This curriculum is provided to professionals and pet owners as a step-by-step guide to successful, positive reinforcement training for puppies and dogs.

For a full manual including exercises and education in body language, marker training and more, see the full IAABC Dog Trainer’s Handbook.

Please contact your IAABC Accredited or Certified professional if you need assistance with training and behavior for your pet.
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Basic foundational skills are imperative for dogs to learn to navigate their environment. This could be when out in public or in our homes.

As trainers, it’s our job to help our clients to understand their dogs, the basics of how they learn and to provide helpful, clear instructions on how to teach these basic manners in a respectful way and based on the LIMA principles. The following games and training exercises are useful for dog owners and you can use them as in your own classes. The manual was designed in such a way that each exercise begins on a new page to facilitate their use as instructions for your clients in class or as handouts for homework.

As dog trainers, it’s important that we are able to help our clients to understand dogs, their motivations, and how to enjoy a happy, healthy relationship with them. Training can not only help to build a better base of communication, it also helps to build a stronger bond and to enrich their mental lives and improve emotional wellbeing.

This manual can help you in building fun and engaging exercises to build a solid foundation. It is not necessary to teach all these skills in the same order as mentioned in this handbook, but some do build on others.

If you have any questions, please ask your IAABC accredited trainer or certified behavior consultant for help.
POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT

What is Positive Reinforcement? Using positive reinforcement to train your dog means you are rewarding (reinforcing) the behaviors you like, and often ignoring (not reinforcing) the behaviors you do not like. You can use treats, praise, or real-life rewards (i.e. games, walks, car rides) to reinforce your dog’s good behavior. Marker training is one effective way of using positive reinforcement to train your dog, but it’s possible to use rewards without the marker.

The benefits of positive reinforcement training, also referred to as R+ training, include a happy training relationship with your dog, ease and clarity of information for your dog, and effectiveness. R+ training can also be enriching mentally for your dog as it requires the use of problem solving skills. R+ is a great way to increase the bond you have with your dog, which is the foundation of any successful training plan where the dog is focused and is eager to engage. It is used for all types of training and behavior issues, without causing harm, and it takes into account what your specific dog likes and who he is.

Positive reinforcement training means that good behavior predicts good rewards, making that behavior more likely to occur again in the future. Thus, the behavior becomes stronger and more robust, allowing the dog to make educated and positive choices.

Punishing or scolding a dog doesn’t help him behave properly or tell him what we expect him to do in a given situation. R+ training tells the dog what to do instead of the undesired behavior.

Reinforcers are like money: each kind has a value for your dog, and some are worth more than others to him. The value can vary from one situation to another. For example, if you want your dog to come when called in the park, maybe scratching and petting him is not as rewarding for him as a piece of hot dog and letting him return to exploring. But when you teach him to lie down on his bed at home, scratching his belly might be the best reinforcer ever.

Reinforcers (commonly referred to as “rewards”) aren’t just food, though food is by far the easiest to use if that’s what your dog likes.

- Hot Dogs
- Meatballs
- Bacon
- Cheese
- Smoked Fish
- Liverwurst
- Diced Chicken
- Freeze-dried Liver
- Other locally available treats
- Kongs®
- Squeak toys
- Balls
- Frisbees
- Playing tug
- Running
- Swimming
- Petting & Scratching
- Playing hide & seek with their human
- A leaf
- A paper plate
- Anything that your dog finds interesting in the moment.

USING MARKERS

What is a Marker? The use of a marker makes training easier for you, as it tells your dog the exact moment when he has done the right thing. A marker is a sound of your choice, e.g. the word “good.” A clicker is a marker, too.

You “mark” (say “good” or press your clicker) immediately when your dog demonstrates the movement or behavior you are looking for. Immediately after that, you will give a treat or provide another reinforcer. Your dog will learn that the sound of the marker promises good things, and you will be able to communicate what exact behavior he is getting “paid” for.

PRACTICE:
Charge the marker of choice (clicker/“good”/“yes” or other “magic words” or sounds). Mark and give a treat. Repeat this 6-10 times, rapidly. If you are using a word, be consistent with what word you choose. A marker is not the same as verbal praise, where you may choose from a variety of positive affirmations.
BASIC MANNER SKILLS

The following pages contain exercises to teach new behaviors or maintain existing ones. Dogs struggling with behavioral issues benefit hugely from simple training exercises as a means of comforting consistency – reminding them what we want them to do rather than being scolded for doing things we don’t like.

