Dogs greeting dogs – how to have a successful encounter



In a perfect world, our dogs would always be thrilled to encounter other animals, but we know that things are not always that easy. I work with many dogs that are rescues that have social anxiety issues. They need time to adjust and learn that the world is not a scary place. It does not help when people let their animals and children run up to these scared, confused souls.

You have the responsibility to not only keep your dog safe but also to prevent injury to other dog and their owners.

How to ensure successful encounters

The most important part is to let your dog know that you are stable leader that he can count on you to protect him during trying times. Watch how wolves work together. When something threatens their pack the leader steps to the front and takes charge of the situation. The pack knows that he has the situation under control and this gives them stability and peace of mind. You can do the same for your dog.

1. When working with a reactive or scared dog, be aware of your surroundings. If you see a dog off leash , calmly move away from the situation. Turn and walk away if you have time.

2. If this is not possible, remember not to get tense and nervous. Your dog will feed off your emotions and body language. Dogs take their cues from humans, if you remain calm it helps them to remain calm.
3. Tightening up on the leash, waving your arms or screaming will only exacerbate the situation. This tells your dog that something is really wrong. Keep your leash loose and calmly step in front of your dog.
4. Let the offending dog owner know that your dog is not friendly with other pets. Use a commanding voice but do not sound panicked or shrill.
5. If the dog continues to approach put your hand out in the stop position, step forward one or two paces and say, STOP or BACK in a deep, calm commanding voice.
6. If all else fails and the dog approaching is aggressive, and you cannot stop the attack from happening then DROP YOUR LEASH. Your dog will fall back on his natural instinct of flight or fight. Holding your leash will only hinder your dog from being able to get out of the situation or protect himself. Immediately call 911. There are leash laws in most states and the offending owner should have a chance to learn about them.

How to approach and greet a dog

You’re walking down the street and see a man taking a stroll with his charming puppy. Do you know the proper greeting etiquette?



First things first – you should ask the dog’s human companion if it is okay to approach. Once you’re given the clear:

1. Get on the dog’s level and extend your hand palm down to be sniffed.
2. Scratch the pup under the chin or stroke the dog gently on the chest and shoulders. Work your way to the top of the dogs head.
3. With some dogs, it is best to remain standing and use the same method described above.
4. Do not hover over the dog leaning over their head and encroaching on their space.
5. Do not put your face directly into the dogs as this can cause a negative reaction and it is a sure fire way to get bit if you make the dog feel threatened.

Most often, people’s natural instinct is to reach in and pat dogs on the head – often while leaning over the dog and even staring into its eyes. This is a very unnatural act for a dog. Have you ever seen a dog pat another dog on the head? Probably not unless it was a trained behavior. We have to refer to the rule of do not do anything to your dog that another dog would not do to them.

This does not mean that you should not teach your pup to find this behavior to be pleasurable, it just means that you should strive to make it enjoyable.

People greeting your dog

Suppose that someone comes up to greet your dog without *your* permission. It is best to train your dog to accept this kind of behavior, but greeters do not always know the best way to behave around animals. Your best response it to calmly step in front of your dog to block access.

Nothing in Life is Free



In a dog's world being the leader is not that comfortable a position. Leaders among canines and wolves carry a massive responsibility on their furry shoulders. They must be able to locate food, water, homes, settle conflicts within their family and protect their pack members.

The term "leader" is often misunderstood. The key to being a great leader in your dog's eyes lies in changing the way your dog feels about your leadership capabilities. Coercion, force and punishment are signs of a weak leader. And you want to be seen as a strong leader. The great news is that it is pretty simple to be a strong leader in your dog's eyes.

Remember that every time you interact with your dog they are learning something. Whether it is something positive or negative is up to you.

The NILIF Method (Nothing in Life is Free)

The concept of nothing in life is free changes they way that you and your dog relate to each other. This process can help a shy dog feel more secure by helping them trust you to be a stable leader, and it can also help a dog with a more dominate nature to understand their place in your home. The added benefit in this type of training is that it builds a stronger bond between you and your dog.

NILIF simply means that your dog must work for anything that it dog wants from you.

The core premise of the NILIF Method is that: Leaders control the resources. Resources can be a variety of different things. Anything that your dog finds rewarding can be considered a resource.

