



Dog Training Made Easy- A Step-by-Step Guide to Using the StarMark Clicker™

by Triple Crown Dog Academy, Inc.



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ABOUT TRIPLE CROWN DOG ACADEMY, INC.

TRAINER DEVELOPED: ACADEMY TESTED

The Certified Training and Behavior Specialists at Triple Crown Dog Academy created the StarMark Clicker™ with you and your dog's needs in mind. All products, guides and videos are tested and approved by the Training Directors of Triple Crown Academy, our licensed school for professional dog trainers. It is the hands-on experience of our training division, combined with the vast technical knowledge and experience of the Triple Crown Academy staff that allows us to bring you useful and unique dog training and behavior solutions. We train dogs just like yours every day and work with owners just like you every day. Learn more at our websites:

www.triplecrowndogs.com

www.schoolfordogtrainers.com

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TRIPLE CROWN DOG ACADEMY, INC.

Triple Crown Dog Academy, Inc. is the World Leader in Pet Education. Thousands of dogs and their owners have trained the Triple Crown way. Triple Crown's training and behavior programs use scientifically proven techniques that provide dog owners with practical, motivational and results-oriented ways to better communicate with their dogs. Triple Crown's Certified Training and Behavior Specialists create custom programs covering virtually all areas of dog training and behavior, including practical obedience; behavior modification; agility training; competitive dog sports; retriever training; police service dog training; search and rescue, and more.

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Dog Training Made Easy- A Step-by-Step Guide to Using the StarMark Clicker™



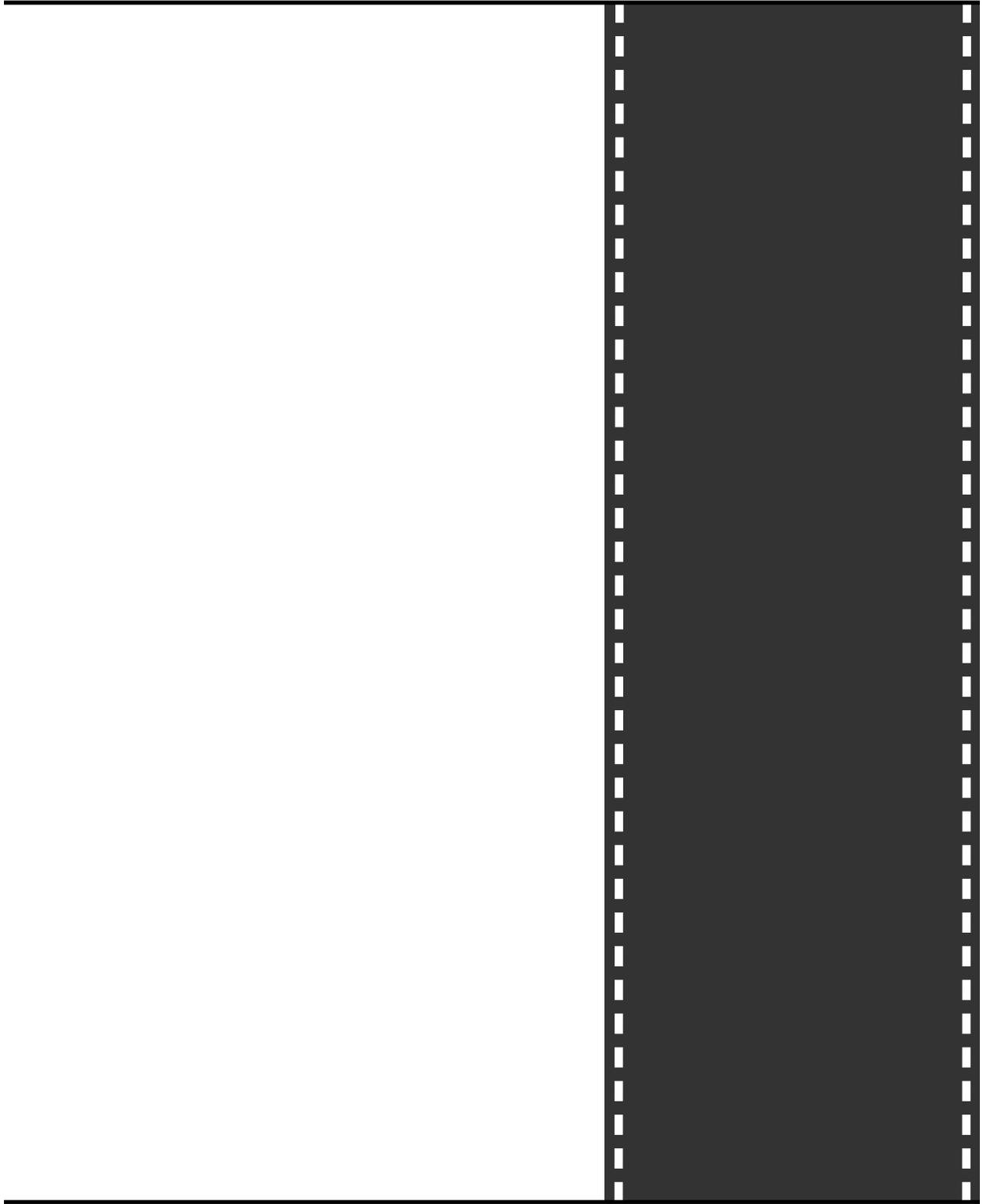
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Triple Crown Academy for Professional Dog Trainers, Inc. is the largest, most comprehensive school of its kind in the United States. Triple Crown, located in greater Austin, Texas, features a 100,000-square-foot master complex and a 360-acre campus including an event center for dog shows and speciality events.



Triple Crown Academy offers a variety of licensed training and behavior-certification programs, continuing education seminars and workshops. Triple Crown Academy is the smart choice for those seeking a career working with dogs. Learn more at www.schoolfordogtrainers.com.







Jessy Gabriel with her dogs



Rob Dunn with Sirk



Jerry Wolfe with Fena



Keith Benson with Ace

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Jessy Gabriel is Vice President of Training and Instructor for Triple Crown Academy for Professional Dog Trainers, Inc. She has represented the United States and competed twice in the World Championship for Schutzhund with her dog Steff. In addition, she has competed in obedience, agility, hunting, and is involved in search and rescue disaster training and certifying police dogs.

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Special thanks to all the dogs who participated in this guide: Sid, Vader, Woogie, Taz, Colten, Baci, Chevy, Celine, and Pepper

INTRODUCTION

Congratulations on choosing the StarMark Clicker™ Training System! Developed by Triple Crown, the World Leader in Pet Education, the StarMark Clicker™ is a fun, easy way to train your dog.

The StarMark Clicker™ is not just another clicker; it is a full training support system. Your StarMark Clicker™ Training System includes this complete guide, with online Instructional Streaming-Video, which shows you how to perform a wide variety of exercises using different techniques.

The StarMark Clicker™ guide comes in two sections:

The first section introduces you to how your dog learns and explains how and why clicker training works. Understanding the principles behind the StarMark Clicker™ Training System will make you a better trainer, as well as a better friend and leader to your dog. Good leadership begins with communication, and the most effective way to communicate with your dog is through obedience training. Trained dogs enjoy stronger bonds and better relationships with their owners.

The second section of the guide gets you started with clicker training and gives you step-by-step instruction to teaching your dog a variety of commands.

We recommend you read through the guide before you begin training your dog, but if you are eager to jump right in, go directly to "Getting Started" on Page 11.

“The StarMark Clicker™ is not just another clicker; it is a full training support system.”



StarMark Clicker™

“Once a dog is conditioned to a clicker, the sound sends a consistent and instant message of “good dog” and promises a reward to come.”



The click marks a good behavior once the click sound has been paired with something the dog perceives as a positive

WHY TRAIN WITH THE STARMARK CLICKER™?

Clicker training evolved from the training of marine animals. Because these animals were usually at a distance, and in water, trainers found it difficult to instantly reward them for a correct response.

The marine animal trainers turned to the research of distinguished psychologist B.F. Skinner, whose work outlined the principles of operant conditioning.

Skinner's theory was that an animal could learn to associate an auditory signal, such as a whistle, with a reward, usually food. Once the animal made that association, the signal would "mark" the appropriate behavior the instant the animal performed it. In that way the signal formed a "bridge" connecting the behavior with the food reward. The elaborate and often spectacular tricks seen in marine parks are the result of operant conditioning.

It did not take long for dog trainers to see the potential of operant conditioning. The sound of a clicker is distinct, clear and consistent-and it can be heard from a distance. It is also a neutral sound. Once a dog is conditioned to a clicker, the sound sends a consistent and instant message of "good dog" and promises a reward to come. It is this precise timing that allows your dog to learn quickly.

HOW DOGS LEARN

Dogs learn by performing behaviors that result in something pleasant and avoiding behaviors that result in something unpleasant. The more often the dog performs a behavior that results in something pleasant, the more likely he is to repeat that behavior. The converse is also true: When the dog performs a behavior that has an unpleasant result, he is less likely to repeat that behavior. A behavior may also be extinguished by simply ignoring or not reinforcing that particular behavior.

CLASSICAL AND OPERANT CONDITIONING

The StarMark Clicker™ Training System is based on the principles of classical conditioning (Pavlov's dogs salivated at the sound of a bell because they had learned to associate the bell with food) and operant conditioning (Skinner's pigeons performed a series of movements in order to receive food).

The first step in the StarMark Clicker™ Training System is to teach your dog to associate the sound of the clicker with a reward (classical conditioning). Initially this reward will be a bite-sized food treat. Food is a biological need for your dog, which means he has an inborn willingness to work for it, and is known as a primary reinforcer. Praise and play are called secondary reinforcers because your dog has to be conditioned to want and enjoy them.

This StarMark Clicker™ Training System links the primary reinforcer (food) to the secondary reinforcer (the click) so that the two become associated in your dog's mind. Gradually, your dog learns to enjoy praise as a reward in and of itself, without it always being accompanied by a treat.

The clicker sound is called a conditioned reinforcer because the dog learns that the click means something



Click , treat, click, treat and so on until your dog understands that a treat follows the click

“The first step in the StarMark Clicker™ Training System is to teach your dog to associate the sound of the clicker with a reward.”

“The clicker sound is called a conditioned reinforcer because the dog learns that the click means something pleasurable is in store.”



pleasurable is in store. In the StarMark Clicker™ Training System, primary and secondary conditioned reinforcers all become rewards for your dog. Further, the StarMark Clicker™ Training System method focuses on positive consequences or positive reinforcement for behaviors.

