

House Dog Obedience Class - Week 4

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Name Game/Eye Contact Step 4

Behavior: Dog makes eye contact when food is in both hands

Verbal Cue: Your dog's name/Watch me

It does not matter what position your dog is in. Show your dog the food lure between fingertips in both hands. Raise your arms so that you are holding the food on either side of your dog's face. When s/he looks up at you and makes eye contact, mark and reward. Once s/he masters this, start to gradually move your hands closer to your dog's face – see if s/he can maintain that eye contact while the food is moving closer! Move just an inch at first. Mark and reward for maintaining eye contact. Gradually decrease distance closer and closer to your dog.

Hand Target Step 4

Behavior: Dog bops their nose on your hand twice before they get one treat

Verbal Cue: Touch

Here we are starting to fade the marker. Start by cuing a few hand targets, marking and rewarding each one to get warmed up. Next cue a hand target but do not mark when s/he bops their nose on your hand, instead hold still and wait or take your hand away and then cue the second target! She might be a little confused at first – s/he's waiting for you to mark and deliver that treat! So s/he's going to bop your hand again as if to say "hello are you paying attention?!" Mark and reward the second target.

Sit Step 4

Behavior: Dog sits at an open door

Verbal Cue: Sit

Just like last week where we were working on default sits when we stop walking, this week we start practicing default sits at doorways. Approach a closed door. Cue a sit (you don't have to feed them here). Reach out and touch the door knob. If your dog continues to sit, mark and reward. If s/he stands up that's ok! Cue them back into a sit and try again. If s/he was successful then this time you reach, grab the door knob and turn the handle. Mark and reward if s/he maintains her sit. Repeat and build up to opening the door just an inch or two.

Leave-it Step 4

Behavior: Dog stays away from a treat on a table

Verbal Cue: Leave-it

It does not matter what position your dog is in. Place the treat directly on the table and cover it with your hand. When s/he backs off, mark and reward with a treat from your other hand or treat pouch.. This is important so that we don't reinforce grabbing food from the table! If s/he masters that try removing your hand from the treat for 1 or two seconds, mark and reward. Gradually build duration just as we did when we practiced leave-it from our hand.

Down & Magic Mat Step 4

Behavior: Dog offers down or sit on a mat and stays for 5-10 steps away in different directions before you return

Verbal Cue: Mat/Bed/Place (Pick ONE!)

Cue your dog into a down on a mat or bed just like last week and warm them up by taking a step to your left or right, or turn one step to your left and finally turn your back completely to them. Mark and reward each behavior. Next you will gradually build distance, marking and rewarding for a maintained down in whatever direction you choose. Always reward by setting the food on the mat between your dog's front legs. If at any time they get up, reset them into the down position on the mat and start with only one step away again. After every 3-4 repetitions marking and feeding for holding position on the mat, release your dog with their release cue and toss a cookie away from the mat. Repeat the exercise.

Loose Leash Step 4

Behavior: Dog makes a left and a right turn during heeling pattern

Verbal Cue: No cue at this time

Get your dog into heel position. When ready, begin walking forward as we did last week. But, instead of making a full U-turn or Front Cross turn, you will make a 90 degree turn to your left or your right. Continue walking forward for another 5-10 paces, then make your full turn and go back in the opposite direction. The pattern will be an L shape. If at any time your dog gets ahead, feel free to stop and get them back into heel position, or make a U-turn and begin again. You have an opportunity to mark and feed your dog for any (and all!) of the following:

- Any time you change direction (u-turn, front cross turn, left or right turns)
- Any time s/he looks at you!!!! This is a big one!
- Any time s/he has a loose leash
- If you stop moving and s/he sits (offered or even if you have to cue it)

Come Step 4

Behavior: Dog runs between two people but as they are running to one, the other person moves their location

Verbal Cue: Use your recall cue when the instructor says you are ready

Person #1 calls the dog's name. Mark as they are in motion and feed at your feet. At the same time, person #2 will run to a different location to call the dog from. Then the dog will need to look for them! Repeat with the other person.

How often should you practice these behaviors?

EVERY DAY! Keep training sessions short – between 10-15 minutes

Where should you practice these behaviors?

Everywhere! Start in one room of your house. Once you have both mastered a behavior in one room, then move to another. Then move outside. Then practice when you're on a walk down the block. Then when you are at the park. Then when you are at the veterinary office! So on and so forth... This is called generalizing a behavior and it is a very important concept to practice!