1. Food and water
2. Treats
3. Toys
4. Access to luxury accommodations such as the bed, the couch, chairs and/or your lap
5. Walks
6. Petting and affection
7. Access to different rooms
8. Rights to access of people entering the home

Here are a few simple ways to put this plan into action.

EXAMPLE #1: SPARKY NUDGES YOUR ARM OR HAND TO LET YOU KNOW THAT HE WANTS TO BE PETTED.

Sparky is telling you – his leader – that he wants something. You being the excellent leader that you are will not pet him without some behavior in return.

1. You tell Sparky to sit and watch you.
2. Sparky sits and watches.
3. You may pet Sparky.

EXAMPLE #2: TIME FOR DINNER

Food is a strong motivator for many dogs. Many know exactly when it is time to eat and won't hesitate to let you know if you're running behind schedule. They'll also ravenously attack their food bowls even thought they know that food will be provided again soon. This is a great time to assert your leadership position.

1. Prepare Sparky's bowl
2. If Sparky is in the room, he must wait quietly while you fill the bowl
3. If he jumps at you or tries to take the bowl, just stop
4. Tell Sparky to sit and wait.
5. Try again.
6. If he persists in trying to take the bowl, leave the room
7. Come back start again
8. Take Sparky to his feeding place
9. Have him sit
10. Place bowl in his spot
11. Tell Sparky to take it

You have now controlled access to your pups food and this is a valuable resource. Since you have given it to him it elevates you in your dogs eyes. Other food leadership lessons include:

1. Occasionally reaching down to pet your dog while it is eating.
2. If your dog is comfortable with this process then move his bowl a little bit.
3. After a few days actually pick up your dogs bowl while he is eating.
4. If Sparky exhibits guarding behaviors start by placing

his dish on the floor.
5. Sit in a chair and drop food a few pieces at a time into his bowl
6. If he objects walk away for a few minutes and try again

Do not torment your dog picking up and removing the bowl over and over during his meal. A leader tells his pack when to eat but then does not annoy them while they are eating. Tormenting your pet while he is eating could potentially lead to food guarding issues.

EXAMPLE #3: SPARKY GOES TO THE TOY CABINET AND BARKS AT THE DOOR THEN LOOKS AT YOU TO TRY TO ENTICE YOUR TO PLAY.

There are two different types of toys. Your toys and the dog's toys. You decide when to play with "your" toys, and you decide when the game ends and the toys go away. Your toys usually include things like balls, Frisbees, ropes and other interactive toys. The "dog" toys can be their favorite items to drag around and chew on.

You should be allowed to play with your dogs toys and remove them from your dogs mouth with no argument from Sparky. When your dog is demanding to play with "your toys"…

1. Ignore the behavior.
2. When Sparky gives up on telling you that it is play time wait just a few minutes and go to the toy cabinet
3. Get a toy and call Sparky to you
4. Have him sit and then say "let's play"
5. End the game before your friend is ready to. This will insure that Sparky will be excited to play again.

If you use this simple technique then you are controlling two resources, toys and play. Be sure to decide when the game ends as well as when it begins.

EXAMPLE #4:SPARKY JUMPS ON BED OR COUCH WITHOUT BEING INVITED.

When your dog decides to get up on your bed or couch, he learns that this is a “right” (as opposed to a privilege). As the leader, you control high ground and the choicest spots.

There are various schools of thought on whether pets belong on the furniture. It really is a personal choice based on your preferences and circumstances. If you do decide to allow Sparky to sit on the couch or lie on the bed, you need to treat these spaces as controlled resources. You decide when your pet is allowed on the furniture or bed, and your dog should know that he must be invited to join you. He must also get off the furniture when asked. Access to special places should be limited or closely monitored if your dog shows any aggression or resistance to being asked to relinquish “higher ground”.

The Find. Love. Train. Potty Training Guide

Potty training should be a top priority as it tends to be the deciding factor in your dog’s quality of life. With a little time, patience, and planning, this can be a relatively simple and painless process. Our Find. Love. Train. Potty Training Guide provides a positive plan of action that will deliver quick results.

Effective potty training is critical for puppies. At an early age, dogs learn quickly, and it is more challenging for a dog to unlearn a behavior or habit than it is to learn good habits in the first place. Most dogs want to please their owners and

live in harmony, so be patient and be consistent!

Find. Love. Train. Basic Truths

Before we get started, it is important to review the core tenets of the Find. Love. Train. philosophy. (Stick with us and you'll see these again and again!)

