9.4. Paw



The "**paw**" cue is used when it is physically impossible to do "knees" (presence of a probe, chair with a shelf for example).

The dog stands in **front** of and **facing** its master. It places its front **paws** on the chair's **footrests** to place an object on the shelf, for example.

This cue is introduced at the end of the course if deemed necessary.

### 9.5. "Say Hello!" & "Check!"



"Say hello" cues the dog who is to **heel** to give a **paw** (either one) to a person who is facing the pair, while "Check" cues the dog to touch the person's fist with its nose..

It's the **handler** who gives the dog the **cue** to "say hello" (or "check") to the person facing them.

## Good Work & Enjoy every single moment

Thank you for reading the manual. If you have reached this point and have 2 minutes to spare, please click on the link and tell us what you think about the manual. Thank you! <https://forms.gle/2tFBP71Z4whkLuiy9>