New puppies and old dogs love learning new tricks, and that’s what all training is, after all. Training is enriching for both species, and helps build a precious bond between human and dog – one that lasts a lifetime.

TIPS FOR TRAINING:

- 2 or 3 short sessions a day – more if you’re both loving it, never fewer than one please!
- 3-10 minutes per session so everyone is left wanting more and no one is tired, bored, or stuffed to the gills with treats.
- Practice when and where you and your dog can focus on one another.
- If you’re struggling with a skill, stop, take a breath, practice something you’ve had success with, and leave that skill for another day.
- There are many different techniques (targeting, luring, capturing, etc.) to teach your dog the skills you’re working on. Whatever works best for you is the one to use, and the same technique may not always be the best one for a given skill.
- Distance, duration, and distraction should be practiced one at a time. When you change something (new place, greater distractions, harder exercise for either one of you), lower your criteria. Just because your dog can do everything perfectly in the kitchen does not mean he can do it in front of a butcher shop while a cat convention walks by.
- Ask your IAABC accredited or certified trainer for help if you need help.

Remember that you are awesome for training your dog. He or she really appreciates you for that!
Basic manners are the essential foundational skills that let you build on everything else you want to teach your dog. It is easy and fun to teach these skills with positive reinforcement:

- The Name Game
- Calm Greetings
- Come (Get it Game)
- Loose Leash Walking
- Sit
- Stay
- Down
- Touch
- Settle
- Muzzle Training
- Go to Mat
- Harness Training

GETTING STARTED

What equipment will you need? You will need the right tools to train your dog comfortably. This will vary depending on each exercise. We suggest using the following:

- A soft, wide collar (cloth or leather).
- An adjustable harness with the option to attach the leash on the back or chest (some harnesses can be worn upside down to accomplish this if a version with both attachment options isn’t available.)
- A 2-meter (6-foot) leash for walks and a 5-meter (15-foot) leash to let the dog explore.
- A basket muzzle which allows the dog to breathe, pant, and drink water. **Do not use a cloth muzzle which closes the dog’s snout!** Dogs can’t breathe freely or drink water with these and they can suffocate. You can find muzzles and how to fit them on the internet if you’re not able to travel to a store.

### The Name Game

“**The Name Game**” teaches your dog attention and focus upon hearing his name. It couldn’t be simpler, as long as you know what your dog loves.

To play the name game:

1. Just say your dog’s name.
2. When your dog turns her head to look at you, give her a small, very yummy treat from your hand and let her know what a genius she is for having chosen to do that.
3. As she starts to look at you, smile, and give her a treat each time. She doesn’t have to sit or continue looking at you.
4. Do this 5 to 10 times in a row, then smile and “release” her by telling her she’s great. You’re done!!

As your dog quickly learns that her name equals treats and attention, practice this in varying environments and with varying distractions: at home, at a bus stop, at a park etc., and at longer distances.

### (Come) Get It Game

The “Get It Game” can be used to teach a great recall. This is as easy and comfortable as dog training can get. You can do it while watching TV, cooking dinner, reading – anytime. It’s the foundation for a good, solid recall.

1. Toss a treat so that your dog can see where it goes. Tell her to “get it!”
2. Once she’s gotten the treat, say “Fluffy, come!” in a nice, friendly tone, and hold ONE treat out in your hand for her to see.
3. When she gets to you, give her the treat while you hook a finger from the other hand through her collar. Then throw another treat and tell her to “get it!” Your dog will quickly learn to come back to your side.

If your dog doesn’t come when you say her name, don’t repeat the cue. Walk up to her, stick the treat under her nose and lure her back to where you started. Give her the treat when you get back to your starting point. If she didn’t follow that treat, you either need higher value treats, to go back to a shorter distance or play “The Name Game” (see above) first! Practice this several times a day in several locations. You can do this outside with your dog on-leash or long line, or in a fenced yard off-leash.
**Sit**

Why do we tend to teach our dog to sit? Because it is easy! Plus, it is incompatible with so many other unwanted behaviors, like jumping, running and pulling on the leash. If he’s sitting, he can’t be doing those other things.

**STEP 1:**
1. Put a yummy treat right to your pup’s nose. Bring the treat back over her forehead.
2. As her head moves up, her rear should move toward the floor. The instant she sits, mark and feed the dog while she’s still sitting.
3. Tell her she’s great, release her or ask her to stand up and move a little bit with you so she’s no longer sitting, and repeat 5-7 times.