1. Accept responsibility for the success or failure during training. Never blame your dog for accidents. It is up to you to be watchful and to prevent mistakes.
2. Be patient. Dogs do not know what you want them to do, you have to teach them.
3. Train 24 hours a day and stay consistent. Dogs learn through repetition, and any behavior that is rewarded will be repeated. The more you practice the faster that you will set the behaviors
4. Use fairness in all things. If your dog does not understand what you want, you have no right to correct him. Show him what you want, and praise the right behavior.
5. Be positive. Every time you interact with your dog it is learning something – whether it is negative or positive is up to you.
6. Practice attention lessons and commands. If your dog is not paying attention he can't learn.

Topics:

- The Find. Love. Train. Potty Training Guide
- Potty Behavior Basics
- Prepare for Potty Training Success
- Potty Training – Step by Step
- Accidents happen…
- Potty Training Signals – The Bell Method

Crate Training Basics



Crate training is one of the most misunderstood subjects in your pup/dog's world. Folks may think that a crate is a horrible punishment – a jail used to confine your dog when he has been bad. In reality, dogs, like their wolf ancestors, are den animals. They feel secure and cozy in their dens, and the crate acts as a safe harbor in times of stress when dogs just need a break from us and all the frantic activity that seem to follow their humans.

Crates also serve a practical purpose of keeping your dog safe from harm when you are unable to be with them, and they can be an invaluable aid during potty training.

FAIRNESS IN ALL THINGS

Although the crate is a wonderful training tool, when used incorrectly it can actually be detrimental to your pet.

1. If you are at work all day and then come home and only let your dog out for short periods of time then the den becomes a prison.
2. If you keep your dog in a crate all the time and do not let it exercise and interact with the family, it will soon become frustrated. This can lead to destructive behaviors.
3. It is never fair to leave a puppy or dog in its crate past the amount of time that he can control his bladder.

CHOOSING THE PROPER DEN

Selecting the right crate for your pet is critical to your success. Too small and your pet will feel trapped and uncomfortable; too big and is loses its den-like appeal. Here are some basic tips to help you pick a crate:

1. The crate should be large enough for the dog to sit, stand, stretch out and turn around comfortably.
2. Choose a crate that can accommodate the puppy when he is full grown. (So you don’t have to buy another crate every few months.) While your puppy is small, create a barrier within the crate to make it temporarily smaller. Some wire and plastic crates come with a divider, but it is also easy to create a makeshift divider by blocking excess space with a box or bedding.
3. Keep in mind that if a puppy has enough room to go to the back of the crate to potty then return to the front to eat and sleep, he will have accidents in his crate. The space should be limited.

PROPER INTRODUCTION IS THE KEY TO SUCCESS.

Most dog crate nightmare stories are caused by taking a new dog and just putting him into the crate without a proper introduction. Making the crate a place the dog wants to go – rather than stuffing the dog into its new home and closing the door – is critical.

This is an “Any behavior that is rewarded will be repeated moment.” So use this to your advantage.

1. Place your crate in an area where your family will be spending a lot of time.
2. Put a soft blanket or towel in the crate. Never use a dog pillow until you are sure that it will not become a chew toy. If your dog eats its bed, you may have an

emergency vet visit in your future!

3. Have lots of toys and soft yummy treats on hand.
4. Sit about 2 feet from the crate and encourage the dog to approach. Say the dog's name, clap your hands, make kissing noises – whatever it takes to get the dog's attention.
5. Do not use the word "come" unless you are sure that the dog will respond to it. We want praise the dog for approaching the crate not for "coming". If your pet does not come toward you when called, you can try to lure him in with treats, praising every forward advance.
6. When your dog is comfortable being in close proximity to the crate, place the treat on the floor next to the crate. Every time your dog gets near the treats praise or click. Do not wait for him to take the treat.
7. The next step is to get your dog comfortable with touching the crate. Start by placing a treat that touches the crate.
8. Make a trail of treats to the open door. Praise every forward motion as your dog is scarfing down the goodies.
9. Next, toss a few goodies in the crate door. Your dog should follow them in even if they are a bit shy; just give it time. Do not force the behavior, and praise every forward movement.
10. Now that your dog is familiar with the crate, let's make going in a lot of fun! Start a game with your dog's favorite toy by tossing the toy into the crate. You can add treats, if necessary. Continue this process until your pup is running happily in and out of the crate.
11. After your dog has mastered going in and out of his crate, you can add a word/command. Some people use "crate" or "kennel". It does not matter what you call it but add a word to all behaviors. It will help you communicate with your friend.

