

Food Guarding: The food issue is really not a difficult problem to correct, if you are willing to put forth the effort to train him. You should already have the dog on a schedule of one or two feeding times a day. The dish will be removed when dinner is finished (about 20 minutes). When you get ready to feed your dog, literally "hand feed" every morsel of his food to him. Make him take it gently from your hand and stay calm. After he is done, take the dish and put it up. Every feeding is the same until he willingly lets you handle his dish and food while he is eating. Once hand feeding is a success you can allow the dog to eat from the bowl but you are only going to put in a few bites at a time so the dog has to stop and wait patiently on you to give him more food in his bowl. If he ever reverts to food guarding, go back to basics and hand feed him until he gets the idea again. Be sure to praise him when he doesn't object to your handling his food dish.

Counter Surfing: This is a situation where you have to actually catch the dog in the act to make any progress in the training. Once he has gotten the food off the counter, he's had his reward. The easiest way is to "Change the Environment" and keep the counters free of any food items or items that the dog might find interesting. He will soon get tired of no rewards and give up checking the counter for goodies. You can also bubble trap the counter lol. Use cans loaded with pennies or pebbles to set around the edge of the counter; when the dog counter surfs and knock over the cans causing a enough noise will startle them and they'll have a negative association with counter surfing. This works best if you can tie the cans together so you get the best bang out of the disturbing the countertop. You can also tie the cans to some bait food so when the dog grabs the food from the counter and takes off it's followed by a lot of noisy cans. Dogs will eventually stop attempting to counter surf so this isn't something that's required to be kept on your counters forever lol. DO NOT undo all your training by offering the dog a treat or food off the counters!

Getting on Furniture: Many adopters do not want or allow dogs on the furniture and therefore the foster homes need to abide by the policy of not allowing the dogs on furniture to insure the dogs are suitable for the majority of adopters. One of the most common questions we get about from potential adopters is if the dog gets on furniture and if we have to say yes then most time they will pass on the dog due to this habit. I assure you for those adopters that don't mind for their pets to get on the furniture, they can teach their new dog that it's o.k. in about five seconds, whereas breaking a dog that isn't allowed on furniture can be a huge chore for the adopter.

Does this mean that fosters' owned dogs can't be allowed on furniture?, absolutely not. It is very common for one dog to be allowed to do something that another dog in the household isn't allowed to do, for instance many of us let our small breeds ride in the front seat but wouldn't dare let a giant breed ride up front due to the safety issues.