

morley vetcentre

TRAINING TIPS

USING AN EVENT MARKER:

The marker word communicates to the dog that he has done the right thing and a reward will follow (toy, treat, play etc). A clicker is a great marker that can be used instead of a word.

Creates a dog who is focused on owner and not food: food doesn't appear until after the marker.

Timing is VITAL: The marker word must be said **IMMEDIATELY** the behaviour is offered. (A second too late and we may have 'marked' a look away, a sniff at the ground, a jump up etc).

Teaching the marker word:

- Arm yourself with 20 yummy treats
- Say your marker word 'YES' (or click if using a clicker)
- Give puppy a yummy treat (take treat down to pup's level—don't allow pup to jump up to get the treat)
- Repeat twice for 5 days to teach puppy the association—now you are ready to have fun training!

ATTENTION:

A huge challenge for any dog owner is creating a dog who focuses on their owner when out and about. There are loads of distractions in a dog's world! Encouraging and rewarding calm focus on their owner is a very important first step in training.

Shaping is a game of HOT and COLD and the behaviour we are shaping this week is your puppy looking in to your eyes! Use your YES (marker word) for any little movements in your direction (a glance, a slight head turn, a step etc) and reward with a yummy treat. This tells your dog that they are getting HOTTER and HOTTER to the final behaviour. Slowly increase criteria until you have a dog that is eagerly looking up at you!

Practice with no distractions first (lounge room for example) until you have a well developed behaviour. Add in small distractions gradually—can your dog give you attention when you are both in the backyard? Go slow and reward highly!!

THE 'PING PONG' GAME:

Once your dog is responding to the 'YES' word (or click) & offering you eye contact we can play a fun game to further establish attention.

Dog looks at you
'YES'
Drop treat near your left foot
Dog gobbles up treat
Dog looks back up at you
'YES'
Drop treat near your right foot
Dog gobbles up treat
Dog looks back at you
Drop treat near your left foot....
REPEAT flicking the treat either side of you

You can flick treat further away to make the game even more fun—dog now gets to chase after yummy treat, then runs back to you and LOOKS at you to restart the game!

Practice in a variety of locations



LEARN TO EARN PROGRAM

To establish good habits desirable behaviours need to be reinforced at a HIGH RATE! Look at throwing away the food bowl and feeding the new way!

1. 50% of your dog's food can be placed in fun enrichment toys—this gives them a fun job to do, plenty of mental stimulation and burns off energy! See our enrichment handout for fun ideas!
2. 50% of your dog's food is to be used to reinforce desirable behaviours. Write down a short list of behaviours that you feel a 'GOOD DOG' should know. Examples might be:

Greeting people politely

Walking nicely on the lead

Coming when called

Lying calmly on their bed

We can then highly reinforce these desirable behaviours—the more we reinforce a behaviour the more likely the dog will repeat the desirable behaviour.

Use a portion of your dog's daily meal to reinforce calm/desirable 'GOOD DOG' behaviours, and also use their daily food for training exercises and games.



NO! THE BEHAVIOURS WE DON'T WANT!

Had one of those days where you feel that you have said 'NO' a hundred times?

'NO' may interrupt a behaviour that we as humans find undesirable (eg chewing on our shoes!), however it does not teach our dogs what we DO want them to do.

Instead follow these two simple rules:

1. Manage your dog's environment to prevent undesirable behaviours (close the wardrobe doors, place the TV remote/sunglasses etc up on the breakfast bar instead of on the low, easy to reach coffee table, use baby gates to prevent access to areas when you are unable to supervise etc etc) until your dog has learnt the desirable behaviours that you DO want!
2. If your dog shows an undesirable behaviour think about WHY your dog is doing it. For example, chewing on things is a completely normal dog behaviour, it is only a human's perception of WHAT the dog is chewing that causes the issue! So, if your dog does find your shoes and starts to chew, instead of saying 'NO' use his name in a bright happy voice to call him to you and then **REDIRECT** him to an appropriate chewing behaviour (stuffed Kong on his mat for example). This way, we are showing the dog the right choice—and right choices that are reinforced will be repeated—so more of the chewing stuffed Kongs and less of the chewing shoes (which we are now going to shut away safely in the wardrobe!) **What other behaviours can you redirect to more appropriate choices?**

REDIRECT

Show your dog what you DO want him to do!



For further advice please contact us at

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