To give an example of how operant conditioning works, imagine that your dog has learned to associate the sound of the opening of a cookie jar with getting a treat. This time, however, instead of giving your dog the treat as soon as you open the jar, you wait. Your dog then might begin to offer certain behaviors to get the treat, for example, barking. If you give him the treat the moment he barks, he will be more likely to bark each time you open the cookie jar because he has learned that barking causes the cookie jar to open. You have put both positive reinforcement and operant conditioning to work for you.

You will find more about how dogs learn in the "Learn More"  boxes found throughout the step-by-step sections of this guide.

GETTING STARTED

The StarMark Clicker™ Training System is a great way to train healthy dogs of any age. If your dog has behavioral problems, such as dominance or fear-induced aggression, contact a qualified training and behavior specialist or a veterinarian before beginning this or any other training program. The following breakdown will show you how to use the StarMark Clicker™ Training System based on your dog's age and previous training experience.

USING THE CLICK AND PLAY™ SQUID

StarMark has also developed the Click and Play™ Squid—a revolutionary training system combining clicker and reward for a fun and fast way to train your dog. The Click and Play™ utilizes the same scientific principles as the StarMark Clicker™ to quickly and easily enhance your dog's training experience. Clicking the instant your dog does something right, then rewarding him with a toss of the Click and Play™ will allow him to associate the action with a positive outcome (play). The Click and Play's design allows for it to float in water and bounce in unpredictable ways your dog will love to chase. This is truly a fun way to educate and exercise your dog anywhere. For more information on the Click and Play™, visit www.aboutdogtraining.com.



PERFECT FOR PUPPIES™

PUPPIES YOUNGER THAN SIX MONTHS

Puppies are extremely impressionable, particularly in weeks 8 through 16. This critical period is when your puppy is most responsive to learning new things. Using the StarMark Clicker™ Training System will help you maximize your puppy's potential. Look for the "Perfect for Puppies™" icon next to the exercises that are suitable for dogs in this age group. Patience and having

“The Click and Play™ Squid combines clicker and reward. Click the embedded clicker and toss the toy as a reward.”



Click and Play Squid™

“Puppies are extremely impressionable, particularly in weeks 8 through 16.”

www.aboutdogtraining.com

fun are important in training any dog, but they are especially important for puppies. Take your time with each exercise, and do not move on to more challenging exercises until your puppy is confident about performing the ones he has already learned.

DOGS WITH PREVIOUS TRAINING EXPERIENCE

If you have already provided your dog with some formal obedience training, congratulations! Using the StarMark Clicker™ Training System will help raise your dog's training to a higher level. Begin with the two clicker conditioning exercises, then note the exercises offered in this guide that your dog does not know. Allow your dog to learn one exercise at a time, moving on only after he has a basic understanding of a particular exercise. Practicing these exercises as recommended will help your dog "learn how to learn." Once your dog understands the new exercises (how to work for his reward), you can incorporate the StarMark Clicker™ Training System by using the steps outlined in this guide for the commands he already understands.

If your dog has already had some clicker training, it is likely that we offer several exercises that he does not know. Ask your retailer or visit our Web site, www.aboutdogtraining.com, for more information on other products from StarMark, including the Click and Play™, a revolutionary system that combines a clicker and an enjoyable reward for a fun and fast way to continue training your dog.

HOUSEHOLDS WITH TWO OR MORE DOGS

Each dog should be trained separately until he is proficient at each exercise in this guide. Trying to train dogs together creates confusion and slows learning. Once the dogs are proficient individually, you can start working with them together, beginning with the exercises they both perform well.

A WEB SITE FOR YOUR DOG

www.aboutdogtraining.com is the Web site dedicated to StarMark Pet Products. It offers lots of free information, including instructional streaming video. These video clips show you how to perform the exercises listed in this guide and the exercises listed in other guides from the StarMark product line. They are the next best things to private lessons at Triple Crown Dog Academy.

TRAINING GEAR

The following items are recommended in addition to your StarMark Clicker™:

- ◆ Soft, bite-sized treats (about the size of a navy bean)
- ◆ Treat pouch
- ◆ 6-foot leash
- ◆ Long-line leash (20-30 feet)
- ◆ Collar
- ◆ Dog bed or an elevated surface on which your dog can rest comfortably
- ◆ Tab leash

TRAINING SESSIONS

Unless otherwise noted, train in secure, quiet locations that are free from distractions, yet familiar to your dog. A fenced-in yard or a spacious room of your home works well.

Keep the duration of your training sessions to less than 15 minutes. Perform at least 1 session a day, but as many as 3 sessions a day are encouraged.

Ensure that your dog will be rested and ready for his training sessions by providing him with at least an hour of quiet time before training.



Recommended equipment



Bite sized training treats

“Train in secure, quiet locations that are free from distractions.”

“Keep the duration of your training sessions to less than 15 minutes.”

“Do not move on until your dog has a basic understanding of the exercise you have been practicing.”

TRAINING EXERCISES

ICON Step-by-Step



Keep a leash and collar on your dog when appropriate (never leave a leash and collar on an unattended dog) and until he has a complete understanding of the Come Back When Called command (See Page 21.).

Training sessions should not take place immediately following a meal. You should always train a hungry dog to peak his interest in the treats.

Try to find a treat that is very appealing to your dog, and that can be quickly eaten.

If your dog is more interested in play than treats, try incorporating the Click and Play™ as a fun reward in your training sessions.

(Note: Never "double up" sessions. Your dog will not learn any faster, and too long a session may decrease his enthusiasm.)

TRAINING, STEP-BY-STEP

Our experience in training thousands of dogs and their owners has enabled us to develop simple, step-by-step training systems for the items in our product line. Follow the steps, and do not move on until your dog has a basic understanding of the exercise you have been practicing. Consider your dog to have a basic understanding of an exercise when he appears to be willing to perform the behaviors expected for his level of training (you will find guidelines for this in the "Tips" boxes following each exercise).

When you move on to a new exercise, spend a few moments working on exercises your dog already understands before beginning to practice the new exercise. This will ensure that your dog is in an ideal frame of mind for learning the new exercise. Finish your training sessions with one or two of the exercises he most enjoys, followed by a brief play session.

Once you have taught your dog all of the exercises in this guide, try mixing up the order of exercises in your training sessions, introducing distractions and training in new locations. We also recommend that you incorporate the Click and Play™ into your routine as soon as your dog has an understanding of a particular exercise.

STARMARK CLICKER™ TIPS

Following each exercise is a "Tips" box with helpful information for that exercise.

LEARN MORE

Throughout this guide you will find "Learn More" sections. These sections contain additional information on operant conditioning and on how dogs learn to give you a better understanding of how the training process works.

**STARMARK CLICKER™
TIPS ICON**



LEARN MORE ICON



**PERFECT FOR PUPPIES™
ICON**



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TRAINING EXERCISES

TRAINING EXERCISES

TEACHING CLICKER CONDITIONING

Clicker conditioning allows your dog to associate the click with a positive experience. The positive experience in this two-part exercise is the treat you give him immediately after the click. It does not matter whether your dog is sitting or standing for this exercise, as its only purpose is to get him accustomed to the click and subsequent reward. Your dog must be conditioned to the sound of the Triple Crown Clicker™ before you use it for other exercises.

CLICKER CONDITIONING

1. Hold both the leash and StarMark Clicker™ in your left hand. Your treat pouch should be on your right side. (If you are left-handed, you may find it more comfortable to reverse the right-left order indicated in the exercises in this guide.)
2. With your left hand, quickly press and release the button to create the "click." Immediately give your dog a treat with your right hand.
3. Repeat the above steps 25 times.

Practice clicker conditioning for 2 training sessions.

After your second session, your dog will probably start to understand that a treat follows the click. Because a dog thinks about what he is looking at, the second half of clicker conditioning involves getting your dog to look up at you. The following steps will help you capture your dog's attention while clicker conditioning.

(Note: Press the button on the StarMark Clicker™ only once to make the distinctive "click-click" sound).

“Clicker conditioning allows your dog to associate the click with a treat.”



1. Hold both the leash and StarMark Clicker™ as shown



2. Quickly press and release StarMark Clicker™ button



3. Immediately give your dog a treat following the clicking sound

Dog Training Made Easy- A Step-by-Step Guide to Using the StarMark Clicker™



1. Starting position - Note loose leash



2. If your dog becomes distracted, hold the treat in front of his nose



3. Bring the treat up to your face. Click and reward your dog when he makes eye contact

“Click and reward only when he stays focused on you and not the treat.”

CLICKER CONDITIONING WITH ATTENTION

1. Hold both the leash and StarMark Clicker™ in your left hand. Your treat pouch should be on your right side.
2. With your right hand, hold a treat up to your face. When your dog looks into your eyes, immediately click the StarMark Clicker™ with your left hand. Bring your right hand down to your dog and reward him with the treat.
3. If your dog becomes distracted, hold the treat slightly in front of his nose before bringing it up to your face.

Repeat the above steps 25 times.

Practice clicker conditioning with attention for 2 training sessions.

STARMARK TIPS:

CLICKER CONDITIONING

- ◆ Your dog should focus his attention on you during training. Try gradually moving the treat away from your face to see if he maintains eye contact with you or if he follows the treat. Click and reward only when he stays focused on you and not the treat.
- ◆ Most dogs will make the association between the StarMark Clicker™ and the reward within 2 training sessions. Try to do 2 sessions of clicker conditioning on the first day, and 2 sessions of clicker conditioning with attention the next day. If your dog still has a problem making the connection, be certain that you are offering him the treat immediately after you click. Also remember that it is important to teach your dog new skills in areas that are quiet and free from distraction to allow him to focus his attention on you.
- ◆ Once you have done clicker conditioning with your dog, it is no longer necessary to practice these two exercises.

PAIRING COMMANDS WITH THE EXERCISES

You will not need to issue a (verbal) command when you introduce a new exercise to your dog. He should concentrate on what you are showing him and will receive a click and a reward the moment he performs the correct behavior. Once he has the idea, you can then begin to issue the command the moment he performs the behavior, immediately followed by a click and a reward. As your dog becomes more proficient at the new exercise, you will give him the command first, then click and reward him for performing the behavior.

TEACHING A RELEASE WORD:

A release word communicates to your dog that the command he was performing has finished. While the sound of the click can mark the end of a behavior, your dog will need an additional cue once you have phased out the StarMark Clicker™ or when you do not have the clicker with you.

To introduce a release word (we recommend "Free," "Break" or "Release") use an upbeat, happy tone and encourage your dog to get up from the command he was performing after you have clicked and rewarded him. Do not release your dog from a distance--staying close to him will help to keep him calm and will discourage him from anticipating the release command.

The release sequence goes like this:

1. Ask your dog to perform an obedience command.
2. When he has performed the command, click.
3. Reward your dog.
4. Say your release word, and encourage him to break the command he was performing. Be sure to give your release word before he breaks the command.

