



Beginning Homework • Week 4

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Intermittent Rewards

It's time to break the bad news to your dog; he doesn't get a treat for everything you ask of him. Just as you put money in a slot machine in hopes you might win, your dog should execute commands in hopes he might be rewarded. This is called gambling. Start this by asking him for a sit, down, sit then say "yes" and reward. Next time try asking for one more down, then reward. Still use treats every time you introduce something new, or if something is still challenging for him. Also, remember to use those life rewards.

Goal: My dog can sit, down, sit for one treat without a lure.

Sit for Guests

Avoid getting embarrassed by your dog jumping up on people by teaching him that jumping won't get him attention. Last week we had people approach our dog, this week our dog will approach a person. First ask for your dog's attention and make sure the leash is loose. Approach the person on a loose leash and ask him to sit. As soon as he does, the guest is the one who rewards him either with a treat or praise. If at any time your dog starts to jump (you can usually see the signs before they are airborne) quickly turn him around and take some penalty steps away from the person, and then try again. Also try this with visitors coming through the front door. Keep a leash handy and clip it on if you hear the doorbell ring. It is your responsibility to keep your dog off of people.

Goal: My dog greeted a guest who came through the front door without jumping on them.

Leave It (Part 2)

If your dog is successfully leaving treats from your open hand, it's time to start practicing with items on the ground. Start by getting a short amount of leash and toss a treat just out of his range. Say "leave-it" only once, and wait. Once he stops looking at the treat say "yes" and reward him with a different treat. Be sure you are not repeating yourself and be aware that it may take awhile before he leaves it. After a few successful tries, start waiting until he looks at you before rewarding him. On occasion let him take the treat from the floor (using his release word or "take-it") so he knows that sometimes he will be able to get the item with your permission.

Goal: My dog can leave a treat on the ground while on leash and look up at me.

Come (Recalls)

Speed up your dog's recalls by reserving extra yummy treats or a special toy that you only use during practice. Try running away quickly while calling him to help his chasing instincts kick in and make it an exciting game. Practicing often is a great way to wear your dog out while learning a potentially life saving command!

Goal: My dog comes when called in a fenced-in area with minimal distraction.

Stay (Using Distraction)

Remember the three D's? The next step in teaching your dog to stay is adding distraction. If your dog is successful with duration, start adding some distraction to your practice. Start by saying "stay" and slightly wave your arm, or jiggle your shoulders. Use small amounts of movement to help your dog be successful, if he has moved at all you have added too much distraction. If your dog does stay, then say "yes", give him a treat, and release him. As your dog improves, increase the distraction by jumping in place or dancing a jig. Praise your dog when he is successful and make it fun for him!

Goal: My dog can sit stay while I turn my back to him and jump up and down.

Loose Leash Walking

Spend more time practicing your loose leash walking this week. The more consistent you are, the quicker your dog will catch on. Be sure that every time the leash is tight you stop, and/or change directions. When there is slack, continue moving and be sure you are giving your dog enough leash to feel the difference. If your dog is catching on, try practicing in front of your home. Start walking down the sidewalk away from your home and if he starts to pull turn around and head back home. Once there is slack in the leash move away from your house again. If he pulls, head back. Staying with you means going further away! Have treats hidden in a few places along the way so he learns to love his adventures with you. Be sure to help him out by exercising him first!

Goal: My dog can walk one block on a loose leash while I have a treat in my hand.

Drop

Teaching your dog to drop things he wants can be a useful command. When puppies are with their littermates they learn if they let something go they may never get it back. Start practicing if you see your dog with an item that isn't very exciting and go trade him for something he likes better such a fun toy or a treat. Put the treat in front of his nose and say "drop". Once he drops the item say "yes", reward, and give the item back to him. Practice whenever you see him carrying something around if you have a treat that he likes better. Giving the item back insures him that it won't disappear forever and he is more likely to relinquish the item.

Goal: My dog can drop an old toy when I ask him using a treat.

Bring your homework back next week with all the goals checked off and receive five extra Lucky Bones!