Whew, this has been a lot of work. This is probably a good time to take a break and do something else for a few

minutes. When you are ready to resume their lessons go back a few steps and toss a favorite toy or treats into their crate. Make a fun game out of this, as what puppy can resist playing a game with you. You're just reinforcing your earlier lesson.

The next hurdle is teaching your dog to be comfortable in the crate with the door closed.

1. Once your dog is running in and out of the crate reliably, toss in a cookie and a great chew toy.
2. Close the crate door and wait about 30 seconds. Open the door and reward your pup.
3. Never open the door while your dog is whining or trying to get out as he learns very quickly to howl longer and louder until you give in and open the door. If your dog exhibits this behavior and is not stopping then actually get up and leave the room until the temper tantrum subsides. Always wait until your puppy is quiet before you open the door.
4. After you let your dog out, play for a moment letting him start running in and out of the crate again. Close the door again and wait two minutes to open it.
5. Repeat this increasing the time to five minutes with you sitting beside the crate.

Depending on your pup and the amount of time this has taken you to get the five minutes quiet in their den, it might be beneficial to take another break.

1. When you begin the exercise again just repeat the above procedure but this time after closing the door leave the room for a couple of minutes. Be sure that you are out of sight.
2. Wait to be sure that your pup is quiet and return and release them.
3. Do this on and off during the day increasing the time your little buddy is left alone in small increments.

HELPFUL TIPS

1. If your dog starts to whine and cry to be let out you may have increased the length of time too quickly. Next time, try leaving him in the crate for a shorter time period.
2. Do not release your dog from the crate until he is quiet. Dogs learn very quickly, and they will know that tantrums work and are the best way to get you to open the door.
3. Have high value chew toys to use just at crate time. A frozen stuffed kong can keep your pup happy for a very long time.
4. Keep the crate door open when your dog isn't in it. Your dog may use this a space to rest or recuperate during the day.
5. Implement a 2-foot-rule so that when your dog goes into the crate no one is allowed to go within two feet. This is a courtesy to your dog.
6. Reduce liquid intake before long periods of crate confinement. A puppy that is healthy can be taken off water about an hour before bedtime to reduce the likelihood of needing to go in the middle of the night, but if you feel that your dog may need water during the night, you can put ice cubes in a dish to regulate the amount of fluid intake.
7. Feed your dog in it's crate. This makes the crate a very desirable space.
8. If you leave your dog in a crate when you are away from home, it helps to continue to crate him for short periods of time when you are home. This prevents them from associating the crate with being left alone.
9. It may be useful to crate your dog ten to fifteen minutes before leaving the house. This prevents separation anxiety behavior in the crate because the dog will not equate being put in the crate to leaving him alone.

10. Do not make a big deal out of coming home or leaving the house as this will increase the possibility of separation anxiety.

Great games for training and play



Structured play is a great way to deepen your bond with your pet, reinforce positive behaviors and exercise your pet's brain. While the games below are written to be dog-specific, they actually can work well with cats, too!

Using simple games to train your dog will make learning fun and rewarding. Many folks approach dog training with militant passion. They allot 30 minutes or more to walking their dogs through one boring exercise after another. Guess what? This is boring for the dog, too! And not much fun.

Here are some games to play that will reinforce training behaviors and commands:

- The Name Game
- Watch me game
- Puppy ping-pong game
- Hide-n-Seek Game

The art of body massage (for your pet!)



Happy and well-trained pets feel secure and relaxed when they are being touched. They actually find it a pleasurable experience. One way we can teach our pets to not just tolerate handling but to actually enjoy the process is through the simple exercise of body massage. This will not only be beneficial to you but it will also make life easier for your vet, groomer and anyone else that comes in contact with your dog.

When I was first introduced to this exercise in formal training classes it was forced behavioral training. Trainers actually made dogs submit to handling through dominance training. I quickly realized that I could achieve more positive, enjoyable results by helping dogs understand that when people touched them it was a wonderful feeling. Every touch experience becomes be enjoyable.

