



RECOMMENDED CERTIFICATIONS FOR DOG TRAINERS

- 1) **ACADEMY FOR DOG TRAINERS:** This is a two-year, on-line university program, offering education in dog behavior, modification, and more. It is located in CA and was developed by Jean Donaldson (author of Culture Clash). Trainers can be found at <https://www.academyfordogtrainers.com/>
- 2) **CERTIFIED APPLIED ANIMAL BEHAVIORISTS: (CAAB)** This organization certifies trainers with advanced degrees and experience in applied animal behavior. These behaviorists can be found at <https://www.animalbehaviorsociety.org/web/index.php>
- 3) **CERTIFIED PROFESSIONAL DOG TRAINERS: (CPDT)** This organization requires its applicants to document at least 300 hours of training experience, provide references, and pass a written exam. Some levels of this exam also require videos of the applicant's work. In addition, they also certify behavioral professionals. Go to: <https://www.ccpdt.org/>
- 4) **INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF ANIMAL BEHAVIOR CONSULTANTS: (CDBC)** This organization offers individual behavior certification in a variety of species, such as horses, cats, birds, etc. as well as dogs and shelter behavior. They have several levels of certification. All applicants must do case studies, complete required readings, and pass an in-depth exam on behavior. To maintain membership applicants must complete 36 continuing education units every 3 years. Go to: <https://iaabc.org/>
- 5) **KAREN PRYOR ACADEMY: (KPA-CTP)** This organization offers many educational on-line articles and classes for the public and for trainers. They run a yearlong online training course focused on marker training that requires passing several exams on behavior and working with people, and attendance at four in-person two-day evaluations. The complete program is now run by Dr. Ken Ramirez. Go to: <https://karenpryoracademy.com/>
- 6) **Pat Miller Certified Training: (PMCT)** This academy is offered by Pat Miller, who runs a business on the east coast called Peaceable Paws. She offers 4 levels of certification: Basic training and behavior, Behavior Modification, Aggression, and Cognition. Go to: <https://peaceablepaws.com/>

- 7) Pet Professional Guild Accreditation Board: (PPG) This organization is a worldwide program based in Australia, that is geared only for professionals that believe there is no place for aversive methods in training. (They openly work against shock, prong, choke, pain, force, or fear in training). They produce their own curriculum and instructional classes for trainers.

- 8) Veterinary Behaviorists: These are veterinarians who have done additional studies in animal behavior. They have extensive knowledge of the relationships between an animal's health, environment, experiences, and behavior. They are knowledgeable about medications and can prescribe them as needed. They can be found through the American College of Veterinary Behaviorists: <https://www.dacvb.org/> and through the American Veterinary Society of Animal Behavior: <https://avsab.org/>

- 9) Victoria Stillwell Academy for Dog Training and Behavior: (VSA-CDT) Started by Victoria Stillwell, this east coast program is devoted to positive training. Go to: <https://www.vsdogtrainingacademy.com/>

In addition to the basic educational programs above, many trainers obtain supplemental certifications in specific areas of behavior, such as separation anxiety, fear, different types of aggression, or puppy development, for example. It is important to always look at a trainer's certifications in order to obtain the most appropriate and updated methods for helping your dog and you.

Written by Karen Seifert, CPDT, PPG Instructor, KPA-CTP, and information from The Whole Dog Journal.