



Getting Started Pack



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What is the Pet Professionals Program?

PPP came about because Denise Fenzi, founder of the Fenzi Dog Sports Academy (FDSA), believed there was a need for individuals with a wide range of skills to serve as a resource for the pet dog community. Not just great dog trainers, or compassionate communicators or skilled business owners, but people with all of these skills – applied skills for dogs and communication and management skills for clients, as well as for classroom situations!

As you look over our catalog, you will notice that we have a significant number of courses that are not about the specifics of dog training. They might be about understanding dog behavior, or recognizing and working with the emotional lives of dogs, or even classes to help you run your business. That's because, in order to thrive as a professional trainer, you will need all of these things!

Our focus is on developing kind and effective trainers by offering education on a broad range of topics, so you can apply your skills in a variety of situations effectively and with kindness, and eventually develop a reputation that will allow you to thrive as a trainer.

How does the Pet Professionals Program work?

Registration will open on the 22nd of every month for the next month's workshops.

Each week, FDSA will host three (3) workshops in the Pet Professionals Program – two from the core collection of classes and one elective.

This means that each of our core classes is offered roughly every 6 months, allowing students to take classes on their schedule. You can choose to take 2 classes a week and complete the core program in 6 months, take one class each week and



complete the core in a year, or take classes more occasionally and still complete the program in 18-24 months.

Each week, the three workshops scheduled for that week will begin on a Sunday at noon. At that time, each workshop will release its main recorded lecture – these are approximately an hour in length. You have one week to watch the lecture, practice the materials (or study as appropriate) and prepare for the second lecture recording.

By Sunday at noon the following week, you will need to complete the learning quiz that will be provided. At the end of the quiz, you will have access to a certificate of completion for the course. You also may ask the instructor questions through the quiz, submit a video (if appropriate for that class), and submit your “secret code words” if you requested CEUs. Your instructor will gather up all of those quizzes, collect the questions and videos, and create the second recorded lecture for you – this will be ready for you by Wednesday. That recording will address questions, review any videos, review the quiz results as a group, and summarize relevant points.

The class has now ended! Both the first and second recording will move to your FDSA library at the end of the month. The first recording will stay active in your library for at least a year – and longer if you purchase additional courses or workshops through FDSA or PPP. The second recording will stay active in your library until the course runs again, at which point we will remove it to make room for the next class.

If you choose to purchase courses to review at a future time, that is absolutely acceptable, but you will lose access to CEUs, the opportunity for feedback, and the certificate of completion. You will, however, have the educational materials.



And now ... you're done! It's time to look for your next course or workshop.

Who is the Pet Professionals Program for?

FDSA started the Pet Professionals Program (PPP) in order to provide concrete and accessible training to current and future pet professionals, but not all things are right for all people! This section is to help you decide whether PPP workshops might be a good fit for you.

Do you have time?

Each workshop has three parts. The initial presentation will run approximately one hour. We strongly recommend that you budget an additional one to two hours for practice, video recording if helpful, and follow-up during the week, and then the second presentation will run another hour. In total, we suggest that you budget about three to four hours per class.

That number could be higher or lower depending on how much you practice, whether you take a video recording to submit for review, and whether you have a significant number of questions about the materials.

Because you register for workshops individually, you can take them as often or as rarely as works for your schedule. We suggest taking a break during those weeks when you're too busy to give the workshop your attention – we'll be here when you get back!

Oh, and make sure you use a calendar! You will need to keep track of the date lectures are released, and the due dates for your submissions. Instructors cannot review late work.



Do you have the financial resources?

Each workshop costs \$29.95.

Are you self-motivated?

While we provide as much interaction and support as possible, we cannot structure your time or your day, nor do we monitor your choices to complete assignments, practice with dogs or videotape your work.

After you take a workshop, ask yourself ... Did you enjoy this way of learning? Did you make time to work with dogs? Did you feel more skilled at the end of the practice week, and did that motivate you to continue? If you answered yes to these questions, we may be an excellent choice for you. If not, you may be more successful with a program that provides more accountability and structure.

