



Dog owners go back to school for training sessions 狗狗上學去 狗學校熱門



A dog tries to catch a Frisbee during a training session, top, and a labrador retriever shakes his paw with a girl, above, at the Universal Police Dog Training School in Sanshia Township, Taipei County on Dec. 31, 2009.

PHOTOS: TSAI WEI-CHI, LIBERTY TIMES

二〇〇九年十二月三十一日，台北縣三峽的「鑽錶愛犬學校」裡，一隻小狗在練習接飛盤（最上圖），另一隻拉不拉多犬則和女孩練習握手的技能（上圖）。

照片：自由時報記者蔡偉祺攝

Every dog needs education. In the past only rescue dogs, army dogs and police dogs were sent to training schools, but now more and more dog owners are sending their pets to training camps to learn some manners.

Shen Chi-tung, owner of the 45-year-old Universal Police Dog Training School in Taipei County's Sansia Township, said that having a pet is like welcoming a new family member. You have to consider everything for the pet, including food, clothing, housing, transport and other daily necessities. Not only does the animal have to be trained, but its owner also has to acquire the basic knowledge needed to keep a pet. Otherwise, the dogs become little more than a fashion accessory, to be discarded once they have gone out fashion.

Shen I-chun, a senior dog trainer, said that their school used to only train army and police dogs, but now the 20 domestic dogs receiving training at the school out-number working dogs.

Basic training consists of teaching the owner and their pet how to get along, then the dog has to learn how to sit, lie down, stand and receive orders, says Shen. More advanced courses are meant to train the animal's strength and interaction skills, and finally the professional classes include rescue, attack and drug sniffing as well as other specialized training. Owners can choose what their dogs learn according to their own needs. The shortest dog class is five weeks, and the longest could last two years.

Trainer Shen suggests that a family dog should receive a high level training session on obedience if there are elders or young children in the family. Otherwise, a session on how to interact with humans is also helpful, such as training the dog how to defecate in a fixed place and getting used to changes in the family.

Most parks or public places forbid the presence of pets, which gives rise to complaints from a lot of owners. Shen says it's true that Taiwan has a lot of work to do in this respect, but there are good reasons why dogs aren't allowed in public places. Pet owners' mentality differs quite a lot from those abroad, and owners here obviously don't educate and manage their animal well enough, which causes problems for other people.

The very experienced Shen Chi-tung has been

training dogs since he was 10 years old, and even traveled to Germany to undertake dog-training courses. He trained the police headquarters' dogs in the past, and helped to establish the dog squads of the Special Police Headquarters.

Shen Chi-tung said that it is more difficult to teach a man than train a dog, by which he means that the mentality of people here has to be changed. The owner has to take lessons before having a dog because he has to understand the dog's habits and consider whether he could fulfill his duties as a dog owner.

(LIBERTY TIMES, TRANSLATED BY TAIJING WU)

小狗也要上學！過去只有像救難犬或軍、警犬等專業工作犬會送到專業狗學校受訓，但現在也愈來愈多飼主選擇將寵物狗送去上學，接受生活和服從等訓練。

擁有四十五年歷史的台北縣三峽鎮鑽錶愛犬學校校長沈啓東感嘆地說，飼養寵物就像照顧家裡的新成員一樣，食、衣、住、行樣樣要考慮周全，不只寵物要訓練，飼主也應該上課，預作準備，否則只是趕流行，很容易就會因新鮮感消失，將寵物棄養，這也是造成流浪動物的主因。資深訓狗師沈怡君表示，該校過去以訓練軍、警犬為主，但現在家犬比例已超過專業犬，目前校內約有二十多隻家犬接受訓練。

沈怡君說，課程內容從最基本教導幼犬居家衛生和人狗相處的幼幼班，到學習坐、臥、站和能接收指令的基礎服從班，還有能加強犬隻忍耐力、互動性的高階服從班，最後則是能從事搜救、攻擊、緝毒等的專業訓練班。飼主可依個人需求，決定小狗要上課，最短五週，最長長達兩年。

沈怡君建議，如家中有年長或年幼的成員，最好可以讓小狗接受完成高階服從訓練，否則也應接受最基本幼幼班訓練，養成固定上廁所和適應家庭環境等社會化階段，讓飼主養狗更易上手。

國內不少公園或公共場所因禁止寵物進入，讓不少飼主抱怨不已，甚至認為遭到歧視。沈怡君卻認為，比較國外的養狗環境，台灣確實落後不少，但國內外飼主在飼養觀念上也和國外「差很大」，對於寵物的教育和管理的明顯不足，造成其他人的困擾，才是不受歡迎的主因。

從十歲開始訓練狗的沈啓東曾遠赴德國受訓，早期曾協助警備總部訓練軍犬，現在保一和保三的警犬隊也都是他幫忙成立，經驗豐富。

沈啓東卻說，「教人比教狗難」，感嘆台灣人養狗觀念實在要加強，飼主應該要先上課，一方面了解小狗的習性，同時也評估自己是否能盡到飼主應盡責任。

(自由時報記者蔡偉祺)