Body massage works well for all types of pets – not just dogs!

How to massage your pet

1. Sit behind your dog and begin by gently stroking around their shoulders. I personally like to sit in this position as it makes it easier to reach the area but if your dog is uncomfortable just begin by sitting at their side.
2. As your dog relaxes start making circular motions with

your hands and applying a small amount of pressure. Never massage hard enough to make your dog uncomfortable.

3. Work your way down slowly toward the back and shoulders massaging as you go.
4. When Sparky relaxes try massaging his head with the same gentle circular motions.
5. Stroke their muzzle gently from the base of their nose, between the eyes and up the head.
6. You may find Sparky gets so relaxed he rolls upside over in a very relaxed posture. This is a great moment that should be rewarded with soft, kind praise and a generous belly rub.
7. As your dog gets comfortable start massaging all parts of the body from head to tail.
8. Massage your dog's muzzle gently working into his mouth and massaging the gums. If Sparky starts to mouth or bite down too hard yelp, remove your hands and stop the massage for 5 seconds. Resume the exercise until your dog does not apply pressure to your hands.
9. To massage your pets ears start by rubbing the ear in a circular motion between your thumb and fingers. Then slowly desensitize them to having you touch the inside of the ear.
10. While massaging their tail actually pull gently to simulate a child grabbing the tail so that they will not be startled or afraid if this occurs.
11. The paws are for most dogs the most sensitive area when it comes to handling. This can be problematic as you must be able to trim the hair and nails and tend to any injuries that might occur.
12. Start at the shoulder area and work your way down their legs to the paw.
13. At first do no more than touch the top of the paw. Do not try to hold them as this should never be a power struggle.
14. When your dog accepts your touch begin stroking more of

the paw until you are able to massage not only the top of their feet but also between the pads.

Tips

1. This exercise can be done any time you are just relaxing with your pup. Whether we are watching a movie or just sitting together enjoying a sunset I do body massage on my pets. I find it to be a very calming exercise for me and they enjoy the hands on experience so it is a win win situation for both of us.

2. When your dog gets accustomed to the massage begin applying a bit more pressure to their ears and tail. This is a safeguard as children have a tendency to approach our pets in an inappropriate manner. They may inadvertently pull on your pups ears or tail and this can help your dog practice self control under these circumstances.

Clicker Training Basics

Many dog trainers recommend the use of a “clicker” to improve communication between you and your dog. Until your dog learns a particular command, words mean nothing! Teach the behavior, then teach the command… Dogs learn quickly that the clicker sound means “good!”.

When you use force to achieve a behavior, you are doing all the thinking for your dog. Your dog will learn to avoid the correction rather than figure out on his own what you want.

WHAT IS A CLICKER?

A clicker is a small gadget that easily makes a distinct and consistent noise. Your dog learns that this particular noise has a meaning – "good dog!". There are three basic clicker types, and which one you choose is more a matter of personal preference and budget. They all work the same.

1. The Box clicker: This is the most common clicker and can found at any pet shop. The cost is under $4.00. (You can often find promotional box clickers for around $1.00.)
2. Star Mark clicker: This clicker's shape and size make it a very user friendly model. The cost is under $6.00.
3. Quiet Clicker: This clicker is best used for dogs that are sensitive to noise. They have adjustable volume settings and can adapt to your dog's needs.

CLICKER TRAINING BASICS

No matter what trick or behavior you are trying to teach your dog, the clicker can help. Every time you click, you "mark" a behavior. The click tells your pet "YES, you have done the right thing." Research also indicates that the click sound activates your dog's mind and helps your pet learn to think and to focus.

Your goal is to click immediately when your dog does the desired action or behavior. Timing is critical – you only have 1.5 seconds to let your dog know that he has achieved the behavior that you wanted.

Here's a simple clicker training example:

1. Lure your dog into "sit" using a yummy treat.
2. When he sits, click. Your dog might stand immediately after the click. This is normal. When you clicked, you told him that he did the right thing and is finished with the behavior.
3. Give you dog a treat after every click. If you make a mistake and click at the wrong time you must give your

dog a treat anyway. It is not your dog's mistake and it will only confuse him if he is not rewarded.

Your dog will quickly learn when he hears a click, good things happen. All clicker training follows the same pattern.

NOTE: Never click to get your dog's attention. The clicker should only be used to mark a behavior. If you click indiscriminately, you will confuse your pet.