*Note: There is no saying “sit” yet – the “sit” cue comes later!*

If your dog walks backwards, sit on a chair (lower your body posture) or try next to a corner that keeps the dog from walking backwards. If he jumps, lower your hand with the treat in it.

**STEP 2:**
1. Lure your pup with your hand in the same position, but with no food in your hand.
2. When she sits, mark and treat. The treats should be in your treat bag, other hand, or pocket.
3. Tell her she’s great, ask her to move a little bit with you so she’s no longer sitting, and repeat 5-7 times.

*Note: In step 2 there is still no saying “sit” yet – the “sit” cue comes later!*

**STEP 3:**
1. Say, “sit” just before you move your hand. She will predict that when you say “sit,” the known hand gesture will follow. Therefore, “sit” means, “do that thing that gets me a cookie after she moves her hand like that.”
2. When she sits, mark and treat.
3. Tell her she’s great, ask her to move a little bit with you so she’s no longer sitting, and repeat.

4. Throughout the following repetitions, you can “fade” the hand signal by making it as small a gesture as possible, and then eliminating it after she understands. You’ve now got sit on a verbal cue!

Keep in mind, always say “sit” then give the hand signal.
You can practice both verbal and hand signals, but don’t say “sit” at the same time that you signal your hand.
Practice just verbal or just hand signals several times throughout the day and in many different locations.
Use “sit” before letting your dog out, before feeding her, before throwing a toy! This way she learns that “sit” means good things will follow and she will learn sit can be a way to ask for permission.
Getting a dog to lie down when and where you want him to and for the time you want him to remain in that position is very useful. It is the foundation for all stationary and calm behaviors, like settle and go to your mat.

**STEP 1:**
1. It might be easiest to start when your dog is sitting. But you can also start training with your dog standing in front of you. Get your dog’s attention with a yummy treat kept between your fingers, almost touching his nose. Your dog should follow this treat with interest.
2. Move your hand swiftly toward the ground close to his chest until it touches the ground between the dog’s front paws. He will probably follow the treat with the nose and lower the elbows to the floor, as this position is more comfortable for him. If he doesn’t, try using a higher value treat.
3. If your dog is sitting and his head moves toward the floor his elbows will follow. Mark when his elbows touch the ground. If your dog is standing initially, you’ll mark when his elbows and butt are on the ground.
4. When you mark, be generous and give several treats in a row, not all at once, to celebrate this achievement. Release him by throwing a treat or invite him to stand up. Repeat 3–4 times.

*Note: There is no cue for “down” at this stage of training.*

If your dog walks instead of lying down, keep the treat closer to his nose and chest or try to lure him under a low chair or through your lowered leg, so he learns to lower the elbows and hind end. You may need to hold the treats in your hand while he licks your hand. Then, he’ll probably get bored and lie down to lick, and you will surprise him by opening your hand and giving him the treats.

**STEP 2:**
1. Lure your pup with your hand in the same position, but with no food in your hand.
2. When he goes down, mark and treat. The treats should be in your treat bag, other hand, or pocket, but be able to “jump” into your dog’s mouth fast while he’s lying down.
3. Tell him he’s great, ask him to stand up again, or roll a treat for him to follow. Repeat a few times.

*Note: There’s still no “down” cue at this stage.*

**STEP 3:**
1. Once he’s consistently following the hand gesture, say, “down” just before you move your hand. This will predict, for him, that when you say “down”, the known hand gesture will follow. Therefore, “down” means, “do that thing that gets me a cookie after she moves her hand like that.”
2. When he does go down, mark and treat. Give him a treat that will take him some time to chew or several tasty treats in a row. Then invite him to stand up. Repeat 2–4 times.
3. Throughout the following repetitions, you can “fade” the hand signal by making it as small a gesture as possible, and then eliminating it after he understands. This way, you’ll get a verbal “down” cue very quickly!

Keep in mind to always say “down” and then give the hand signal.

You can practice both verbal and hand signals, but don’t say “down” at the same time that you signal your hand. Practice just verbal or just hand signals several times throughout the day and in many different locations.
Go to Mat

Go to Mat is a great skill for you to use to send your dog to a safe spot and know that he will stay there. You might send him to his mat so nobody can trip over him when your kids are playing or while you are cooking dinner. You could send him to the mat when greeting your guests or when food is on the table. It takes a while to teach this skill as it combines sending the dog to the mat and having him lie down on it and staying put. But it is really worth the effort, mat training is a highly versatile skill.