Do you have access to dogs?

Do you feel confident to go out and find dogs to work with? You have a wide range of options for finding dogs – everything from working with your neighbor's dogs to approaching the local shelter or rescue organizations and offering your help. But ... you need to do it! You cannot become a dog trainer if you don't train dogs, and your own pets, while a great start, are not enough. So before you commit to more workshops, we suggest you have a plan in place for finding dogs to work with if your long-term plan is to become a professional.



Do you have a basic skill and comfort level with dog training?

While we make no assumptions about your knowledge of individual topics, for example your ability to teach a dog not to pull on a leash, we do make assumptions about your knowledge of dog training in general. You should be very comfortable in the presence of dogs and ideally have some experience training your own dogs, neighbors' dogs, foster dogs, or maybe you have experience volunteering at a local shelter. If you have absolutely no experience, volunteer somewhere and get some!

You also need a basic understanding of learning theory and common training techniques but, if you don't have that, no worries! FDSA is creating a free self-study class on these topics which will be available to anyone who wishes to take it – that means you! That study class will introduce you to the basics of how dogs (indeed, how all animals) learn those things we want them to do (be polite with guests) and those things we don't want them to do (pull on a leash!). That class should be available soon, so make sure you are on the FDSA mailing list so you will be notified when it is available.

If you work through the study class, have some experience with training dogs and have a basic comfort level around dogs, then you should be ready for any of our entry-level workshops. Workshops which specify prerequisites assume additional knowledge or prerequisite skills, so read the description with care. Workshops marked "advanced," while anyone can take them, might be of the most value to a person who is already a skilled trainer.

By the way, if the study class sits in your computer for months and you are not able to motivate yourself to work through it? That might be an indication that the Pet Professionals Program is not the best fit for you. Consider taking individual



workshops as they appeal to you and finding a more structured program for your route to becoming a pet professional.

Do you have access to a computer?

While you can watch the videos and listen on a smartphone, it is likely that you're going to find it quite a bit more difficult than if you can work on a computer.

What is your temperament?

We teach using positive reinforcement methods and we strive to find approaches for changing dog behavior that are positive and pragmatic. We will teach you skills that you can use to create a more harmonious household with your clients and their companion animals.

AND ... a big part of gaining compliance from your clients is going to be your attitude! Are you excited about the positive changes in the world of dog training and behavior? Can you communicate positively and with enthusiasm? Can you motivate other people to want to work with you? Can you listen to what people need from you, and put their interests above the ones you had in mind?

The dog world needs qualified and enthusiastic trainers – people who appreciate the amazing changes that are taking place around us! We can give you the skills but you need to bring the positive attitude. Your clients are doing their best, but they are absolute beginners and quite possibly unaware of what is realistic with a dog. Your job is to make them successful by teaching in a manner that can reach them. If this is an approach that appeals to you, our program may be exactly what you need.



Gaining hands-on experience – Train Dogs!

There is no way to overstate the value of hands-on time working with dogs. Studying dog training does not make you a dog trainer. Thinking about dog training does not make you a dog trainer. Talking about dog training does not make you a dog trainer. And solving problems with your friends and then applying them to a hypothetical dog in your head? That still does not make you a dog trainer.

Training dogs makes a dog trainer. Watching dog behavior, adding an intervention, and then observing cause and effect gives you valuable information and helps you become a dog trainer. Creating behavior plans and working through them with as wide a variety of types of dogs as possible is what will eventually make you a skilled and intuitive trainer, and none of that can happen in your head with imaginary dogs. Real dogs with real owners with real problems need real solutions – solutions that work and can be applied even with inexperienced dog owners, and there's only one way to get that. Find dogs and train them.

So, where are you going to find all of these dogs?

Train Your Own Dogs

Start with your own dogs! Especially when you are first learning, your own dogs will provide plenty of challenge for you. But when you realize that training your own dog has become easy? You've got a terrific pet who behaves well and has picked up a few fancy behaviors to boot? Your friends think your dog is amazing? Then it's time to take the next step.



