

Free Bonus: Teach your Cavalier King Charles Spaniel 13 Amazing Tricks!

You and your King Charles Spaniel may want to while away the idle hours together sometimes? Then, what better way can there be than to get together and teach him some tricks?

If you decide to do that, your first consideration would be when training your Cavalier King Charles Spaniel is his learning environment. Is your home environment familiar and friendly to your Cavalier King Charles Spaniel? Do you have a yard? Well then, you could use this yard as “learning ground” to train your King Charles Spaniel.

After a while, perhaps you could go inside the house where, in its privacy, your Cavalier King Charles Spaniel may just fare better. And please bear in mind that dogs have very short attention spans. Add to that the knowledge that you’re training him in an unfamiliar place, with unfamiliar objects and scents and that will only render him unable to focus on the lesson at hand.

Another contributory environmental factor is the number of people present at training sessions. At any session, you should be the only person to be present to train the Cavalier King Charles Spaniel. It should always be a one on one, so that an easy familiarity is developed, leading to trust between the teacher and the taught. Further, this minimizes distractions. Once your dog learns to execute each trick, you should teach the trick to the rest of the family by seating them down quietly, and demonstrating the steps to them. Once they learn, allow them to prompt the doggy to do the trick, using the same hand motions, commands and tone of voice.

Rewards and punishments: While teaching your Cavalier King Charles Spaniel all kinds of tricks, you should make rewards and punishments an integral part of your lesson. These could be your dog’s favorite snack, either small in size or broken into small pieces or verbal praise. But remember, it makes sense to give your pet rewards only if it has performed the trick perfectly.

If you want to punish him for not performing a trick correctly, this should be limited to withholding rewards with a firm “No.” After all, you want your King Charles Spaniel to respect you, not be afraid of you. If you scream at him or physically torture him, he will resist learning anything from you.

Your tone of voice: Another important factor in training is your tone of voice. True, your commands should be clear and firm, so should your “No” be. Equally loud, loving and encouraging should your tone be when you are handing out praise to him. You may even add verbal praise, such as “Good boy,” with a pat on the head or a quick back scratch. But repeat the words over and over again. Your choice of words is extremely crucial because your pet is in the

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process of linking words with actions, so your tone of voice will also be registered. You could, if you like, choose one word or phrase as an aid to memory for each trick. If your pet doesn't respond at first, don't change the word or phrase nor should you be discouraged or this will confuse your dog.

With all these factors in place, you're all set to train your pet—and that will be fun and simple. Spend one hour trying to teach one trick, but do this just three times a week. Divide the hour into two half-hour sessions and practice with your pet.

Tips to dog training: If you're a first-time dog owner, you need to know what makes dogs learn fast.

Rationale: If your pet is motivated, he will learn faster. If you want to teach your Cavalier King Charles Spaniel to perform some tricks, choose one that you think he might enjoy. So, if he has never carried anything in his mouth, don't ask him to fetch or retrieve things. Instead, start with something easy like "shake hands" or play hide and seek.

You're getting there, buddy: As he learns the trick, your pet needs to know if he is on the right track. You need to give your dog clear instructions so that he may follow them the way you want him to.

To "tell" him that he's doing fine, praise him the minute he begins to be right. For example, when he grabs the newspaper or tennis ball or toy between his teeth and takes his first step towards you, immediately shout out, "Good boy!" He may just drop the ball or object and run away from you, in which case you need to reissue your command. After this, if he walks towards you, praise him. Now, the Cavalier King Charles Spaniel will begin to see what you want him to do. Once he gets the whole picture, you can heap the pressure on to him.

Which reward does doggie appreciate? Some long for love treats—a hug or a kiss, while others expect food or yet others like to play with their favorite toy for a while. However, you can just easily use your voice as a reward—tell them in your happiest voice how smart your dog is, particularly when he does the right thing. This way neither you will not have to use treats every time you train your dog because he will understand that the verbal praise is for a job well done.