A “mat” can really be anything you’ve designated as his lying-down spot: his bed, an impromptu towel or coat on the floor, a yoga mat or a corner of a rug.

**STEP 1:**
1. Stand with a handful of great treats next to your dog and his mat.
2. When your dog looks at the mat, mark and throw a treat onto it. If he doesn’t look at the mat, throw a treat into it and mark the moment he looks at the treat on his mat or moves toward it.
3. Release him and throw a treat away from the mat for him. Repeat a few times.

**STEP 2:**
1. Now you say “mat,” and when he looks or moves toward it, immediately throw the treat onto the mat. He will step on the mat and eat his treat. It will be helpful to have good aim, so stand close by. Praise your dog and release him.
2. Repeat 5 times, but make sure he understands that you throw the treat after he is moving toward or, even better, stepping on his mat.

**STEP 3:**
1. Now it’s time to fade the initial treat toss and only say the cue “mat.”
2. Practice until you are sure your dog understands what “mat” means: your dog has learned to step on his mat and earn a yummy treat.

Continued on following page...

Settle

Settle is teaching a dog to relax.

Settle is an exercise you can use anytime, anywhere, that tells your dog what to do when he’s not getting any specific feedback from you. You can use this skill in a dog-friendly coffee shop, at home while chatting with your guests, or while talking to a neighbor you run into on a walk.

1. Start with your dog sitting or standing. Wait.
2. When your dog lies down, mark (“good!” or click) and follow with a treat. Treat in varied amounts and times as the dog stays down, and be sure to treat only in the down position – don’t force your dog upward to take the treat, deliver it at their level so they stay in the down position!
3. Move to another location and repeat the exercise. Use lower-value treats, so your dog doesn’t get so excited that he moves. Relax yourself so you can help your dog relax.

If your dog can’t settle at first, step on the leash. There should not be any tension on the leash. Your dog should have enough leash to comfortably sit or lie down, but not enough to leave. Don’t struggle with your dog, and do not put any pressure on his neck. Don’t pay any attention to attention-seeking behaviors such as barking. Mark, treat and praise him for lying down. Reinforce frequently at first, lots of cookies or quiet praise, to build duration.

Continued on following page...
Go to Mat  continued

STEP 4:
1. Now it’s time for him to learn to lie down on his mat. Say “mat” and wait until he steps on his mat.
2. When he is on his mat, quickly lure him into a down position. Mark and give him a high-value treat while lying down. Then give him a couple more to let him know how well he is doing.
3. Repeat several times a day. Don’t forget to release your dog – when you decide it’s time.

STEP 5:
Increasing distance – 1 step at a time.
1. You take 1 step away from the mat and say “mat.”
2. When your dog goes right to his mat, mark and treat generously. If he hesitates, mark any slight intention to walk to his mat. You’ll just have to take it a bit slower with smaller steps.
3. Repeat several times a day, varying the distance between 1-3 steps away from the bed.
4. Increase the distance every day. Always praise generously when dyour og lies down, then release him again. Practice until you get the distance you want the dog to be able to work at.

STEP 6:
Increasing duration – 1-3 seconds at a time.
1. Lower the criterion of the previously trained distance. You should be closer to your dog’s mat for this exercise than when you were practicing distance. Say “mat.”
2. When your dog lies down on his mat, count 1 or 2 seconds before you mark and treat. (If your dog knows a “stay” cue you can obviously use it.)
3. Repeat, varying the duration from 1-4 seconds, then from 4-15 seconds. Slowly build duration. When you are at 30 seconds, mark and give a different, longer lasting treat. A good choice is a chew that won’t roll, like a Kong Quest Wishbone stuffed with baby food or a Nylabone chew toy he loves.
4. Watch for him closely and try to release your dog before he gets up and leaves on his own. Go back to adding distance and start giving him long-lasting food toys/treats to increase the length of the stay.