Train Dogs for Friends & Family

Do you have family or neighbors who struggle with their dogs? Almost everyone would appreciate a little free help! Volunteer to come over a couple of days a week to work with their dogs. Now you'll have a chance to learn what it's like to work with a dog who doesn't actually know you, and to see how much progress you can, or cannot, make in a limited amount of time.

Okay, you've run out of family and neighbor dogs. Now what?

Help Friends & Family Train Dogs

Help your family or neighbors train their dogs! It's great that you taught their dogs valuable skills, so now you can work on your people training! Can you find a way to communicate with the dog's handler in a way that makes them excited about working with their dog? Can you use words that help them fall in love with their dog and develop their relationship so they want to train? Excellent! Work on that skill.

Now what?

Volunteer with Local Shelters & Rescues

Local shelters and rescues are always looking for volunteers to help them. Even something as simple as volunteering to walk dogs for a rescue or a shelter will give you experience. Heck, you'll be learning about loose leash walking, one of the most common complaints that people have when they contact a dog trainer!



As you develop a relationship with these local organizations, it is very likely that they will give you greater responsibilities, and will eventually enthusiastically embrace your quest to work with the dogs on more training-specific issues.

There are also different ways to get involved with rescues and shelters beyond walking dogs! We suggest trying to work with a range of dogs so, if you do work with a rescue, don't necessarily take in a foster dog. Talk to the rescue about short-term fostering – maybe you could take in dogs when the regular fosters are on vacation! This creates a win-win situation; the foster finds temporary housing as needed for their placements, and you get a week or two with one dog to refine your skills. What's not to love?

Look for Local Shelter Sleepover Programs

How about a sleepover program with the local shelter? These are surprisingly common, and are extremely beneficial for both dogs and trainers! Contact your local shelter and see if they have a program where you can take the dog for one night, or even a few nights, to work with that dog. These programs have shown to be extremely beneficial to the dogs, lowering their stress levels in the shelter environment, so it's also a win-win!

Puppy Raising for Service Dog Programs

How about puppy raising programs for service dogs? Again, rather than taking in a full-time puppy, check and see if they need people to watch the dogs when the regular handlers go on vacation, or for those short periods of time between puppy raising and the start of their formal education.



Okay; let's go even further.

Offer Training via Neighborhood Email/Craigslist

Place an ad on your neighborhood email or Craigslist! Tell people you are looking for dogs to walk and practice training with, and set the area that you're willing to travel to. Offer your services for free to gain experience, and ensure that you get a range of types of dogs. You will be flooded with people who would love to have someone come into their house in the middle of the day and take out their puppy or young dog, who could use a little training exercise.

Dog Walking (+ Training) & Pet Sitting

If you have followed some or all of the above steps, you now have experience training dogs. Would you like to start making money while you continue your education?

Place an ad as a dog walker, but only take out one dog. Ask for permission of the owner, and then train the dog while you walk it! Charge a reasonable fee for your service.

Take dogs into your home when people go on vacation. Ask for permission of the owner, and then train the dog while you board it! Charge a reasonable fee for your service. Note that if you do a good job, you will be extremely busy in no time because excellent dog sitters are hard to find and in great demand.

Apprenticeships/Work for Local Trainers

Eventually, you will have worked with enough dogs as a volunteer and informally through boarding or walk-n-train that you may well feel ready to take on a more formal internship or apprenticeship. Great! Contact local trainers, dog training clubs,



rescues and humane societies, and ask about assisting with their training classes. Be prepared to work for free initially but, once they recognize your skill, you may quickly move into a paid position when one becomes available. People tend to hire others who they already know.

Using Our Facebook Group!

You can also chat with alumni at Fenzi Dog Sports Academy and see if someone who is local to you might be looking for an intern. To help you with that process, make sure you join the Facebook group, [FDSA Pet Professionals Program](#). (Please note you won't be eligible for that group until you have taken at least one or more classes, workshops or webinars with either the Pet Professionals Program or FDSA.)