“Once your dog has the idea of an exercise, you can then begin to issue the command the moment he performs the behavior.”



1. Say your release word, and encourage your dog to break the command he was performing after you click and reward him

“A release word communicates to your dog that the command he was performing has finished.”

Dog Training Made Easy- A Step-by-Step Guide to Using the StarMark Clicker™



1. Hold the leash and treat in the same hand



2. Raise your treat hand in an upward arc



3. Click and reward your dog the moment he sits



On the third session, begin using the word "Sit" the moment your dog sits.

TEACHING THE SIT COMMAND:

The Sit command is the most commonly used exercise in dog training. Most dogs have some understanding of what "Sit" means.

1. With your dog at your left side, hold the leash in your right hand 2 feet from the snap. Hold a treat in your right hand between your thumb and forefinger. Hold the StarMark Clicker™ in your left hand.
2. Hold the treat slightly in front of your dog's nose, and raise it in a slight upward arc to lure him into the Sit position. Do not use the command "Sit" at this stage.
3. The moment your dog sits, click and reward him and immediately give your release word.
4. Repeat the above steps 15 times.
5. Practice the Sit without the command for 2 sessions.
6. On the third session, begin using the word "Sit" the moment your dog sits. Immediately click and reward him.

STARMARK TIPS: SIT

- ◆ There is no need to pair a command with the Sit for the first 2 training sessions. Adding the command after your dog has an idea of what to do makes it easier for him to learn the "Sit" command. The same principle applies to some of the other exercises when first introduced.◆ Once you begin to pair the command "Sit" with sitting, you are ready to move on to the next exercise.
- ◆ If you ask him to Sit and he does not perform the command, repeat the command while gently pushing down on his rear with your left hand.
- ◆ If your dog offers the behavior of sitting on his own, capture the behavior by clicking.

Training Exercises: Teaching Come Back When Called

TEACHING COME BACK WHEN CALLED:

Come Back When Called is the most important command you can teach your dog. For his own safety, it could be vital.

1. Hold the end of a 6-foot leash and StarMark Clicker™ in one hand and a treat in the other.
2. Wait for your dog to become distracted, and then hold the treat slightly in front of his nose.
3. When your dog shows interest in the treat, back away with your treat hand extended in front of you.
4. As you back away, bring your treat hand close to your body. When your dog reaches your treat hand, click and reward him.
5. Repeat this exercise until it is apparent that your dog understands he is rewarded with a treat when he comes to you (15-20 repetitions should suffice).
6. Now, say, "Come" the moment he moves toward you. Click and reward your dog when he comes to you.

STARMARK TIPS: COME

- ◆ Practice the Come command until your dog begins to come toward you without the need to lure him with a treat. Once this happens, try to "sneak away" from your dog and then say the command "Come." Click and back away as soon your dog turns toward you. Reward him with the treat when he reaches you
- ◆ Never correct or punish a dog when he comes to you. Your dog must view coming to you as a positive experience.
- ◆ Keep training fun. Always give your dog plenty of verbal praise after you reward him with the treat.
- ◆ Come Back When Called is an important safety exercise. Set your dog up for success so that he never learns that come does not mean come.



1. Starting position- StarMark Clicker and leash are in the same hand



2. When your dog becomes distracted, hold the treat in front of his nose



3. Back away from your dog, keeping your treat hand extended



4. Bring your treat hand close to your body before you click and reward your dog

Dog Training Made Easy- A Step-by-Step Guide to Using the StarMark Clicker™



1. Hold a treat slightly in front of your dog's nose



2. Lure your dog onto the place bed using a treat



3. Click the moment all four paws are on the place bed



4. Give your dog the treat and praise

TEACHING THE PLACE COMMAND, STEP-BY-STEP

The Place command is a great way for your dog to learn a "Boundary-Stay" for an extended period yet remain comfortable. Your dog will quickly learn to go to a slightly elevated and comfortable surface (we recommend a dog bed) and remain there until released. When your dog is on his Place, he may do as he pleases-play with a chew toy such as StarMark's Everlasting Treat Ball™, roll over, and nap- as long as he does not come off his Place. With practice, this exercise can be used in many situations when you need your dog to be mannerly.

1. Stand 2 feet in front of your dog's bed with your dog at your left. Hold the leash in your left hand 2 feet from the snap. Hold a treat in your right hand between your thumb and forefinger.
2. Hold the treat slightly in front of your dog's nose, and lure him onto the bed using the treat.
3. The moment all four of his paws are on the bed, click and reward your dog with a treat. Release your dog and encourage him to come off the dog bed. Do not use the command "Place" at this stage.
4. Repeat the above steps 15 or 20 times until it is apparent that your dog understands he is rewarded once he gets on his bed.
5. Practice for 2 training sessions without the command.
6. On the third session, begin using the word "Place" the moment all four of his paws are on the bed. Immediately click and reward your dog. You may quietly praise him after he has been rewarded.

“When your dog is on his Place, he may do as he pleases- play with a chew toy, roll over, and nap- as long as he does not come off his Place.”

STARMARK TIPS: PLACE

- ◆ Use a dog bed with distinct, elevated boundaries to allow your dog to easily identify when he is on the bed. The boundaries of mats, small rugs or towels can be difficult for your dog to identify.
- ◆ You may find that your dog attempts to go to his bed without your guidance or from farther away than 2 feet. Click and reward him for doing so.
- ◆ Make sure that you do not click until all four of your dog's feet are on the bed. Your dog needs to understand that getting all four feet on the bed is the appropriate behavior.
- ◆ The Place should be an exercise that your dog enjoys performing. Do not use the Place as a Time Out or for punishment.
- ◆ You may practice the Place command in different locations by moving the dog bed throughout your home, provided that each area is quiet and free from distraction during this stage of the training.
- ◆ When your dog is on the Place, he may do anything he wants except get off the place. He can sit, lie down, stand up, chew on toy, play dead, and more.
- ◆ Once your dog has learned the Place command, it is easy to teach your dog that anything that has a clear boundary is a "Place", such as a chair, bench, grooming table, weight scale, fluffy dog bed, and more.
- ◆ Once your dog is proficient at the Place command, it becomes an excellent tool to use when company comes over. Instead of being banished to the back yard, your dog can be taught to stay on his place when guests come over.



Use a Place that has distinct boundaries. This will allow your dog to easily identify when he is on or off the Place



Using a bench as a Place



Using a chair as a Place



Send your dog to his Place when company comes over

“When you Shape new behaviors, you reward your dog for each closer approximation to the desired behavior.”



Does your dog offer an odd or cute behavior that you would like to train? You can strengthen the behavior by capturing it with a click and reward

“Capturing involves waiting for your dog to perform a behavior that you wish to strengthen. Capture the behavior with a click and then reward with a treat.”

LEARN MORE: SHAPING, LURING & CAPTURING

There are essentially three ways to teach your dog behaviors that lead to rewards using your StarMark Clicker™: Shaping, Luring and Capturing.

When you Shape new behaviors, you reward your dog for each closer approximation to the desired behavior. For example, if you want to teach your dog to retrieve an object using shaping, first you might reward him for just sniffing it. Then reward him for picking it up. Finally, you would reward him for bringing the object to you. The scientific term for shaping is successive approximation.

Another way to teach your dog new behaviors is to use Luring. Your dog follows the lure (typically a treat in your hand) until he has performed the desired behavior. For example, if you want to teach your dog to Sit using a lure, you hold the treat in front of your dog and move it in an upward arc. If your dog follows this movement, he will finish in the Sit position; then you reward him.

Capturing involves waiting for your dog to perform a behavior that you wish to strengthen. The moment he performs the desired behavior without incentive, click and reward him. For example, if you wanted to teach your dog to lie down using capturing, you would wait until he chooses to lie down, click and then reward him.

The StarMark Clicker™ Training System uses a combination of all three of these techniques, which allows your dog to learn new behaviors quickly and enjoyably.

Training Exercises: Teaching Walking on a Loose Leash

TEACHING WALKING ON A LOOSE LEASH:

It takes a little practice to teach your dog to walk peacefully by your side, but you and your dog will enjoy leisurely walks once you show him that it is pleasant to stay next to you instead of pulling on the leash.

1. Have your dog Sit at your left side with his shoulder aligned with your knee.
2. Hold the end of your leash and the StarMark Clicker™ in your right hand, grasping the remainder of the leash with your left hand. The leash should be loose enough to form a slight loop between you and your dog with the snap hanging down. Maintain a natural body posture when holding the leash.
3. Walk forward, encouraging your dog to move with you if necessary.
4. If your dog forges ahead, lags behind, or sways away from the appropriate position, immediately stop walking. Do not say anything to your dog. When you stop, your dog will try different behaviors-pull harder, go right, go left. Once the leash is loose, click and reward, and begin the exercise again.
5. When your dog walks by your side for 2 paces on the loose leash, click and reward him, and immediately say your release word. Repeat and increase the number of forward steps by recognizing the moment of good behavior with a click and reward.
6. Repeat the above steps until your dog has walked by your side properly and has been rewarded for doing so 10 times. You may quietly praise him after he has been rewarded.
7. Once your dog understands the correct position for walking, introduce a command for walking on a loose leash, such as "Heel," "Let's go" or "Let's walk." Use this command for walking when you begin to move forward and just before you click and reward the dog for being in the correct position.
8. Once your dog has associated the command with walking, gradually work up to 10 paces before you click, reward and release him.



1. Have your dog sit at your side



2. Walk forward



3. If your dog pulls or forges ahead- Stop and wait. Your dog will try different behaviors



4. When the leash becomes loose, click and reward. Then repeat the exercise



Loose Leash with a slight loop between you and your dog



StarMark Collar™

STARMARK TIPS: WALKING ON A LOOSE LEASH

- ◆ Your dog should match his pace to yours, not the other way around.
- ◆ Keep your leash loose enough to form a slight loop between you and your dog. The snap attached to your dog's collar should swing as you walk.
- ◆ Practice walking on a loose leash in the forward direction only at this stage of the training.
- ◆ Many dogs are stubborn leash-pullers. If your dog fits this description, ask your retailer about the StarMark Collar. Using the StarMark Collar™ in conjunction with the StarMark Clicker™ will make teaching your dog how to walk peacefully by your side much easier.

TEACHING THE SIT-STAY COMMAND:

Teaching your dog to Stay in one place is one of the most useful and enjoyable aspects of having a mannerly, well-trained dog. We will use the Sit command to introduce Stay into your dog's routine. Although it is common for people to tell their dog to "Stay," it is not necessary to do so. When you say, "Sit," it should mean, "Sit and Stay" to your dog until he is released. Do not release your dog from a distance-staying close to him will help to keep him calm and will discourage him from anticipating the release command. When teaching your dog to Stay, you increase the amount of time he stays by gradually delaying the click and reward. Your dog eventually will learn to Stay even if you walk away from him.



