

## **The 7 Habits of Highly Effective Pooches**

What is it about dogs that makes them so adorable and fun to have around? It's not like they help with the housework, do the shopping, or pay their share of the utility bills. Mostly, they warn off hapless postmen and passers-by, or laze around doing zip. So how do they draw us into their thrall and hold us there like besotted groupies, making us feed them, groom them, walk them, play with them, clean up after them, and rub their bellies? It boils down to seven habits:

**Habit 1: Doe-Eyed Dog.** The plaintive look we get when Fido has turned a pair of brand new shoes into a patchwork doily—and sees our expression. Such is the compelling power of this look that it melts human resistance. You ruined my best shoes? Oh come here, all is forgiven.

**Habit 2: Sit, Roll, Stay.** We think we're clever because we've taught them a few rudimentary behaviors. We call it training. They call it humoring mom and dad to get free rent and board all the days of their lives.

**Habit 3. Shake My Paw.** The classic raising of a paw as if wanting to shake hands. We oblige, little realizing Fido is employing a neurolinguistic programming technique designed to make us go weak at the knees whenever that paw comes near us.

**Habit 4: The Loveable Nut.** Whether it's chasing tails or racing around the backyard post-bath, dogs know how to bring the cute. (Likelihood is, they're laughing at us. They know if we carried on like that, we'd be institutionalized.)

**Habit 5: The Mind Reader.** The remarkably accurate human-emotion radar that somehow always tells dogs when we feel down, so they can do something extra cute.

**Habit 6: So Happy Together.** Who can resist the emotional ticker-tape parade dogs throw whenever we return after leaving the house for five minutes?

**Habit 7: I'm Missing You Already.** The slumped, ears-down, why-are-you-doing-this-to-me look by which dogs communicate that leaving the house sans your furry friend is tantamount to cruelty.