STEP 7:
Adding distractions – gradually.
The final step is to gently and gradually add in some distractions. If you can send your dog to his mat from a distance and he stays there as long as you want him to be there, then you’re ready for this step.
While you work on distractions cut down on the distance and duration at the beginning.
1. Have some high-value treats in your hand. While your dog is lying on his mat, move around. Do things like walking from one side to the other, jumping up, and crouching down.
2. Throw a treat between your dog’s front legs for every distraction you add.
Repeat with goofy stuff. Ask your kids to play around your dog, ring the doorbell – the more exciting the distraction, the better his “pay” (value of his reward) must be.
When you start introducing the sounds your dog normally responds to excitedly with barking or standing up, like the doorbell, attach a leash to his collar. The leash should not be tight – your dog should have enough lead to comfortably lie down, but not enough to leave his mat. Don’t struggle with your dog, do not put pressure on his neck, and increase the value of treats you’re using to reward your dog for remaining on his mat.
Loose Leash Walking: Stop & Go

The following contract with your dog says that you will be consistent and kind while training them to walk with a loose leash.

Rule 1: If your leash is attached to your dog’s collar, pulling will never work.

Rule 2: If you don’t have the time or patience to train, put a harness on your dog so you don’t break Rule 1.

Harnesses with a front attachment ring are a good place to start to manage a dog who pulls. They reduce pulling while your dog can get a bit of exercise. Keep in mind, however, this does not replace training but can assist with teaching leash skills. Long lines are excellent for more physical exercise like running, but be sure to clip the line to the attachment ring on the dog’s back between his shoulder blades instead of on his chest to reduce the risk of your dog injuring himself.

Training loose leash walking: always be sure to connect with your dog. You can’t train your dog while you’re talking on your cell phone or listening to music. You have to achieve a real connection with your dog – this is not just about treats. Therefore, you should begin training this skill in a calm environment without competing distractions that may impede your dog’s ability to pay attention. If necessary, begin training in your home or yard.

1. Stand next to your dog. Then take one step forward.
2. If your dog moves with you, mark, smile and give him a treat. You can vary how frequently you give treats.
3. As long as your dog stays at your side, give him constant feedback. Mark and treat near your hip, knee or ankle, depending on the size of your dog. For a miniature dog or a puppy, you can use a kitchen spatula with cheese or baby food on it for them to lick off so you don’t have to constantly bend over.

If your dog pulls, stop moving. Wait until your dog reconnects with you, when he does – maybe just a small sign like an ear slightly tipped back in your direction, turning his head, or ideally making eye contact, thank him and give several treats (between 5 and 10) one after another.

Your dog should move toward you to be rewarded if he is in front of you. Don’t move toward your dog to give treats!

Calm Greetings

This skill is very practical both with greeting guests at your door and when greeting people during a walk with your dog. There are different ways to go about it. When greeting people at your home you might choose scattering treats or even a toy on the floor as a reward for your dog. However, we suggest asking your dog to sit when greeting people outside of your home, so he doesn’t learn to search for food on the ground when outside.

1. With the dog on leash, have some high-value treats in the hand not holding the leash.
2. Before a person reaches your dog, ask your dog to sit. Feed him while sitting next to you. Or, when opening the door for your guests, drop a small handful of treats right under your dog’s nose, making sure they don’t roll far.

First practice with people your dog knows approaching calmly, and once your dog is successfully keeping four feet on the floor then ask people to approach with more excitement. Keep those treats coming to reinforce the desired sit behavior. When doing this inside your home, make sure your dog can remain calm before you take his leash off – and before you start welcoming people with hugs and kisses.
4. Next, you can decide if you will continue in the same direction, to one side or to the other, or back the way you came – you aren’t trying to go very far this first training session. You are trying to create the habit of saying to your dog: “we aren’t going anywhere if you are pulling on the leash.”

Stop & Go: It takes two to have a tight leash. If your dog pulls on the leash, remain still (stop). Don’t pull back, yank, jerk or tug on the leash. Your job is to keep your dog safe and guide him, don’t be the other end in a game of tug of war. It is your dog’s job to keep a loose leash. You will pay him with treats and permission to walk, sniff and explore (go) – always with a relaxed leash. You might discover that a good portion of the pulling comes from your end of the leash.

At first, practice this in a low-distraction environment. Increase the level of distractions gradually, praise and treat your dog generously when he performs well in difficult situations. Also, your dog has likely already learned to sit, this is a useful skill to practice with loose leash walking because it will give both you and your dog a break.

### Stay

The next time you break a glass, drop some medication you were about to take, or you need to tie your shoes during a walk, you will be happy that your dog knows how to stay.

