



Animal Trainer

SALARY RANGE (2017): The hourly pay rate for is \$18.09ⁱ

I am an entrepreneur who loves animals. I work primarily with dogs, but have worked with cats, horses, wolves and even the occasional group of cockroaches. While I mostly work as a trainer for individuals who are looking to teach their new puppy a few skills for the house and the dog park, I also do work for TV shows and movies and I have my own YouTube channel demonstrating my success stories.

The Tip: Make sure you have well-trained animals of your own! Nothing speaks of competence like seeing the results of your work in your own pets.

PRIORITY KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS:

Evidence-based Decision Making

- Select appropriate interventions for animals with no training, or that are poorly trained, based on research and best practices
- Provide appropriate resources to movie and TV clients who need various animals to work on their sets

Advanced Research & Analysis Skills

- Critically analyze the current literature on animal training techniques
- Synthesize key themes from multiple sources

Knowledge of Human Behaviour

- Able to relate to a wide range of individuals
- Support clients to explore motivations, behaviour, emotions, thoughts and patterns and how that relates to their challenges with their pets
- Guide exploration of difficult topics such as how the owner influences the behaviour of the animal
- Sensitivity to how behaviours regarding animal training are shaped by circumstances, privilege, experience & attitudes

Advanced Communication Skills

- Sensitivity to how communication between an owner and their animal is shaped by their expectations
- Formulate and defend perspectives on best practices for animal training

Inter-personal Skills

- Work with diverse populations
- Empathetic and patient with clients
- Professional and courteous with the TV and movie producers I engage with
- Professional and thoughtful in response to comments on my YouTube channel

Intra-personal Skills

- Manage stress and work with aggressive and anxious animals
- Calm when working with clients and animals
- Self-aware and able to manage personal opinions or biases with regards to different clients

Additional Skills

- Strong organizational skills
- Intentional curiosity and thoughtful creativity
- Fundamental business acumen

- Self-motivated, independent, ethical

BUILDING BLOCK EXPERIENCES:

<p>Education & Learning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bachelor of Arts (Psychology) with research assistant experience specializing in animal behaviour and a minor in marketing • Bachelor of Science (Biology) with a specialization in ecology and evolution of animal behaviour • Attend conferences, workshops and training seminars each year to improve skills and enhance knowledge about the latest developments in animal training 	<p>It's hard to say where my interest in working with animals started. As a child I had several pets including a horse, a dog, several cats, a hedgehog and a corn snake. My desire to become an animal trainer solidified when I spent a summer in Thailand as an undergraduate student, doing volunteer work at an animal rescue facility. I was in awe of the individuals who worked with the elephants and the primates. I knew I also wanted to work with individuals and wanted to combine my love of psychology with my love of science. I am also an avid follower of technology and decided to create a YouTube channel to provide support for animal owners who can't afford the cost of private or group training lessons for their pets.</p>
<p>Employment Experiences:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I worked in a convenience store and as a server before I got a job working at a humane society shelter • After my second year of undergrad I spent a summer working for a volunteer organization at an animal shelter in Thailand • I worked as a research assistant in a lab that trained cockroaches and studied their memory for aversive places such as a brightly lit room • I worked for four years at a local humane society shelter • I worked part time with a local animal trainer. After she retired I took over her business and expanded it to include TV and movie work. 	<p>All of my jobs revolved around working with animals or people. I love both and nothing makes me happier than seeing the joy on a person's face when they see positive training results with their pets. My work as an extra on TV shows while an undergraduate also gave me a real edge when it came to put together a business plan to provide trained dogs and horses for these productions.</p>
<p>Community Experiences:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I volunteered and supervised at our university's puppy room talking with people, providing some direction for how to handle the puppies and giving information managing anxiety • I volunteered with an equestrian facility that used horseback riding to help kids with muscular dystrophy. The training was outstanding. 	<p>Some of the best training I ever received in understanding how to work with animals was through these volunteer centres and my work in Thailand. Volunteering for a university student centre was amazing—you really get to establish yourself as an active citizen, or maybe even a leader—and it really makes you feel like you belong on campus. Many of the contacts I made during my time working in the puppy room have now become my clients.</p>
<p>Contextual Experiences:</p>	<p>I think growing up with a menagerie of</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I think it was good that I moved away from home to attend university; I wish I had lived in residence, but because I had a cat and a hedgehog, that option wasn't open to me • Working with animals in various venues throughout my university career kept me engaged and helped me see that being an animal trainer is what I wanted to do with my life 	<p>animals helped me to understand animals and how they interact with people. By getting a degree in psychology I became more understanding of human behaviour. My degree in biology gave me the animal behaviour perspective. By combining majors and minors with my work and volunteer experience I have a unique package of skills that is highly desired by my clients.</p>
<p>Relationships:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The woman I worked for at the humane society was an incredible example of compassion and kindness with an element of steel in her personality that was necessary for working with rescue animals. I will always admire her selflessness when it came to help an animal in need. • Working with cockroaches was a departure for me but the experience and knowledge I gained working alongside a scientist was invaluable. He is a wealth of knowledge on the evolution of animal behaviour that I still tap into on occasion. 	<p>The support I received from the individuals I worked with to pursue my dreams was what kept me going through eight a.m. labs in molecular biology. Seeing other people around me with a passion for animals that is similar to my own keeps me inspired to do the best I can for my two, four and six-legged clients.</p>

ⁱ https://www.payscale.com/research/CA/Job=Dog_Trainer/Hourly_Rate