1. Have your dog sit. Wait 3 seconds



2. Click and then reward your dog. The delayed click rewards the "stay" portion of the sit

1. With your dog at your left side, give the Sit command.
2. Click, reward and release him if he sits for 3 seconds.
3. If your dog gets up before you click and reward him, repeat the command "Sit" and help him back into position if necessary.
4. Repeat the above steps 5 times.

Training Exercises: Teaching the Sit Stay

5. Repeat the above steps again, but this time click, reward and release your dog for remaining in the Sit position for 5 seconds.
6. Repeat the above steps until your dog can remain in the Sit position for 10 seconds by the end of your first training session.
7. Start your second training session by clicking, rewarding and releasing your dog after he has remained in the Sit position for 5 seconds. Gradually delay the click and reward until you end this session with your dog remaining in the Sit position for 15 seconds.
8. Expect your dog to remain in the Sit position for longer periods until he can remain sitting by your side for 1 minute.

(Note: The number of sessions it takes to reach this goal varies, but most dogs will learn a 1-minute "Sit-Stay" within 10 sessions.)

TEACHING SIT-STAY AND WALK AWAY:

Until this point in the training, all the exercises have involved keeping your dog close or having him come toward you. Once your dog can Sit by your side for 1 minute, teach him that remaining in position when you walk away is also a positive experience.

1. With your dog on leash and at your left side, give the command "Sit."
2. Wait about 5 seconds, and then repeat the command "Sit" as you step directly in front of your dog. Hold the leash loosely throughout the exercise.
3. Wait an additional 5 seconds while in front of your dog.
4. Return to the starting position on the left side of your dog and wait an additional 5 seconds.
5. Click, reward and release your dog.
6. Repeat the steps 5 times.
7. On the fifth correct repetition, step 2 paces back after you have pivoted in front of your dog. Have your dog remain in position for 10 seconds. Return to the starting position and wait an additional 5 seconds.



3. Ask your dog to remain sitting for longer periods of time before you click, reward and release



1. Have your dog sit at your side for 5 seconds



2. Pivot directly in front of your dog and wait 5 seconds

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3. Step 2 paces back and wait for 10 seconds



4. Return to the starting position and wait 5 seconds



5. Click, reward and release



The Down command is second only to Come Back When Called when it comes to safety

Click, reward and release your dog.

8. If at any time your dog gets up from the Sit position before you click, reward and release, guide him back to the spot he was sitting and repeat the Sit command, helping him into position if necessary.

STARMARK TIPS: SIT STAY

- ◆ During each session, gradually increase the duration that your dog remains sitting, until he can do so for 1 minute with you 2 feet away.
- ◆ Gradually step farther away from your dog until he can remain sitting for 1 minute with you 6 feet away.
- ◆ Practice the "Sit-Stay" while you prepare your dog's food. Doing so will help him learn self-control. Have him remain sitting for 10 seconds before giving him his food.
- ◆ If your dog continually breaks the Sit, pivot directly in front of him and repeat the exercise.

TEACHING THE DOWN COMMAND:

The Down command is second only to Come Back When Called when it comes to having a safe, reliable dog. The Down command provides you with more control than a Sit command, and because it is a more comfortable position for your dog, he will Stay in that position for greater lengths of time. The Down command is also an effective way to communicate your leadership role to your dog. Although it is important to take your time when teaching any obedience command, it is especially so with the Down command. Dogs see this position as a subordinate posture and as a result, some may resist it. If your dog has severe behavioral problems, such as dominance or fear-induced aggression, consult with a qualified training and behavior specialist or a veterinarian before beginning this or any training program.

1. With your dog at your left, give the command "Sit."

Training Exercises: Teaching the Down Command

2. Hold the leash and treat in your right hand. Hold the StarMark Clicker™ in your left hand.
3. Hold the treat slightly in front of your dog's nose, and slowly lower it toward the ground. Be sure to lower it slowly enough so that your dog can follow its path. Place your left hand just behind his shoulders to help him into position if necessary.
4. Continue to lower the treat until it is on the ground and between your dog's paws. Keep the treat between your thumb and forefinger. It is acceptable to crouch as you lower the treat.
5. The moment your dog's elbows are resting on the ground and he is settled into a Down position, click, reward and release him.
6. Repeat the above steps 15 times.
7. Practice the Down for 4 training sessions.
8. On the fifth session, say the command "Down" the moment the dog is in position. Immediately click, reward and release him.

TRIPLE CROWN TIPS: DOWN

- ◆ You can help your dog into position by placing your left hand just behind his withers (shoulders) to gently guide him toward the ground using a slight left-to-right rocking motion.
- ◆ Capture your dog going into the Down position when not training. To do so, click and reward him whenever you see him lie down on his own. If your Triple Crown Clicker™ is not handy, quietly praise him.
- ◆ The Down command is an important exercise for your dog to master. Practice it daily. As your training progresses, you will learn many useful applications of this exercise.
- ◆ Remember to take your time teaching the Down command. Do not add the command "Down" until your dog goes into the position willingly.



1. Hold a treat slightly in front of your dog's nose



2. Lure him into the down position, helping him with your other hand at his shoulders if needed



3. Click the instant your dog is in the down position, then reward with a treat

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1. Give the command Place as your dog moves to get on the bed



2. Have your dog remain on the Place for 10 seconds



3. If your dog starts to break the Place before you release him, guide him back onto the Place



4. Click, reward and release your dog for staying on the place

TEACHING PLACE-STAY:

Your dog now should be ready to remain on his Place for longer periods.

1. Stand 2 feet in front of your dog's Place with your dog at your left side.
2. Give your dog the command "Place," and take a step forward. Do not lure him with a treat. Guide him onto his bed with the leash if necessary.
3. Have your dog remain on his Place for 10 seconds.
4. Click, reward and release him and encourage him to come off his Place. Do not release your dog from a distance-staying close to him will help to keep him calm and will discourage him from anticipating the release command.
5. If your dog breaks his command before you click, release and reward, repeat the command "Place" and guide him back onto his Place. Expect him to remain in position until you have reached your time goal for that repetition.
6. Repeat the above steps as many as 10 times or until he will remain on his Place for 1 minute. Add at least 5 seconds to each repetition before you click, reward and release him.
7. Begin the next training session by having your dog remain on his Place for 30 seconds. Add 15 seconds to each repetition until your dog will remain on his Place for 2 minutes.
8. Occasionally move slowly around the perimeter of your dog's Place. Your dog may follow your movements, but he must remain on his Place.

STARMARK TIPS:

PLACE STAY

- ◆ Practice the Place steps in each training session until your dog will remain on his Place for 5 minutes.
 - ◆ Once you have reached the 5 minute goal, move on to the next exercise.
 - ◆ Allow your dog to have a favorite chew toy to work on when you ask him to remain on Place for extended periods.
- Tips continued on next page

- ◆ Position your dog's Place near a chair or where you can relax. Ensure that you are close enough to the Place should he break his command and need guidance.
- ◆ Gradually introduce distractions into your training sessions such as gentle clapping or the rolling of a ball.
- ◆ Remember, do not click, reward and release your dog until he has completed your time goal for a particular repetition. However, you may reward his continued good behavior by giving him a treat every 30 seconds or so when practicing for extended periods. Do not allow him off his Place if you do so.
- ◆ Do not use the "Sit" or "Down" commands themselves while your dog is on the Place.

TEACHING PLACE-STAY AND WALK AWAY:

Now that you have taught your dog to go to his Place and remain there for as long as 5 minutes, you should teach him to remain on his Place even as you move around or walk away from him.

1. With your dog facing the bed give him the Place command, guiding him onto his bed with the leash if necessary.
2. Step 4 feet from your dog and casually move around the perimeter of his Place for 1 minute.
3. Give your dog a treat, but do not allow him to move off his Place.
4. Drop your leash, and step 6 feet away from your dog, casually moving around the perimeter of his Place for another minute.
5. Return to your dog.
6. Wait 10 seconds, then click, reward and release your dog.
7. Repeat the above steps twice.
8. With each training session, add 1 minute to the time your dog must Stay on his Place and 2 additional steps of distance from him until you are 10 feet away, and he will remain on his Place for 10 minutes.



1. Start with your dog on the Place and step 4 feet away



2. Casually move around the perimeter of the Place



3. Return to your dog and reward him with a treat. He can sit, down or stand on the place, as long as he does not come off



4. Step 6 feet away from the Place



5. Return to your dog, wait 10 seconds then click, reward and release



To transition to a dog bed alone, first place your dog's bed on the elevated Place



When your dog is proficient with the bed on the Place, you can remove the elevated Place



Position your dog's Place bed near you

STARMARK TIPS: PLACE STAY AND WALK AWAY

- ◆ As a rule, it is best to keep training sessions to less than 15 minutes, but your dog ultimately should remain on a Place-Stay for as long as 30 minutes. Once your dog has mastered a 10-minute Place, it is time to incorporate this exercise into your daily routine. Use any or all of the following suggestions:
- ◆ If you want to use just a dog bed as your dog's place you can transition from the elevated platform to your dog's bed. The elevated platform initially helps your dog understand the exercise and the boundaries of the Place.
- ◆ Position your dog's Place in an area where you can see it while you watch television, read or enjoy quiet time. It is acceptable to get up and go to your dog to give him a treat and pet him on occasion.
- ◆ Bring your dog's Place into your home office and expect him to remain there as you work.
- ◆ If you have young children, teach your dog that he can and should relax on his Place even if the kids are playing in the house. Keep an eye on your dog to ensure that he does not break his command. Teach your children that the Place is a quiet spot for your dog and discourage them from approaching him to play while he is there.
- ◆ When you have guests, have your dog remain on his Place while you tend to them.
- ◆ When your dog seems settled and comfortable on his Place, you may begin to step out of sight for a few seconds. If he remains on his Place, you can give him a treat. Gradually extend the duration that you are out of sight.
- ◆ See Page 45 to teach your dog the advanced exercise of going to his Place when the doorbell rings.

LEARN MORE: GENERALIZATION

Dogs make strong associations to places and situations. Always begin teaching new exercises in quiet, distraction-free locations. Once your dog has a basic understanding of his new command, it is essential for you to use that command in different locations and situations. Asking your dog to Sit not just in your quiet living room, but also on walks or in the park, is an example of generalizing. Asking your dog to remain sitting as other dogs walk by or when you put his food bowl down is an example of proofing. Both proofing and generalizing are essential to maximize the benefits of training. Remember to put your dog into situations only when he is ready for them, and eventually he will perform reliably in any situation.