**STEP 1:**

1. Begin with your dog sitting in front of you (or lying down if you prefer).
2. Move one of your feet one step back, return to your original position, mark and treat.
3. Repeat with intervals varying between 1 and 10 seconds.

**STEP 2:**

1. Now, move your foot to the side, take a step back, raise your hand, vary your movements, but never go further than a step away from your dog.
2. Repeat with intervals varying between 1 and 10 seconds.

**STEP 3:**

1. Before you move, say “stay” which your dog will understand to mean “You move and I don’t. We call this ‘stay.’”
2. Resume moving around as you did in step 2, but always say “stay” first.

If your dog moves, restart at a level your dog is able to understand and be successful at and practice until you reach your goals.

**STEP 4:**

When your dog has learned that “stay” means remain in position for 10 seconds every time you ask with you standing in front of him you can begin adding more duration and distance. Here’s how to increase duration.

1. Ask your dog to stand in front of you or at your side.
2. Look at your watch and vary the time your dog stays incrementally, little by little, until you reach 5 minutes.
3. Repeat this in calm environments standing in front of your dog or very close.
**Stay** continued

**STEP 5:**
Now we can begin to increase the distance. Here’s how to teach your dog to “stay” at a greater distance from you.

1. Ask your dog to stay in front of you.
2. Take one step back, mark and return immediately to treat your dog. Again, take a step back, mark, return immediately and treat your dog. Remember the beginning (Step 1) of teaching “stay”? Your dog does, too! If your dog gets up, ask him to return to his position. Then take a smaller step, stretch your hand between yourself and your dog (this will make it seem as if you aren’t as far away from your dog). Mark and reward your dog. Be generous.
3. Repeat several times and gradually increase the distance until you can get 10 meters (30 feet) away from your dog. Your dog will have learned to trust that you will return to him, step by step.

**STEP 6:**
Your dog now remains in a “stay” for several minutes and at various distances away from you. This is fantastic impulse control! Now it’s time to gradually add distractions.

Remember you need this exercise for real life situations like when you break a glass, a baby cries, a car is coming, your shoe comes untied, etc.

1. While you are working with distractions, at first, decrease the distance and the duration. Have several high-value treats in your hand.
2. Practice in several positions and with weird movements such as jumping jacks, pretending to drop something, making strange sounds, etc. Mark and reward.
3. Walk past your dog, jump, and mark and reward your dog for each distraction you add.
4. Repeat this doing crazy things: ask your kids to play around your dog, ring the doorbell, etc. When you train outside of your home or when you are using higher levels of distraction and excitement, make your criteria (expectations) easier and use higher value treats – the distractions (sounds, smells and movements) are enormous.

*Always set your dog up for success and to be able to do what you ask!*

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**Touch or Target an Object**

Touch is the beginning of a whole new world of tricks and control with your dog. When he has learned to touch an object (your hand, a plastic cover, a piece of paper, or a pencil) with his nose, it’s easy to teach your dog to walk at your side, to call her away from an object, and to learn dozens of tricks like closing doors or ringing bells.

Touching your hand or an object is also known as “targeting.” Here’s how to teach this skill:

**STEP 1:**
1. Offer your empty hand in front of your dog’s nose. Make sure you choose a hand signal different from what you use for sit, down, or stay. It could be your open hand, just two extended fingers, or your closed fist.
2. Your dog will likely look at or smell your hand. When she does, mark and give her a treat with your other hand. Repeat 3-5 times.

If she doesn’t look at or sniff your hand, move your hand slightly toward her, in a circle, or in any friendly way that calls attention to it. Then mark and treat when she looks at or smells your hand.

**STEP 2:**
1. Repeat, but, now, mark when her nose actually touches your hand. When she has learned to touch your hand to get a treat, you are ready for the next step.

Remember that if your dog “won’t do” something, it really means you haven’t made what you want clear, or she’s afraid, or there’s another reason she won’t. Ask yourself, why wouldn’t she do something for a treat she loves?

**STEP 3:**
1. Hold your target hand 5 cm (2 inches) to one side of your dog’s face, mark and treat when he touches it with his nose. Repeat.
2. When your dog clearly understands this trick, start switching sides (and hands) and the position of your hands. Mark and treat when the dog touches your hand with his nose. Keep it fun and variable for him. This is not a serious, silent game – it should be light and fun.
Teaching Your Dog to Wear a Muzzle

No matter how friendly your dog is, it’s great to get him used to wearing a muzzle, but simply putting it on him without conditioning him to it can make him anxious and uncomfortable. That’s the last thing you want, especially when he’s at the vet, outside, or under stress, the very times he might need to wear a muzzle. Take your time while your dog gets used to the muzzle; don’t rush things. Depending on the dog, this process may take a few weeks.