Some dogs may find it difficult to learn new tricks and behaviors. Adding a "jackpot" reward can supplement clicks and treats and help your pet better recognize success.

1. When your dog accomplishes the desired behavior, click, say "jackpot" enthusiastically and give multiple treats and praise. This will let your dog know that he has done something really special and that you are really pleased, so he will be more likely to offer the behavior again.
2. Click only once and never give extra clicks. Only give your dog extra rewards and praise.

Beyond the basics

Your clicker is very handy for advanced training, as well. Using the techniques below, you can teach your dog all sorts of tricks!

Lengthening a behavior – hold that position!

After your dog learns a trick or behavior, you may want him to "hold" the position or to wait for further commands. This is called "lengthening the behavior" and it's pretty simple.

1. Give your dog a command, and count to three before clicking and treating.
2. Repeat this process, but count to five before clicking.
3. Wait longer and longer periods between clicks, and your dog will learn very quickly to hold his position

until you click. Like magic, your dog will hold positions longer with very little effort.

BTW, you'll want to count to yourself because speaking aloud will distract your dog!

Luring – coax your dog into the desired position or behavior

The simplest way to begin using the clicker is to lure your dog and then click as soon as you achieve the behavior that you want. To lure your dog use a treat and lead your dog into the correct position. Do not speak to your dog during this phase of training.

For example, to achieve a sit place a treat in the palm of your hand. Hold the treat under your thumb.

1. Raise your hand slowly over your dog's head and move it towards his tail. Your dog should raise his head following the treat, and his rear will go to the ground. Gravity works.
2. Click immediately then treat. Try to get a quick succession of lure, click, treat. At this point you will be teaching a hand signal as you lure your dog.

Luring is based on the show-don't-tell training principle. Your dog must learn a behavior before he learns the command.

Shaping – teach your dog in smaller increments

Shaping consists of taking baby steps towards a behavior. You can click for voluntary (or accidental) movements towards your goal.

1. You may coax or lure your dog into a movement or position, but do not force the behavior. Let the dog discover how to perform the behavior on it's own.
2. Don't wait for the whole picture of the perfect

behavior. Click and treat for small movements in the right direction. It’s like playing hot and cold.

Example: You are luring your dog into the down position. Your pet will only look down toward his chest following the treat but will not complete the down. So, let’s build on the little bit of forward progress your dog is making.

1. When your dog looks down, click and treat and repeating the exercise waiting for your dog to move closer to the down position.
2. For every little movement that takes him closer to the ground you will click and treat.
3. When he achieves the down position, click, treat and jackpot.

Chaining – joining multiple behaviors together into one trick

Chaining is a method that will help you achieve difficult or complex behaviors. It consists of combining small skills to teach a more complex maneuver.

A simple example is teaching your dog the old standby “play dead” trick.

1. Teach your roll over using BANG! as a cue.
2. Teach your dog to lay his head flat on the floor and to stay still playing dead.
3. Teach him to him to stand up on his back legs or sit up.

After your dog knows all of his new tricks, combine them into “Stick em up!”

- Start with him standing on his back legs or sitting up on his hind legs, then use bang to get your dog to drop to the ground.
- Finish it with playing dead and have your dog fall on

his side for a dramatic death.

There are many ways to use your clicker to it’s full advantage. All it takes is a bit of effort and creativity and you can achieve anything with your dog.

Capturing – reward and name a behavior that your dogs does on his own

Capturing is a unique and fun way to teach your pet new behaviors. It gives you the opportunity to take cute behaviors that your dog does naturally and turn them into a trick.

A simple example: Say that your dog lays down and places his paws over his nose.

1. While sitting around with your pet wait for him to place his paw on his nose and click and treat. If you do this often enough he will get it.
2. Add a word like “shy” as a command, and after he learns to respond to the word ask him “Are you shy?” he will then do his trick. How easy is that?

Another use for capturing is it gives you a way to teach your pet behaviors that he is having problems with. For example, if your dog is challenged by the “down” command:

1. Have your dog on a leash, and stand on it so your hands are free. Don’t give your dog a lot of room to maneuver.
2. Signal for a down. Then wait. It may take a while but with this method patience is a virtue.
3. Do not say the word, down repeatedly. Let him think about what he should do.
4. When your dog downs click and jackpot.
5. Start again. Do not give up. Wait for it. It will happen.