TEACHING DOWN-STAY:

By now you should notice a positive change in your relationship with your dog. He should be more mannerly and eager to please and more willing to take direction. Incorporating the Down-Stay will help strengthen your relationship by further establishing your role as a leader to your dog. The Down-Stay has one more element of equal importance: safety. Along with Come Back When Called, the Down-Stay will help keep your dog safe in situations that you don't control.

1. With your dog at your left side, give the command "Down," helping him if necessary.
2. Stand upright and guide your dog back into the Down position if he attempts to get up.
3. Once your dog has remained in the Down position for 3 seconds, click, reward and release him. Do not release your dog from a distance-staying close to him will help to keep him calm and will discourage him from anticipating the release command.
4. Repeat the above steps 5 times.
5. Repeat the above steps again, but this time click, reward and release your dog for remaining in the



Generalize by training in different environments and around distractions



Rolling a ball past your dog while in a stay is a great test. Be ready to help your dog back into position



1. Have your dog Down. Help him if necessary



2. Slowly stand upright. Wait for 3 seconds then click, reward and release

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3. Repeat. Gradually delay the click and reward to mark longer periods of the Down stay



4. During longer Downs stays occasionally lean down and give your dog a treat



5. Should your dog break the Down stay withhold the praise or petting and redirect him into position



1. Have your dog Down. Wait 5 seconds

Down position for 5 seconds.

6. Repeat the above steps until your dog can remain in the Down position for 10 seconds by the end of your first training session.
7. Begin your second training session by expecting your dog to remain in the Down position for 5 seconds before you click, reward and release him. Gradually delay the click, reward and release until you end this session with your dog remaining in the Down position for 15 seconds.
8. Gradually increase the length of time in the Down position until your dog maintains it for 3 minutes. The number of training sessions this will take varies, but most dogs learn the command within 10 sessions.

STARMARK TIPS: DOWN STAY

- ◆ Dogs are highly sensitive to body language. Practice giving your Down command while standing in an upright, normal posture.
- ◆ When practicing the Down-Stay for extended periods, it is acceptable to give your dog a bite-sized treat every 30 seconds. Gentle petting also is encouraged so that your dog learns to remain in position even during such interactions. Should your dog break his command when you pet or praise him, withhold the praise and petting, repeat the command "Down" and redirect him into position.

TEACHING DOWN-STAY AND WALK AWAY:

Now that you have taught your dog to remain in the Down position by your side, you can teach him to maintain the position while you step away from him. Doing so will help him to become a safer, more reliable and enjoyable companion.

1. With your dog on leash and at your left side, give the Down command.

Training Exercises: Teaching Down Stay and Walk Away

2. Wait about 5 seconds, then repeat the Down command as you pivot directly in front of your dog.
3. Wait 5 seconds while in front of your dog. Lean down and give your dog a treat. Stand back up but be ready to help your dog back into position if he moves.
4. Return to the starting position on the left side of your dog and wait an additional 5 seconds. Click, reward and release your dog.
5. Repeat the above steps 5 times.
6. On the fifth correct repetition, pivot in front of your dog and wait 5 seconds. Then step 2 paces back. Have your dog remain in position for 10 seconds.
7. Return to the starting position and wait an additional 5 seconds. Click, reward and release your dog. You may quietly praise him after you release him.
8. Repeat the above steps again, but have your dog remain in position for 10 seconds. If at any time your dog gets up before you release him, use the leash to guide him back to the spot where he was laying and return him to the Down position.

STARMARK TIPS:

DOWN STAY AND WALK AWAY

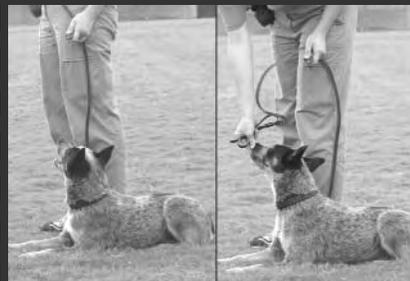
- ◆ During each session, gradually increase the duration that your dog remains in the Down position until he can maintain it for 3 minutes with you 2 feet away.
- ◆ Gradually begin to step farther away from your dog while he remains in the Down position until he can do so for 5 minutes with you 6 feet away.
- ◆ Once you have reached the 5 minute, 6-foot goal, begin to move from side to side slowly. Ultimately, you should be able to walk behind and around your dog while he remains in the Down position.
- ◆ You may test your dog by dropping the leash, but remain close enough to grasp it again if you need it.
- ◆ Remember, when practicing any Stay exercise for an extended time, you can give your dog treats and gently pet him on occasion. Your dog should remain in position as you do so.



2. Pivot directly in front of your dog and wait 5 seconds



3. Give your dog a treat and then stand back up. Be ready to help your dog back into the Down



4. Return to the starting position and wait 5 seconds. Click, reward and release your dog



**LEARN MORE:
LEADERSHIP**

Leadership is not a scientific principle. It is an intangible concept and difficult to measure, but it is critical to the relationship between you and your dog. As a social animal, your dog instinctively seeks direction, and it is vital that he recognizes you as that leader or one that provides direction. Otherwise, he may feel the need to fill this role in your relationship. Dogs that perceive themselves as their owner's leader can become bothersome, anxious and even aggressive.

Communication is the cornerstone to providing the guidance and direction your dog needs when he is with you. By teaching your dog to perform obedience commands to gain rewards, you teach him that listening to you is the right choice. Teaching your dog exercises such as Down and Place sends a clear signal to your dog that you are in charge and the one providing direction. Once that is established, your dog will take direction gladly. In addition, recognize and encourage good behavior with rewards such as praise, petting, toys, play or treats. Too often we only notice undesired behavior.

One of the best ways to develop consistently good behavior and to keep your dog safe is to adhere to these leash and collar guidelines:

1. Keep an appropriate leash and collar on your dog whenever he is with you, not just during training sessions. Use a 6-foot leash for walks and most training sessions, a 20-30-foot long line in large, open areas and a short, "tab"-style leash when your dog is relaxing with you at home.
2. Never leave a leash and collar on an unattended dog.

Follow rules 1 and 2 until your dog rarely needs leash guidance or whenever appropriate (such as in public or outdoors in unsecured areas).

It takes anywhere from 3 to 6 months for good behaviors to become permanently established in your dog's mind. This time frame depends on several factors, such as your dog's age, temperament and experiences before you began training. Allowing your dog too much latitude too quickly can slow training and create unnecessary confusion and frustration for you and your dog. A good rule is that when you feel confident that you can relax these guidelines, wait another month before you attempt to do so.

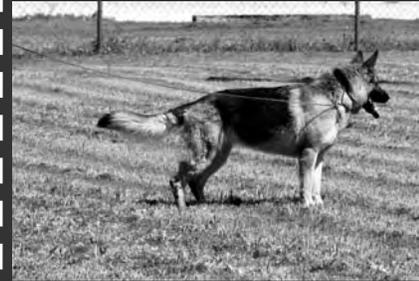
“Have your dog wear a short “tab” style leash when your dog is relaxing with you at home for times when your dog needs leash guidance.”

Teaching Come Back When Called from a Distance

TEACHING COME BACK WHEN CALLED FROM A DISTANCE:

This important exercise should be practiced daily. At this stage in training, you will teach your dog to Come Back When Called from a distance with the use of a 20- or 30-foot long line. We recommend that you use a long line and not a retractable leash. Although retractables are convenient and valuable training tools, they keep a constant tension on your dog's collar. You want your dog to come when you ask him to-not because he feels tension from a leash. Ultimately, you will want your dog to come back to you even when he is off-leash and using a long line is one of the most effective ways to develop a consistent Come Back When Called.

1. Hold the end of your long line and StarMark Clicker™ in one hand, and a treat in the other. Do not show your dog the treat.
2. Allow your dog to become distracted and to wander approximately 10 feet away.
3. Make your leash loose and give your dog the command "Come." Help him with the long line if necessary.
4. The moment he moves toward you, click and back away, reeling in the long line as you do so.
5. Your backward movement will encourage your dog to continue to come toward you. Praise your dog using an upbeat tone as you do so.
6. When your dog reaches you, stop moving and reward him with the treat. Follow the reward with praise.
7. Release your dog, but do not let go of the long line. Repeat the above steps 10 times.
8. Practice these steps in each training session, but allow your dog to gradually wander farther from you with each session, until he is 20-30 feet away, depending on the length of your long line.



1. With the long line in your hand, allow your dog to wander off



2. Make your leash loose and give the Come command. Click the moment your dog turns to you



3. Back up to encourage your dog to come to you



4. When your dog reaches you, stop and reward with a treat



Back up and reel in your long line as your dog comes toward you



Keep your leash loose when you practice Come Back When Called



Train in quiet areas free from distraction until your dog has a understanding of the exercise



For safety keep a long line on your dog when in open areas

STARMARK TIPS: COME BACK WHEN CALLED

- ◆ Reel in your long line as your dog comes toward you to prevent you or your dog from becoming entangled in it.
- ◆ Backward movement will encourage your dog to come toward you. Keep the Come, exciting and fun for your dog
- ◆ When your dog comes toward you, do not show him the treat. Give him his reward once he catches up to you.
- ◆ Do not step forward and reach out for your dog. Reaching out may trigger a “chase” play response.
- ◆ Remember to keep your leash loose when you practice the Come command. Doing so ensures that your dog is not coming back to you because he feels tension on a leash or is being forced back.
- ◆ As with all exercises, it is important that you train in quiet areas free from distraction. Once your dog becomes proficient at the exercise, you can introduce progressively bigger distractions. Do not put your dog in a situation for which he is not ready. At a busy park, for example, your dog may be capable of remaining sitting by your side, but he may not be ready to Come Back When Called from a distance.
- ◆ If you doubt that your dog will come toward you the first time you ask, give him the command and gently guide him with the long line. Once he decides to move in your direction, click, back up and praise him.
- ◆ Keep a long line on your dog when in large, open areas as a safety measure. If your dog chooses not to respond, pick up the end of the line and help him make the correct decision. Do not allow your dog to learn that Come does not always mean come back when called.

Training Exercises: Teaching Stand for Basic Grooming

TEACHING STAND FOR BASIC GROOMING:

Teaching your dog to stand for basic grooming is useful for brushing and cleaning ears. It also makes your dog more manageable for the veterinarian.