Please also refer to the videos on the IAABC Crisis Response website page.

STEP 1:
The muzzle appears and good things will happen!
1. Have the muzzle behind your back in one hand and treats in your other hand, a pouch, or your pocket.
2. Show the muzzle to your dog, hand him a treat, or drop it on the ground, or throw it for him to find. While he is eating, hide the muzzle again.
3. Repeat. Show the muzzle, treat. You can also throw his favourite toy or walk to the fridge with him to get him a piece of cheese. Anything your dog really likes can be used!

This is a very important stage of training, especially for dogs that have had unpleasant experiences with muzzles or head halters previously. Look for a reaction of joy when he sees the muzzle before you continue training.

STEP 2:
The muzzle is a cool food bowl!
1. Now that your dog is excited or happy when he sees the muzzle, place the muzzle in an upright position over your palm and put some big treats, e.g. cubes of cheese or sausage, into the opening of the muzzle.
2. Hold it out for your dog, so he can eat the treats comfortably out of the muzzle. Don’t push the muzzle into your dog’s face. Repeat several times a day or feed your dog his meals in the muzzle.

STEP 3:
Finding the muzzle and placing the mouth into the muzzle – voluntarily!
1. Again, load the empty muzzle with yummy treats and offer it to your dog. Once he starts eating, you can gently and slowly move the muzzle away from your dog’s nose. He will want to follow the muzzle and push his nose onto the bottom to reach the treats.
2. Once he has emptied the muzzle, throw a treat for your dog to find some steps away. In the meantime, refill the muzzle and show it to your dog as soon as he has eaten the treat from the floor. Remember the “Get it Game”? This is quite similar: your dog will come back to you and put his nose in the muzzle.

STEP 4:
Building duration – your dog learns to accept the odd feeling around his nose.
1. Use pasty food like peanut butter, liverwurst, or cream cheese and smear it into the bottom of the muzzle. Spread some on your hand as well for your dog to lick through the muzzle. You can use a big syringe or a pastry tube, or you can cut a tiny hole into a liverwurst package and squeeze the liverwurst through the hole.
2. Show the prepared muzzle to your dog and let him lick the food. Refill.
3. Repeat and give him treats or pasty food (you prepared that, remember) through the bottom of the muzzle. Take your time as your dog needs to get used to the feeling of this thing on his snout.
Teaching Your Dog to Wear a Muzzle  continued

STEP 5:
Getting the dog used to the click sound of the buckle and closing the neck strap.

During this step, your dog’s nose is not inside of the muzzle.

1. You will only need a few treats for this exercise. If your dog is sound sensitive, start clicking the strap buckle shut from a distance, then give your dog a treat.

2. Step by step, reduce the distance until you can close the strap without your dog reacting to the sound. Repeat until he is not afraid of the sound or your hands next to his neck and he has a relaxed and loose body showing no avoidance.

3. Fix the neck strap around your dog’s neck. Don’t put his nose into the muzzle! If you have difficulties closing the buckle, put some treats on the floor so your dog can eat them while you close the strap. The muzzle should dangle around his neck now.

4. Give some more treats and do fun stuff with your dog: throw a ball, give him his lunch, check the mailbox, all with the muzzle dangling around his neck.

STEP 6:
It’s time to combine steps 4 and 5 (feeling the muzzle on the face and the strap around the neck for a while). It will be easy for both you and your dog, as you already know how this works!

1. Ask your dog to place his nose into the muzzle. If necessary put a treat into the muzzle. Hold the neck strap with one hand tightened behind his ears. Don’t close the buckle! Release and repeat.

2. After some repetitions, with your other hand also feed pasty food or some soft treats through the bottom of the muzzle – for a longer duration. Release the neck strap when the food is gone.

STEP 7:
Now, you start closing the buckle of the neck strap.

1. Ask your dog to place his nose into the muzzle. You can always use a treat.

2. Fix the neck strap around your dog’s neck and close the buckle. If you can’t close the buckle, put some soft food into the muzzle so your dog can lick it while you close the strap. Especially with long haired dogs, it can be challenging to close a neck strap without pulling on hair! You will probably need to use both of your hands.