Making It Happen

The one thing that all of these suggestions have in common is that you're going to have to make them happen. The shelter is not going to come knocking on your door and the ad in Craigslist won't place itself. You're going to have to reach out and be willing to put in some volunteer hours. The good news is, if you opt for certification down the road, volunteer hours are given as much weight as paid hours, so you want to make sure you put everything in your logbook from the very first day you start training!

There are many routes to becoming a dog trainer, but none of them works without dogs to train.

Make it happen!



What is the Relationship Between PPP and FDSA?

PPP is a standalone program designed for pet professionals, but it is strongly associated with FDSA. Let's take a look at the relationship.

Both FDSA and PPP offer à la carte educational opportunities for learning about specific topics related to dogs, dog training and dog behavior. The big difference is that FDSA emphasizes six-week-long classes that go into great depth on specific topics, and PPP is designed to give a person a very broad (and complete) overview understanding of subjects specific to pet dog trainers. FDSA heavily targets dog sports trainers directly, and PPP targets the current and future pet professionals audience. As a result, FDSA will focus on teaching you to train a dog, and PPP will focus on teaching you to train your clients to train their dogs!

We are well aware that there is significant overlap between the needs and interests of these populations, and you may certainly take offerings from both programs. Indeed, we would suggest that if you find a topic at PPP that intrigues you and you would like to learn more, head over to the FDSA course schedule and see if something might be coming up!

Because there is such a strong relationship between the two programs and the kinds of people who benefit from each, there is only one mailing list for both programs. In addition, all classes register on the FDSA website and classes are stored in the FDSA library at their completion, whether taken through FDSA or PPP. We strongly encourage you sample freely from both programs regardless of your personal emphasis!

Students of the PPP are encouraged to join the Fenzi Dog Sports Academy Alumni Facebook group as well as the FDSA Pet Professionals Program FB group.



Eventually, we hope to expand the FDSA offerings to give even more depth to the workshops at PPP, covering as many sub-topics and specialty areas geared toward the pet professional as possible.

Stay tuned!



Track Your Classes

How to Use this Chart

The purpose of this chart is to help you track your training progress.

When you take a class, write it down! Fill out the name of the class, number of CEUs, etc. Note that there is a section for hands-on experience gained, titled “Hours Training.” This is very important to keep track of!

First of all, if you’re trying to get a job or internship, it’s an easy way for you to show your experience. Second, if you choose to apply for certification with IAABC or CCPDT, you’ll already have your working log filled out for you!

You may not know yet if you want to apply for certification and that’s fine, but it would be unfortunate to have lost this information if you do pursue certification.

So keep track of your work! You’ll find it extremely motivating to watch the rows fill up ...

Class Section 1: The Dog-Human Relationship	Hours Training	Dogs/Clients Worked With	Date Completed	CEUs Earned
BE the Cookie! How to be Attractive to a Dog				
How Does It Feel to be Trained by You?				
Seeing Dogs for Who They Are – Emotion, Cognition, Social Structure, and Evolution				

Training Problem or Medical Issue? Red Flags for Veterinary Referral				
Notes:				
Class Section 3: The Science (and Techniques) of Behavior Change	Hours Training	Dogs/Clients Worked With	Date Completed	CEUs Earned
Learning About Learning				
Shaping, Capturing and Luring! Oh My! Ways to Get Behavior				
Behaviour Intervention Techniques				
Fixing Fear: Applied Desensitization and Counterconditioning				
Management vs. Training: Choosing the Best Option for Your Client				



Notes:

Class Section 4: Foundation Training for Pet Dogs	Hours Training	Dogs/Clients Worked With	Date Completed	CEUs Earned
The Critical Skill of Connection				
"Come!" Relationship-Strengthening Recall Games				
Sits, Downs, and Stands, Oh My!				
Happy Crating!				
Settle and Stay – for the Cafe!				
Walk with Me! Leash Skills for Pet Dogs				
Get On and Stay: Station Training Made Easy				
Can You Handle It? Preparing for Grooming and Vet Visits				
Notes:				