1. With your dog at your left side, give the Sit command.
2. Hold a treat in your right hand and slightly in front of your dog's nose.
3. Slowly move the treat away from your dog in a direction that is parallel to the ground. Be sure that your hand movement is slow enough so that your dog can follow the treat.
4. Place your left hand under your dog to help guide him into position and to keep him stable.
5. The moment your dog is standing, click, reward and release him.
6. Repeat the above steps 15 times.
7. Gradually delay your click, reward and release until the dog remains standing for 30 seconds.
8. Once your dog begins to understand, you may begin to add the command "Stand" the moment he is in the standing position. Click and reward your dog for standing.
9. Do not allow your dog to move his feet once standing. If he does, repeat the above steps until you reach the desired time goal.

TRIPLE CROWN TIPS: STAND FOR GROOMING

- ◆ Once your dog is capable of a 30 second Stand, begin to "handle" him by running your hand down his neck and back and examining his paws and ears. Click, reward and release your dog for remaining in position for just a few seconds. Gradually increase the length of time your dog remains in position until you can fully examine him.
- ◆ Once you can fully examine your dog, begin to brush him while he is in the stand position. Use the same gradual approach until you can brush your dog with ease.



1. With your dog in the sit position, hold a treat slightly in front of your dog's nose



2. Move the treat away from your dog, parallel to the ground. With your other hand, help your dog stand if needed



3. Click the instant your dog is in the stand position, then reward with the treat





1. With your dog in a Sit, open the door. Watch your dog. If he gets up put him back in the sit



2. Stand facing your dog and wait 5 seconds before you click



3. Reward your dog and release him



4. Invite your dog through the door

USEFUL SIT EXERCISES

In this section you will learn three useful ways to incorporate the Sit exercise into your daily routine: "Sit at Doors," "Wait to Load" and "Sit for Greetings." These exercises help develop good manners while preventing unruly behavior such as jumping or excessive excitement.

SIT AT DOORS

1. With your dog on leash and at your left side, walk to the front door of your home.
2. Stop 2 to 3 feet from the door. Give the Sit command.
3. Repeat the command, and open the door. Watch your dog as you do so.
4. Continue to watch him as you step through the doorway.
5. Stand facing your dog, wait 5 seconds, then click, reward and release him.
6. Invite your dog through the door and reward him with a treat as he does so.
7. If your dog breaks the Sit position before you click, reward and release, repeat the above steps.
8. Perform 5 repetitions of the above steps in each direction through the door, for a total of 10 repetitions.
9. Add several seconds to each training session until your dog can remain sitting at a door for 30 seconds.

STARMARK TIPS:

SIT AT DOORS

- ◆ Practice Sit at doors in different locations and going both indoors and outdoors.
- ◆ Return to your dog occasionally, and click, reward and release him as you stand next to him. This will prevent your dog from anticipating your release and your permission to enter or exit through the door.

TEACHING WAIT TO LOAD:

The purpose of this exercise is to teach your dog to get in and out of your vehicle peacefully and only with your permission.

1. With your dog on leash and at your left side, walk to the door of the vehicle that you want your dog to use.
2. Stop 2 to 3 feet in front of the door. Give your dog the Sit command.
3. Repeat the Sit command, and open the door. Watch your dog as you do so.
4. Wait 5 seconds, then click and release your dog. Encourage him to "Load." Reward him once he is in the vehicle.
5. With your dog in the vehicle, close the door.
6. Wait 5 seconds, and then open the door. Do not allow your dog to get out of the vehicle. If he does, repeat the command "Load," helping him back into the vehicle if necessary. Do not click or reward your dog if he breaks the command.
7. Wait 5 seconds, then click, reward and release your dog.
8. Repeat the Sit command once he has exited the vehicle.
9. Wait 5 seconds, then click, reward and release your dog.
10. Perform 5 repetitions of the above steps.
11. If your dog breaks the Sit position before you click and release, repeat the above steps.
12. Gradually extend the duration of time you expect your dog to remain sitting or in the load position until he can remain in each position of the exercise for 1 minute, for a total of 3 minutes.

(Note: Caution should be used when asking a dog to jump up onto or down from high surfaces. It is recommended that dogs young and old either use a safety ramp or be safely lifted.)



1. Walk to your vehicle with your dog on loose leash



2. Have your dog sit while you open the door



3. Have your dog remain in the sit for a few seconds, then click to reward the sit stay.



4. Encourage your dog to load



5. Reward your dog once he is in the vehicle



6. Close the door, then open it. Do not allow your dog to leap out of the vehicle



7. Wait, then click and reward your dog for staying in the vehicle



8. Encourage your dog to exit the vehicle by releasing your dog

STARMARK TIPS: WAIT TO LOAD

- ◆ The Load exercise breaks down into four parts: the Sit at the vehicle, the Load into the vehicle, remaining in the vehicle and the release from the vehicle back into the Sit position. Initially, click, reward and release your dog for each phase of the exercise. Ultimately, you will click, release and reward your dog only when he completes all four phases. This is known as chaining. You can and should practice the four aspects of the exercise separately and then chain them together.
- ◆ When you practice an exercise for an extended period, you may offer your dog a bite-sized treat. For example, if your dog is peacefully waiting in your vehicle, you may offer him a treat before you click, reward and release.
- ◆ Expect your dog to remain calm and mannerly whenever he exits your vehicle.
- ◆ Another useful Wait exercise is to teach your dog to Wait before going through a gate, up stairs and more.



Teaching your dog to Wait before going through a door or into a vehicle is a practical and convenient exercise

**LEARN MORE:
CHAINING**

Chaining involves grouping exercises in a sequence until they become one complex task. Teaching your dog to retrieve an object is an example of chaining. Your dog is taught the following behaviors separately, then chained together as one task:

1. Take an object from your hand.
2. Hold the object.
3. Pick up the object from the ground.
4. Get the object from a distance.
5. Bring the object to you.
6. Give the object to you when asked.
7. Get the object, and bring it to you when asked.

In order to get to the last step, steps 1-6 are taught separately.

Advanced tricks, agility training, competitive obedience training and service dog training all involve chaining. If your dog prefers play over treats as his reward, try the Click and Play Squid™, a clicker and fun reward in one, to practice chaining exercises. Think of things you would like to teach your dog, then break them down into simple steps. Teach each step in sequence, and you will be amazed at what your dog can do!

“Chaining involves grouping exercises in a sequence until they become one complex task.”



1. Teach your dog to take an object from your hand



2. Teach your dog to hold an object



3. Teach your dog to pick up an object from the ground



4. Teach your dog to get the object from a distance and bring it to you

Dog Training Made Easy- A Step-by-Step Guide to Using the StarMark Clicker™



1. Walk on a Loose Leash up to someone familiar to your dog



2. Stop and have your dog Sit. Reward your dog with a treat for sitting calmly



3. Exchange greetings. If your dog gets up have him Sit again.



4. Have your friend calmly greet your dog.

TEACHING SIT FOR GREETINGS:

Many dogs become excited at the opportunity to greet or be greeted by people. Whether it is someone they know or a friendly stranger, jumping up or other rowdy behavior can be replaced with a dog that sits calmly for greetings.

1. With your dog on the leash and at your left side, approach someone who is familiar to your dog.
2. When you meet, give your dog the Sit command. Reward your dog with a treat for sitting quietly. Then exchange greetings.
3. Next have the other person calmly praise and pet your dog under his chin or near his shoulder. Your dog should remain sitting. Reward your dog with a treat.
4. Have your friend say goodbye and walk away. Your dog should remain sitting.
5. Wait 5 seconds, then click, reward and release your dog.
6. If your dog breaks his Sit command while your friend is greeting him, your friend should immediately ignore him by standing upright and looking away. Repeat steps 1-3 until your dog successfully completes them.
7. Repeat the above steps 5 times.

STARMARK TIPS: SIT FOR GREETINGS

- ♦ If your dog seems too excited to remain sitting for greetings with petting, have your friend say hello to you from a distance. Once your dog is settled into the Sit position, your friend can move closer. With practice, your dog will be able to Sit peacefully for greetings.
- ♦ Practice this exercise at the front door of your home, on walks and at any other time that allows you to show your dog how to accept greetings by sitting.

Training Exercises: Teaching Place When the Doorbell Rings

TEACHING PLACE WHEN THE DOORBELL RINGS:

Most dogs will bark and run to the door when they hear the doorbell or a knock. While many dog owners do not mind being alerted, barking at the door can be a nuisance if it is excessive. Teaching your dog to go to his Place when the doorbell rings alerts you to a visitor, while preventing nuisance or embarrassing behavior.

1. Move your dog's Place 10 feet from the front door of your home.
2. Give the command "Place."
3. Have a friend or family member ring the doorbell. Your dog should remain on his Place.
4. Go to the door and greet your guest. Watch your dog the entire time.
5. If your dog gets up from his Place, return him to his Place, helping him with the leash if necessary.
6. Wait 30 seconds, then click, reward and release your dog for remaining in the Place position.
7. Have your friend leave. Remain with your dog in the vicinity of the door, and allow him to do as he pleases.
8. First have your friend ring the doorbell. Then give the Place command, helping your dog with the leash if necessary.
9. Repeat steps 4-7 5 times.
10. Gradually move your dog's Place farther from the door until it is in the area where you usually keep it.

STARMARK TIPS: PLACE

- ◆ This is a great way to keep your dog polite and mannerly when you are entertaining. Keep your dog on his Place for several minutes. When he is settled, ask your guests to go to your dog to greet him. Click, reward and release your dog when he has politely accepted the greetings. Repeat for each arriving guest. With practice, your dog will identify his Place as the most enjoyable spot to be when there is a lot of activity in your home.



1. Tell your dog "Place" and have him get on the Place bed



2. Have a friend ring the doorbell. If your dog gets off the place, return him to it



3. Open the door and greet your guest. Watch your dog



4. When your guest comes in click and reward your dog for staying on the Place

Dog Training Made Easy- A Step-by-Step Guide to Using the StarMark Clicker™



1. With your dog at your side, have your friend ring the doorbell



2. Tell your dog "Place" and take him to the Place bed



3. Click and reward your dog for staying on the Place



Fade the use of food rewards by using the Click and Play Squid or praise as your reinforcement

LEARN MORE: PROMPTING, CONTINUOUS REINFORCEMENT AND FADING

There are many scientific principles behind dog training and operant conditioning. Below are several more terms with simplified explanations to help you better understand your dog and use the StarMark Clicker™ Training System.

Prompting: Prompting occurs when you provide a signal to your dog that will help him to learn and perform new exercises. The hand motions you use to lure your dog into positions are an example of a gestural prompt.

Continuous Reinforcement: Your dog receives a reward (remember, the sound of the clicker, treats, petting, play, and praise are all rewards) every time he performs a desired behavior. This is the reinforcement schedule we use throughout the step-by-step sections of the StarMark Clicker™ Training System. We recommend that you consistently offer some form of reward for your dog's good behavior.

