

between dogs of the same sex who are compelled to 'fight off the competition'), and the complete loss of attention span that attends raging hormones. Not to mention accidental mating, false pregnancies and the male teen's need to taste-test female urine.



An adolescent, even a neutered one, will experience occasional lapses in attention. At times he may look at you as though you just

addressed him in Mandarin, trying to convince you that you have never before in his lifetime uttered "S-I-T?" Handle these lapses the same way you would with an untrained dog.

Take a step or two backward in your training program and re-teach him the command by luring him into the requested position. Be sure to make it worth his while by the use of positive reinforcement. Keep his focus on you, using favorite toys and treats as lures. And keep your training sessions short and functional, always ending with a

game or playtime. If you take away the fun, he or she will show even less interest.

In order to get through your dog's adolescence, remember to provide plenty of exercise, continue to crate/confine when he or she is unattended, spay or neuter, and keep training fun. And by all means, hang on to your sense of humor at all times. Though your pup may try your patience, take heart. Adolescence is one thing your dog is guaranteed to outgrow!

The San Clemente-Dana Point Animal Shelter can be contacted for a list of local animal trainers.

Adolescence



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Those weeks of careful monitoring have finally paid off - you're now the proud caretaker of a housebroken pup! But wait,

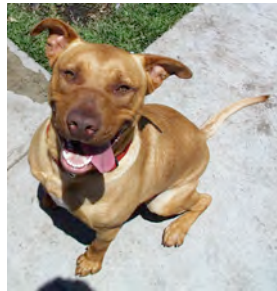
is that a yellow stain part of the way up the drapes? And after you unclip Rex's leash in the dog run, and he maniacally bounds around for 45 minutes, it still takes a 10-minute game of "Catch Me If You Can" to get him back on-leash to go home. What gives? Your puppy has grown into a teenager.



From age 6 to 18 months, your dog is in adolescence, that gawky stage between puppy-hood and adulthood. Physically, the dog has his adult teeth but still needs to chew on hard toys to set the teeth in his jawbone. That cottony puppy coat is falling out

in one tremendous shedding cycle, allowing the adult coat to grow in. He has almost reached his adult height but for now is all loose elbows and gangly movement.

And what movement! During adolescence, the domestic canine resembles a perpetual motion machine requiring super-human stamina to wear out. It's a good idea



to find your pup a friendly pack of other canine adolescents to run with in the safety of an urban dog run or suburban

fenced-in yard. If your dog lacks canine friends, send him or her out with your resident human teen to fetch a Frisbee or go inline skating.



Tiring out your canine teen will also save

wear and tear on your abode. Chewing often results when a bored, anxious, or curious dog is allowed the run of the house. For the canine adolescent, boredom and curiosity often lead to major household

damage via chewing, digging, and general re-organization. This damage could largely be avoided if caretakers would simply continue to confine their dog in a training crate or dog-proof room when no one is around to monitor canine investigations. Canine teens are not yet capable of the consistency it takes to earn the run of the place unsupervised.



Hormones also play a major role in your canine

's adolescence. Most dogs become sexually mature at 8 to 12 months of age; at this time females will experience their first estrus (heat) cycle and males will begin to lift their legs and show interest in "the ladies." By spaying or neutering early (usually before the dog is 6 months old), you can save yourself and your dog such varied experiences as increased indoor urination (females in heat will do this to advertise for suitors, for intact males it's a way of marking territory), inter-dog aggression (primarily