Keep practice sessions short. Much more is learned in three sessions of five or ten minutes each than in an hour of boring repetitions. You can get dramatic results, and teach your dog

many new things, by fitting a few clicks a day here and there into your normal routine.

The “Wait” Command

Wait is a very important behavior. It tells your dog that he must stay in one spot momentarily and that you will tell him when it is time to move on. In the lesson below, we use this to teach proper door behavior but you will find it has many everyday uses.

The training technique below uses the clicker training method. If you choose not to use a clicker you can replace it with the word yes or good, but clicker training may help activate your dogs mind and help them understand a behavior quicker.

STEP BY STEP

1. Use an inside door to begin as this will prevent your dog from accidentally running out into the street.
2. Place your dog on a six foot leash to prevent running through the door. If necessary you can step on the leash to keep your dog from bolting.
3. Step up to the door, and tell Sparky to. “Sit.” (Leave about 4 ft of space between your dog and the door.)
4. Tell Sparky to “ WAIT”, using a circular motion with your hand.
5. Open the door just an inch. Wait a second and close the door. If Sparky does not move toward the door click and treat.

6. Again tell Sparky to sit and wait using your hand signal. Open the door about 2 inches. Close the door. If he does not move from his spot click and treat.
7. Continue this pattern opening the door a bit more each time until you can open it all the way.
8. Close the door again. Tell Sparky to sit and wait using your hand signal. Open the door all the way. Step through the door. Your dog should not follow you. Step back inside. Close the door. Click, treat and praise the behavior.

Success! This would be a good time to jackpot your puppy. Tell Sparky to sit and wait using your hand signal. Open the door and step out then call him so that he will know that he is now allowed to step through the door. When he comes running to you click and treat and jackpot again.

IMPORTANT REMINDERS

1. Remember a jackpot does not mean more clicks it just means the pup gets more treats.
2. If your dog breaks his wait at any time during the exercise make a quick correction noise, step in front of him to stop any forward motion and close the door. Go back a few steps and only open the door a small amount. Repeat the procedures above until Buster sits patiently and waits to be called.
3. Leaders lead and the pack follows. You must always go first out the door as this tells your pet that you are a responsible leader. You can also have him wait while you put his leash on him or want him to stay in one spot for a moment. Use this when going through doors inside your house as it will teach Buster not to charge a door while someone is trying to walk through it.
4. This is not a stay command. Stay is long term and position specific. What this means, is if I say, BUSTER, SIT, STAY", he must remain in a sitting position until I

release him. If I tell him down, stay he must remain in place in a down position until I release him. With the command wait I do not care if he sits, downs are stands as long as he stays where I told him to until I tell him to follow me.

The “Touch” command

The “touch” command is you and your dog’s ticket to a world of new tricks and talents. Once your dog understands “touch” you can teach him to close cabinets, fetch items and perform other “chores”. And it is a remarkably easy command to learn!



EQUIPMENT NEEDED

1. Plenty of soft treats. If you use a hard treat it slows down training time as you have to wait for your dog to chew. The faster the repetitions the quicker they learn.
2. A clicker, if you use one.

Training Process

1. Sit in a quiet place with your dog. Get down on his level.
2. Hold out your hand with no treat in it. When your dog sniffs or touches your hand, immediately mark the behavior by saying, “Good,” and/or clicking the exact moment that he sniffs or makes any form of contact with your hand.

3. Use your I-am-so-happy-you-did-that voice, and treat immediately. Be sure to give the praise and/or click before you treat.
4. Hold out your hand again. When your pup touches you repeat the step above.
5. After your dog is touching your hand reliably, add the word “Touch”. Don’t use the word until your dog has thought about what you want and is touching your hand every time you present it. It is much better to show the dog the action before you give a word that corresponds to the action.

Once your dog understands the word “touch”, you can start “touching” different items. It is easy to start with something simple like a post-it note or a note card. Hold up the item and ask your dog to “touch”.

1. Your dog may be a bit confused, but be patient. Only use the word once and wait for your pup to figure it out. If you repeat the word again and again you are only confusing the issue.
2. When your dog touches the card say “Good Touch.” and/or click the behavior. Repeat the process until your pup responds every time.
3. Repeat this process with different items to teach your dog that “touch” means to touch any item that you point to or hold up with his nose.