Fading: Fading is the diminishment of prompts that you provide to your dog. An example of fading would be the gradual reduction of the hand motion you use to lure your dog into the sit position, until he sits on a verbal command without the need of a gestural prompt. Most dog owners will want to fade the use of food as a continuous reinforcement to a more practical reward. The Click and Play™ Squid is a great tool to use in fading the use of treats. This innovative training system combines a fun toy reward and the clicker in one product. Ultimately, verbal praise and a pat on the head should suffice in most situations. You should, of course, continue to give your dog occasional treats.

FUN TRICKS

In this section we will show you a few fun and easy tricks to teach your dog using the StarMark Clicker™ Training System: Spin, Shake, Play Dead and Sit Up. While the obedience exercises you have been learning should be practiced daily, adding a few tricks into your dog's routine will keep the training fresh, fun and interesting for you and your dog.

TEACHING THE SPIN:

1. With your dog standing in front of you, hold a bite-sized treat 2 inches in front of his nose.
2. Slowly move your treat hand in a counter-clockwise motion, encouraging your dog to follow the treat.
3. When your dog has completed a half-circle motion, click, reward and release him.
4. Repeat steps 1-3, but click, reward and release him when he does 3/4 of a circle.
5. Repeat steps 1-3, but click, reward and release when he does 1 full circle.
6. Add the command "Spin" when your dog completes 1 full turn, then click, reward and release him.
7. Gradually increase the number of spins over several training sessions, until your dog will follow your treat hand for as many as three spins. Give the command "Spin" for each turn, but do not click, reward and release until he completes the desired number of spins.

STARMARK TIPS: SPIN

- ◆ Initially, it may be easier to lure your dog forward with the treat hand to get him started into the spin movement. You also can use the leash to guide him into the counter-clockwise direction, if necessary.
- ◆ Fade luring your dog around in a spin. Gradually move your hand further and further away from your dogs nose until you are standing upright.



1. Hold a treat slightly in front of your dog's nose



2. Lure your dog around into a half circle. Click, reward and repeat



3. When your dog gets the idea of turning in a half circle, lure him into a 3/4 circle and click



4. Click and reward each successive approximation of the spin until you are getting a full circle



1. Raise either paw, then click and reward. Repeat until your dog begins to lift his paw on his own



2. Click and reward any voluntary movement of his paw



3. Click and reward successive approximations of your dog lifting his paw to your hand

“The trick, Play Dead can also be useful when brushing or examining your dog.”

TEACHING SHAKE, STEP-BY-STEP:

1. With your dog standing in front of you, give him the Sit command.
2. Use either hand to raise either paw, click and reward your dog. Keep your dog in the Sit position.
3. Repeat the above steps 15 times.
4. When your dog begins to lift his paw off the ground without assistance, immediately click and reward him. Any voluntary movement of his paw is sufficient.
5. Gradually expect your dog to lift his paw into your extended hand before you click and reward him.
6. Once your dog fully offers his paw to your extended hand, add the command "Shake," then click and reward your dog.

STARMARK TIPS: SHAKE

- ◆ **Some dogs are naturally inclined to offer their paws without assistance. If you notice this behavior in your dog, capture it by clicking and rewarding him each time he does so.**

TEACHING PLAY DEAD:

1. With your dog in front of you, give him the Down command.
2. Gently rest him on his side, immediately click and reward him.
3. Release your dog and return him to the Down position.
4. Repeat the above steps until your dog voluntarily rests on his side.
5. From the Down position, gently roll your dog onto his back, immediately click and reward him.
6. Return your dog to the Down position.
7. Repeat steps 5 and 6, until your dog rolls onto his back voluntarily. This may take several training sessions.
8. Once your dog begins to offer to roll onto his back, pair the action with a command--"Play Dead" or

"Bang"-- then immediately click and reward him.

9. As your dog becomes eager to perform the exercise, begin the exercise directly from the sit or stand positions. Ultimately, you should be able to give your dog the "Play Dead" or "Bang" command from the sitting or standing position. Click and reward your dog the moment he performs the trick.

TRIPLE CROWN TIPS: PLAY DEAD

- ◆ **Playing Dead is a trick for dogs that enjoy rolling onto their back. However, because this is a naturally submissive posture, some dogs may not enjoy playing dead. While all healthy dogs should learn all of the basic obedience commands in this guide, do not attempt to teach your dog a trick unless he enjoys performing it.**

TEACHING SIT UP:

1. With your dog in front of you, give the Sit command.
2. Hold a treat directly above your dog's nose but out of reach.
3. Entice him to follow your treat hand as you move it directly upward.
4. As soon as you notice any attempt by your dog to have his front paws lift from the ground, immediately click, reward and release him. Do not click and reward if his rear end comes off the ground.
5. Gradually expect your dog to lift his front paws higher off the ground until he sits up fully.
6. Once your dog fully sits up, use the command "Sit Up" as soon as he is in the correct position, then immediately click, reward and release him.
7. Gradually delay the click, reward and release until your dog can Sit Up for 5 seconds.



1. Start with your dog in the down position. Move him onto his side then click and reward



3. Repeat until your dog voluntarily rests on his side, then roll your dog onto his back and click and reward



1. Hold a treat directly above your dog's nose and entice him to follow your treat hand up. Click and reward any attempt by your dog to lift his front paws



2. Gradually expect your dog to lift his paws higher. Click and reward each more accurate effort.



3. Progression of learning. Click and reward each successive approximation of the desired behavior



4. Once your dog fully sits up, pair in the command "Sit Up." Click and reward

STARMARK TIPS: SIT UP

- ◆ This exercise requires strength and balance from your dog. Take your time teaching this exercise to ensure that your dog is physically capable of performing it.
- ◆ Initially, it may be easier to practice this exercise with your dog sitting in a corner, which will minimize the opportunity for him to fully get up and may allow him to learn the trick faster.
- ◆ In training Sit Up, you may be using several techniques at any one time. The hand above your dog's nose acts as a gestural prompt that encourages your dog into position. The treat in your hand acts as a lure. Shaping occurs when you click and reward for each closer approximation of the desired behavior. Capturing takes place when you click for a behavior that the dog offered on his own.

A CONTINUATION OF SIT UP: PRAY



Start with Sit

Ignore unwanted behaviors

Sit Up



Wait and see what behavior your dog will offer

Dog offers new behavior of holding paws higher up

Click the the exact moment his paws touch, then reward

PROBLEM SOLVING

My dog will not eat treats. What do I do? Find a treat that is highly appealing to your dog, such as StarMark Everyflavor Treats™, hot dogs, cheese, boiled chicken and only use them during training sessions. Train a hungry dog. Do not train your dog after a big meal because he will be satiated and the treats will be less appealing. If your dog prefers play over treats, you may want to use an alternative reinforcer like the Click and Play™ Squid, a patent pending design that combines a clicker and toy in one product.

My dog grabs for the treat. How do I teach him to take the treat softly? Only release the treat to your dog when he is being polite. You may need to close your hand more fully around the treat to prevent him from grabbing it until you choose to release it. If your dog grabs for the treat and gets it, he will learn that grabbing gets the treat. In addition, do not reach out then immediately pull your hand back when giving the treat. Pulling your hand back too soon may teach the dog that he has to leap forward to your hand to be able to reach the treat. Another alternative is to give your dog the treat from your palm instead of from between your thumb and forefinger. You may also try giving your dog the treat by putting the treat on a metal spoon.

My dog will not focus and follow the food lure. What do I do? Try using a larger treat that your dog can see and follow more easily, or use a treat that is extra appealing to him. You may also try holding the treat closer to your dog's nose and moving it more slowly. If your dog still does not follow a lure, use the technique of shaping or capturing to teach him the exercises. To shape a behavior, click and reward successive approximations of the behavior you want. For example, if, when teaching the Place command, your dog does not follow the lure all the way onto the place, then you would first click and reward for one paw being up on the place. Then, click and reward when two paws are on the place, and so on. To capture a behavior, wait for your dog to perform a behavior on his own. The moment he performs the behavior you wish to strengthen, click and follow with a treat. If your dog prefers to be lured around by a toy, use a toy, such as the StarMark Easy Glider™, instead of food.

My dog will not go into the down position. What do I do? The down is a subordinate posture and some dogs may resist you helping them into position. In this case, train the down by waiting for your dog to lie down on his own accord, and capture it with a click followed by a treat. The perfect time to capture the down is when you are watching TV, prepared with your StarMark Clicker™ and some treats. As you are watching TV, wait for your dog to get bored and lie down, then capture it with a click and give him a treat. You may also teach the down through shaping by rewarding successive approximations of the down. For example, first click and reward when your dog's head drops towards the ground. Then only click and reward when he drops his head and shoulders. Then click when an elbow hits the ground, and so on until

your dog is completely in the down position.

My dog will sit at home but not at the dog park when other dogs are running around.

What do I do? Take a few steps back in your training and practice the sit at a distraction level slightly higher than what your dog is proficient at. Then generalize the sit to several different locations where the distraction level is low. Gradually increase the distractions, but don't overload your dog with them. When you plan to work around higher distractions, bring a reward that is extra special, over and above what you normally use. When you first get to an area with higher distractions, give your dog a chance to look around and check things out before starting your training session. Don't work too long and stop your training session on a high note. Set your dog up for success and don't expect too much too fast. If you still need to lure your dog into position, he is not yet ready for working around distractions.

My dog is afraid of the sound of the clicker. What do I do? If your dog has a sound sensitivity, you will want to muffle the volume of the clicker by placing it behind your back, in a pocket, or wrap a few layers of tape on the clicker, until your dog has been desensitized to the sound and has learned that it means a treat is coming. You can also use a retractable pen at first to make the click sound and progress to the clicker once your dog is comfortable.

COMMON QUESTIONS

What is the difference between the StarMark Clicker™ and other clickers? The StarMark Clicker™ was designed with ergonomics in mind. It has been our experience working with hundreds of clients that traditional box clickers can be bulky and uncomfortable. The user friendly StarMark Clicker feels comfortable wherever you hold it, and is also made from a lightweight and durable material. Have you experienced missed clicks while training from accidentally pressing the wrong end of the traditional box clicker? With the StarMark Clicker there are no more missed clicks! The raised button is easy to find and press, even if you are wearing gloves or have long fingernails. The stainless steel clicker element will not rust, plus it has a built in lanyard attachment.

Why do I need the clicker? Can't I just say "Good Dog," and give my dog a treat? The reason the clicker is preferred over a verbal marker word is that a clicker allows you to quickly and consistently mark the exact moment your dog performed a desired behavior, even at a distance. The click sound is consistent, while verbal cues can vary in tone, volume, tempo, and emotion. In addition, it is faster to click than to say a word. The sound of the clicker also signals an automatic response in the dog that a word cannot do, making it clearer for your dog. When teaching a new exercise, you have only limited moments that your dog is in the desired position. A clicker allows you to catch those moments in time and bridge the period to when you give him a treat. The precise timing the clicker gives you allows your dog to learn quickly,

while minimizing confusion.

