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Kids' Weekly

Jobs around us

Dog trainers



Dogs are the most popular pet in Hong Kong. Unfortunately, many of them misbehave because their owners haven't trained them properly. Professional trainers like Winnie Lam can help.



KC = reporter from *Kids' Weekly*

WL = Winnie Lam

KC : Winnie, how did you become a dog trainer?

WL : I've always loved animals. When I was a child, I adopted a dog from a pet rescue centre. I bought some training books so that I could teach him how to behave. This went well and I started helping my friends with their pets.

KC : Cool! Did you need any special training to become a professional trainer?

WL : Yes, I studied at the Academy for Dog Trainers for two years. It was hard work. I had to learn a lot about dog behaviour and take lots of tests.



KC : What qualities does a dog trainer need? You must love dogs, right?

WL : Of course! But that's not enough. You also need to be patient. You may need to repeat a training exercise many times before a dog learns a new skill.

KC : That doesn't sound easy!

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WL: No, it isn't. You need to be calm and confident so that you can manage difficult dogs. Dogs can sense how you feel. If you feel nervous or unsure, they won't listen to you. Good dog trainers are also creative. Sometimes you need to come up with new ways of solving problems.

KC: That's a lot of skills! What's the best thing about your job?

WL: Working with owners to change their dogs' behaviour. There was one lady who wanted to give up her dog because it barked all the time and chewed the furniture. After training, her dog stopped doing these things and the lady decided to keep her pet. Both of them were much happier.

KC: How rewarding!

WL: Yes, I think I have the best job in the world!



About dog training

Most dog trainers use the 'rewarding good behaviour' method. They praise and reward the dog with a tasty treat when it does something good.

The key skills that dog trainers teach dogs are 'sit', 'down', 'stay' and 'come'.



What do you think is the most difficult thing about being a dog trainer? Would you like to be a dog trainer?