If you begin by telling him that he has not done what you expected of him, you can then go on to give him more praise than "nos." Be consistent in your praise, once he does the right thing.

If the trick is complicated, break it down into several sub steps and then try to piece it all together. It's better to proceed slowly when the task at hand is complicated.

Then, again, don't practice too much at a time, but do this often, maybe about three times a day for short durations. If you stop when he still wants to go on, he will be motivated to learn well and continue next time. But if he seems disinterested, take a break or teach him something else.

Preparation: You need to decide what you would like him to learn and why. Allow your Cavalier King Charles Spaniel to feel successful by starting with simple tricks (shake hands, dance, retrieve something, etc.) and then go on to the more difficult ones, if he learns fast. Start with one trick and then take it from there.

Now, think of a command for that particular trick—something different that will signal only this trick and nothing else in the King Charles Spaniel’s mind. It will not resemble anything else that your dog already knows. Short words are a good choice.

Your Cavalier King Charles Spaniel can amuse you and while away the hours for you by entertaining you with some easy and fun tricks. If you use food and praise to motivate him, he will learn that much faster. You’ll find that you need neither yell nor shout at your doggy—he’s so intelligent that he learns fast enough! Instead, all you need to make him perform some tricks are food and patience. Here are some of them to get you started:

❖ **Tricks for your Cavalier King Charles Spaniel:**

1: Teach him to sit: This is by far the easiest trick of them all. Teach him this trick over mealtime for a few days consecutively and watch him perform for you like a professional!

Tell your Cavalier King Charles Spaniel to sit. Now, gently but firmly press his hindquarters to the ground until he sits completely. Wait for him to sit down to your satisfaction before you give him his dinner. This may take a few tries, but he will get it soon enough. Now it’s time for you to praise him.

2: Begging or sitting up: The next trick is “beg” or “sit up.” This is quite easy as well. Tell your dog to beg, and then hold a piece of food over his head. His natural instinct is to sit up to reach the food. When he is begging properly, then praise him and give him a treat. Note that with small puppies you want to be careful not to injure their backs.

Now that you and your Cavalier King Charles Spaniel know that fun is in store, don’t practice one trick at a time. Learn to multi-task as in the trick given below.

3: Play dead: Also called “bang-bang,” the key to mastering this trick is to let your Cavalier King Charles Spaniel roll on its back by gently turning him over once you’ve said “bang-bang.” Once he’s on his back, you can feed him. While he is on his back—even if for only a minute or two—praise him profusely. Initially, your dog might find this trick a little difficult, but as always, practice makes perfect.

4: Shake hands, boy! To teach your King Charles Spaniel to shake hands, say “Shake,” and then gently pick up your dog’s right paw. Now, every time you say the word “shake”, see that you pick up the same paw. As you pick up his paw, praise him and gradually, he will link the action with the praise you give, and will soon begin volunteering his paw to you. The moment he does this, praise him verbally and give him a treat.

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To take this trick forward, you can also put a treat on its paw and use the “Stay!” command till you want him to let go and eat the treat. Once your dog has learnt to do this, take the trick forward by asking him for his other paw by saying the words, “Other paw,” and moving your hand slightly to the left or right, depending on which paw you want. Keep flitting from right paw to left until your Cavalier King Charles Spaniel learns to alternate between paws.

5: The “speak” trick: Here, you need to speak every time you hear your dog bark. Follow this up with a heap of praise. In case he’s one of those silent types who rarely barks, urge him to “speak” and make a noise that will lead him to bark. He will soon link the two and bark when you say, “Speak.” He will also understand that if he obeys you, you will give him a treat.