Class Section 5: Prevent and Address Common Problem Behaviors	Hours Training	Dogs/Clients Worked With	Date Completed	CEUs Earned
Real Resolution: Systematic Solutions for Behavior Problems				
Cars, Cats, and Kangaroos ... Don't Chase That!				
Can You Dig It? A Survival Guide to Yard Behaviors				
It Was So Nice to Meet You: Calm Greetings for Dogs and People				
Hounds in the House! Working with Clients to Develop Appropriate Indoor Manners				
Countering Counter Surfing				
Dogs on Leashes: Relaxed, Not Reactive!				
Preventing and Handling Mild Noise Sensitivity				
My Ball, My Food, My Space! Handling Resource Guarding				
Before Baby! Setting the Stage for a New Baby in the Family				
After Baby! Promoting Safe Parallel Play and Coexistence				

Notes:

Class Section 6: Specific to Puppies!!	Hours Training	Dogs/Clients Worked With	Date Completed	CEUs Earned
The Puppy Procedure – Setting Up Your Home for Success!				
The Puppy Procedure – Creating Good Habits				
The Perfect Puppy Class: Scheduling, Structure, and Skills				
Socialization: One Size Does Not Fit All				
Puppy Power! Building Confidence and Optimism				
Puppies: Toys and Building Appropriate Play				

Notes:

Class Section 7: Go Teach! Strategies, Lesson Plans, and Organization	Hours Training	Dogs/Clients Worked With	Date Completed	CEUs Earned
The Human End of the Leash: Developing Your Client-Centered Skills				
Wait ... Treats Forever?? Reinforcement Strategies in Pet Dog Training				
Show Don't Tell – Games for Teaching Complex Ideas (without Delving into the Science)				
The Home-Field Advantage: Succeeding with Private Lessons				
Class Formats: Let Me Count the Ways!				
Managing a Skills Class – Ways to Create Success in the Classroom				
Preparing for Success: Structuring and Organizing Your Class Materials				

Notes:				
Class Section 8: Electives	Hours Training	Dogs/Clients Worked With	Date Completed	CEUs Earned
The Legal Aspects of Launching Your Business – The Basics				
The Legal Aspects of Launching Your Business – Advanced				
Building a Successful Dog Business				
Running and Growing Your Dog Training Business				
Social Media and Your Business: How to Use it to Grow Your Impact				
Marketing 101: Matters of Marketing for the Pet Professional				
Fake It 'til You Make It: Teaching Appropriate Canine Communication Signals to Reactive Dogs				
Surviving the 9-5: Real Solutions and Prevention Strategies for Clients with a Work Week				
Management for Reactive Dogs				
Keeping Safe – How to Handle Aggression Cases				

Bouncing Off the Walls: Dealing with High-Energy Dog Clients				
A Place for Everyone: Multi-Dog Households				
Next Level Training: Advancing Distractions				
Four on the Floor: Strategies for Reducing Jumping				
Be Right Back: Stays for Real Life				
Zen Focus				
Housetraining for the Hard Cases				
Mary Poppins Bag: Dog Trainers and Their Gear				
Get Tricky! Tricks That Will Keep Them Coming Back for More				
The Laws and Training Guidelines for Public Access Work of Service Dogs				
Double Dog Manners: Tips for Working with Multiple Dogs at Once				
Won't You Be My Neighbor? Suggestions for Reducing Fence Fighting with the Dog Next Door				
Thinking Outside the Classroom: Creative Ideas for Creating Income				



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Notes:				
Other Classes (For Future Additions!)	Hours Training	Dogs/Clients Worked With	Date Completed	CEUs Earned



Other Useful Links & Notes:

- [The FDSA Pet Professionals Website](#)
- [The Fenzi Dog Sports Academy Website](#)