3. Feed your dog through the holes in the muzzle. Distract him, so he doesn’t try to take the muzzle off with his feet. Make sure your dog is always comfortable and not giving off signals that he would rather avoid this situation.

STEP 8:
Your dog has learned to like the muzzle when he sees it, puts it on voluntarily, keeps it on. Now it’s time for perfection! Increase the time you have your dog muzzled, minute by minute and have him wear it in many different situations. Reinforce regularly and generously!

THESE TIPS CAN HELP...
Muzzle your dog and tighten the neck strap for perfect comfort. Then:
- Give treats or his food; keep them variable. Tell him how great he is doing!
- Start preparing his meals. He will be distracted by your movements and the anticipation of eating soon. Talk to him. Put the bowl on the floor, take his muzzle off, and allow him to eat.
- Take him for a 2-minute walk if he loves going out with you. Come back home and take the muzzle off.
- Allow him to jump into the car if he loves driving around. Have him jump out, take the muzzle off. Or drive him around with the muzzle on, but make sure he does not try to take it off.
- Let him play with his best friend, take a break, then get the muzzle off. Let him go play again.
Keep it fun!
A harness takes a lot of the work out of teaching your dog to walk with you, so it’s great to teach him to like wearing one. Dogs need to wear a harness if they have not learned to walk on a loose leash (otherwise they will hurt their trachea), when using the seat belt in the car, or as a safety device in public in addition to their collar.

Dogs who don’t like to be touched can be challenging to acclimate to a harness, so please take your time, especially with the first two steps described in the following:

**STEP 1:**

*The harness appears and good things will happen!*

Show the harness to the dog and then give some tasty treats. Repeat this a couple of times. Your dog should start looking happy and excited when he sees the harness appear.

**STEP 2:**

*Getting your dog used to the click sound of the buckle*

1. You will need only a few treats for this exercise. If your dog is sound sensitive, start clicking the harness buckle shut from a distance, then give your dog a treat.
2. Step by step, reduce the distance until you can close the strap without your dog reacting to the sound.
3. Repeat until he is not afraid of the sound or your hands next to his chest.

**STEP 3:**

*Your dog learns to feel the harness straps on his body*

1. Hold the harness in your hand and place it near your dog’s body, and treat.
2. Repeat this a couple of times. If your dog seems to shy away from the harness, repeat for as long as it takes, maybe even a week or two, until he is comfortable. Practice until he maintains a loose body and appears relaxed without any signs of avoidance when you touch his body with the harness straps or lay it over his back.

**STEP 4:**

*Lure your dog to voluntarily put his head or front paws into the opening of the harness.*

1. Depending on the type of harness you are working with, hold it in front of your dog’s face and lure him with a treat to get his head through the opening and treat him when he does. You can also place it on the ground and lure him with a yummy treat to get him to step inside, then tell him what a good dog he is and give him the treat!
2. Repeat this step a couple of times until your dog is comfortable.

**STEP 5:**

*Building duration - your dog learns to be comfortable with the loosely fitted harness on.*

1. When your dog is voluntarily putting his head through the harness or stepping into it, start strapping it across his body. Fit it very loosely. Give your dog a lot of praise and treat him. Only keep the harness on for a couple of seconds.
2. Repeat several times.

Continued on following page...
STEP 6:
Your dog has learned to like the harness when he sees it, puts it on voluntarily, and keeps it on. Now it’s time for perfection! Increase the time your dog wears his harness, minute by minute and have him wear it in many situations.

Always supervise interactive social play with other dogs. Pay special attention if they are wearing a harness. If the harness is too loose, the other dog’s feet can get caught during play and wrestling.

THESE TIPS CAN HELP...
Adjust the straps of the harness for perfect comfort. Put it on your dog. Then:

- Give treats or his food; keep them variable. Tell him how great he is doing!
- Start preparing his meals. He will be distracted by your movements and the anticipation of eating soon. Talk to him. Put the bowl on the floor. Take his harness off immediately after he has finished eating.
- Take him for a 2-minute walk if he loves going out with you. Come back home and take the harness off.
- Allow him to jump into the car if he loves driving around. Have him jump out, then take the harness off. Or drive him around with the harness on, but make sure he does not try to take it off. If you fix him to the seat belt buckle with an adapter strap, have another person driving while you stay close to your dog the first few times.

Keep it fun!

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