6: “Hey, sleepyhead!” Whenever you see your King Charles Spaniel yawn, shout a command to him such as, “C’mon, give us a yawn” or “Hey! Are you sleepy?” If he yawns frequently, obviously he’s going to hear your commands often enough to link the two actions. You’ll find that eventually he will yawn whenever he hears those words. But your Cavalier King Charles Spaniel requires more patience than intelligence to learn this trick because this takes a long time to learn. And yes, lavish him with praise when he yawns to your command. He will believe he’s doing something to change the world.

7: Teach him to stay: Make your Cavalier King Charles Spaniel sit. Now, stretch out your hand, your palm flat as if you were asking someone to stay right there. As you make the action, say the word, “Stay.” Repeat the word “Stay” every five seconds as you move farther and farther away from your dog. Don’t move your hand from its extended position, but when you are about 10 feet away from him, take down your hand and say, “Come here.” Now that he has mastered your trick, reward him with a treat only when he waits for your hand to come down and for you to call him.

Repeat the exercise, and now see if his timing is right. If he comes over to you before time, say, “No.” Next, hold up a treat while your “Stay” hand is still extended towards him. But if he does not stay, say “No” and hold your flat hand close to his face, saying “Stay.” Now, push your hand further forward when you hold up the treat, so that your doggy focuses on your command rather than on your reward.

8: Catch: Find a small treat and throw it gently in your Cavalier King Charles Spaniel’s direction. He will try to catch it. Do this a few times and he will follow the direction you take and catch the treat.

9: Bow: With this trick, teach your Cavalier King Charles Spaniel to bow before you before giving it a treat. Hold a treat in front of your dog and move it downwards, but not touching the floor. When the dog follows its descent with its head, you give the command “Bow.” You have to do this repeatedly before he learns to obey your command.

10: Walk: Here, your Cavalier King Charles Spaniel learns to stand on its hind legs and perhaps walk a little too. Begin teaching this trick with a treat. Hold the treat high above your Cavalier

King Charles Spaniel's head so that he can reach it if he stood on his hind legs. Then, shout the command, "Walk," while helping him up by taking its paw. When it walks, give him the treat.

11: Dance: This trick is easiest to teach to your pet. The advantage of teaching this trick is that once the dog "dances" on order, he won't put all his weight on people when jumping on them. So, more than a trick, it is good replacement behavior for one who jumps too easily.

When your Cavalier King Charles Spaniel is excited and jumps all around you, say, "Dance." Gently hold his front legs and lift them up so that he now stands on his hind legs. Now, praise him lavishly and give him a treat. Now, put him back on his fours on the ground. Once he learns to do this, see if he can do it on his own. If your King Charles Spaniel is small or medium-sized, he will balance better than most other large dogs.

12: Roll over: First, tell your Cavalier King Charles Spaniel to sit, then to lie down. Take a treat and hold it near your pet's chin. Circle it slowly low over your dog's head, letting him follow the direction of your hand. Now, simultaneously say the words, "Roll over" when the treat is near the top of your pet's head. According to plan, your pet should roll over naturally at this point, trying to get the treat. When he rolls over on your command, don't hesitate to give him your reward and praise.

13: Find or retrieve something: Does your doggy enjoy carrying things in his mouth? If he does, then this trick is tailor-made for him. All you have to do is to bring your Cavalier King Charles Spaniel's toy a few steps away from where he is sitting, just so that he sees it. Ask him to find it by saying, "Find" or "Toy" for any object that you hide and want him to retrieve for you. Once he locates the toy, praise him immediately, even if he doesn't touch it.

Repeat this each time he is near the toy and in the process encourage him to hold it by the teeth. When he does this the first time, praise him and give him a treat. Now, return the toy to him and play with him. Once he learns to take the toy in his mouth, teach him to bring it to where you're seated. If he does this successfully, begin by praising him. Then, praise him only when he brings it and places it in your hand. Now, you can exchange the toy for a treat. Now that he has learnt the basic concept, start hiding the toy in more difficult places.

Good luck and remember that patience and consistency go along way in helping your "best friend" achieve their best.

Sharda Baker 2006

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