

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.