What happens if my timing is off when I click? Once paired with something positive, the clicker's precise ability to "mark" a behavior can sometimes create a problem if your timing of the click is off, especially if you have clicked and rewarded a behavior repeatedly. For example, if you are teaching the sit and you click when your dog's rear is only halfway to the ground, you can end up teaching a hover sit. If you find your timing is off, practice your timing without your dog. Have a friend bounce a ball while you click whenever the ball hits the ground. Pretty soon you will be able to click the precise moment the ball hits the ground.

How do I wean my dog away from luring, the clicker, and treats? In this guide you will initially use a lure to help show your dog the desired behavior. When your dog is beginning to understand the exercise, start to slowly take the lure away. Then, switch from luring your dog into position with the treat to bringing the treat out only as a reward after the dog has performed the desired behavior. Throughout this guide a continuous schedule of reinforcement is used to help your dog learn the fastest when you are teaching a new behavior and are in the initial showing stage. With continuous reinforcement, your dog receives a reward every time he performs a behavior as you asked. Once your dog has a general understanding, we recommend you switch to a variable schedule of reinforcement to help your dog generalize and retain the behavior, making it stronger. With a variable schedule your dog receives a reward intermittently for performing a behavior as you asked. The reward should be something that your dog perceives as desirable, whether it's food, play, social interaction, petting, or praise. For example, your dog sits reliably as you have asked for the past 5 occasions. The next time you ask your dog to sit, praise him instead of giving him a treat. After that, ask him to sit again and click and reward with a treat. Vary both the type of reinforcement given and the occasions you give it so your dog never knows exactly when or what kind of reward is coming. Go back to a continuous schedule of reinforcement when you teach a new behavior. The Click and Play™ Squid is perfect to use when switching from a continuous to a variable reinforcement schedule and for weaning away the use of treats. Instead of clicking and giving your dog a treat, you click and toss the toy. Note: Give a treat or some other positive reinforcement often enough so that your dog knows that if he keeps performing the behavior, he is sure to win something he wants.

DOG TRAINING SECRETS

ABC's: Antecedent, Behavior and Consequence are important concepts to understand when trying to understand why your dog does what he does, whether he is being naughty or nice. The first factor, antecedent, is whatever comes before any given behavior, and can be almost anything. Think of it as the trigger that elicits the behavior. The second factor, behavior, is how your dog responds to its environment (your dog's response to the antecedent). The third

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factor, consequence, is whatever happens in response to the behavior- whether it strengthens the behavior or weakens it. If the behavior is strengthened, then the consequence is a reinforcer. If the behavior was weakened, then the consequence was a punishment. Understanding the ABC's helps you unlock the secrets of your dog's mind. To explain how the ABC's work, let's pretend that your happy-go-lucky Golden Retriever ecstatically greets all your friends by jumping up on them. It probably starts with the sound of the doorbell or a knock at the door and your friend walking in (Antecedent); your dog jumps up and greets your friend (Behavior); your friend, trying to be polite, says, "Hello Trip," while you wrestle your dog off and put him in the back yard (Consequence). The consequence for this particular dog is not a punishment, but a reinforcement. Trip wants attention and physical contact, and he gets them in the form of your friend's patient response and your wrestling techniques. This behavior is strengthened every time you have company. How can you break this cycle? Teach your dog that sitting leads to attention while jumping up leads to withholding attention.

Timing: Studies show that dogs have a period of about 1.5 seconds in order to accurately associate a cause with an effect. This means that all types of reinforcement, or lack of, should be given in that time frame to maximize learning potential and minimize confusion. Since dogs live in the present, they believe they are being praised or corrected for what they are doing at that exact moment. Miss that moment in time and your dog can get confused or learn something entirely different than what you wanted. Proper timing is critical for an animal to learn by making an association between a cause (his behavior) with an effect (the consequence of his behavior).

Consistency: In order for your dog to clearly understand what you expect of him, your training must be clear and consistent. Dogs thrive on rules and routines, and the familiarity of patterns puts them at ease. Allowing a particular behavior sometimes and not others will be confusing to your dog, as he will be unable to determine when this behavior is appropriate and when it is not. If a behavior is not always appropriate, it is best not to allow it at all.

Reinforcement: The timing, strength, and type of reinforcement used to communicate with your dog are critical to the outcome of what your dog learns. When a behavior is strengthened either through the dog working for something or avoiding something, reinforcement occurs. Understanding what your dog perceives as reinforcement is critical because reinforcement is relative. For example, if your dog is more enthusiastic about playing with a toy than receiving treats, a toy may be a more effective reinforcer.

Reinforcement must be meaningful, motivational, and good enough for your dog to want to strive for it. Behaviors that have been consistently rewarded will occur more often. Things that are naturally rewarding to your dog, or through association have been conditioned to be rewarding are called Positive Reinforcers and are usually given during or immediately after a

behavior to cause the behavior to be strengthened. Natural reinforcers are often called Primary or Unconditioned reinforcers. They are based on what your dog instinctually wants, such as food, drink, play, social interaction to name a few. Reinforcers that your dog has learned to enjoy are called Conditioned or Secondary Reinforcers. These are things that your dog has learned have value. The StarMark Clicker™ is considered a conditioned reinforcer because your dog has learned to associate the click with a primary reinforcer, such as food. Another common conditioned reinforcer is praise. As a puppy your dog probably learned to associate verbal praise with treats, loving attention, and/or petting. He was not born knowing what praise was. Thus praise is a conditioned reinforcer for your dog. In this guide you use Positive Reinforcement to teach your dog to repeat desired behaviors. An example of using a conditioned positive reinforcement to teach your dog to sit when you open his kennel gate is to go to the gate and simply wait until your dog chooses to sit on his own, then open the gate and let him out. If your dog wants to go out, he will soon learn that sitting causes the gate to open. The behavior of sitting is strengthened by the addition of you opening the gate (the reinforcement). Your dog has learned to associate the gate being opened (conditioned reinforcer) with something pleasant.

Try to become aware of when you are giving reinforcement and the effects it has on your dog's behavior. Many times, well meaning, caring dog lovers can inadvertently reinforce unwanted behaviors such as fear, shyness, pushiness, barking and aggression in an attempt to soothe or quiet their dog. Petting, talking quietly, and holding may be perceived by your dog as a reward for these unwanted behaviors. The secret is to wait until your dog does a desired behavior, or redirect your dog into a desired behavior, and then reward it. Many times we only recognize and pay attention to the unwanted behaviors. Turn the process around by recognizing and rewarding good behavior when you see it. If you have a highly active dog and would like to teach him to be calmer in the house, recognize and reward him when he is calm or quietly lying down, such as when you are watching TV and your dog has become relaxed.

DOG TRAINING MYTHS

You can't begin obedience training puppies until they are at least 6 months old. False.

Puppies learn good or bad behaviors from the very beginning and especially when they arrive at their new home. Puppyhood is the perfect time to imprint good behaviors and teach your dog how to learn. Don't give your puppy the opportunity to practice bad behaviors. Instead, teach them what the correct behaviors are right from the start- this will often prevent problem behaviors from ever appearing. Look for the Perfect for Puppies™ icon throughout this guide for exercises that are suitable for puppies. Begin training your puppy, the day you bring him home. Start out by clicker conditioning your puppy and move on from there.

Old dogs can't learn new tricks. False. Old dogs can learn new tricks. If you have an older

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dog and want to try out clicker training, it is not too late to start! The clicker is a perfect tool to use whenever you want to teach your dog something new. Older dogs sometimes take longer to retrain because they have had a longer period of time to practice the bad behavior.

If you train with food, you can never wean away from it. False: Once your dog has learned the exercise, the StarMark Clicker™ and treats can be weaned away using a variable reinforcement schedule. Then, pull them out again when you want to teach your dog something new!

You have to catch your dog in the act for it to mean anything. True. Any type of reinforcement must immediately follow or coincide with the behavior for your dog to closely associate them together. If you wait longer than 1.5 seconds, you run the risk of your dog engaging in another behavior while you are giving the reinforcement and getting the two confused. A good example of this is teaching your dog to sit without using a clicker. You manipulate your dog into the sit and while you're saying "good dog" and petting him, he stands up. What just happened? You rewarded him for standing up because of the timing of your reinforcement. This is why clickers work so well in training- they allow you to mark an exact moment while giving you time to reach in your pocket for a treat. Only reinforce the behavior you want and not some other.

I know my dog "knows" she has done something wrong (even if it is hours later) because she looks guilty. False. Many times this "guilty" look is actually a learned or natural fearful or submissive response to your body language and other stimuli, such as a chewed sofa. What happens is your dog learns to act fearful or submissive when both you and the chewed sofa are present, and to expect punishment on your arrival. If there is no chewed sofa, you will act favorably on your arrival with a happy greeting. Your dog does not understand that the act of chewing the sofa brought about your unfavorable response because you did not catch him in the act. Your dog only learns that a chewed sofa is bad when you are present.

When your dog is nervous or uneasy you should pet and comfort him. False. Never coddle or soothe a nervous dog. Doing so will be perceived by the dog as a reward or praise for being afraid. This is how well meaning, caring dog lovers can inadvertently encourage their dog into being more fearful or shy. If your dog is mildly nervous, communicate to him through obedience how he needs to act. Redirect your dog away from the stimulus and have him sit or lie down. When your dog responds to you in a favorable way for lying down, reward him with a treat or praise. If your dog has a strong fearful response to a stimulus, contact a Certified Training and Behavior Specialist to help you develop a Behavior Modification program involving counter-conditioning and desensitization.

WORDS TO KNOW

Antecedent: Whatever occurs before a behavior.

Behavior: An animal's response to its environment.

Bridge: A signal that connects a behavior to a reward. A bridge allows you to reward your dog with food after a behavior has been performed.

Capturing: Capturing involves waiting for your dog to perform a behavior that you wish to strengthen and then rewarding it. Capturing is used to teach dogs behaviors that they offer naturally, such as stretching in the morning. It is also a useful technique to use when your dog does not respond to lure-based techniques.

Chaining: A training technique used for training complex behaviors which consist of 2 or more separate behaviors that are linked together.

Classical Conditioning: Classical conditioning is related to reflexes and bodily responses to neutral and unconditioned stimuli. Most of the time this takes place with the presence of food. As in the Russian physiologist Ivan Pavlov's experiment, the bell alone did not mean anything to the dogs- it was an unconditioned stimuli. Paired a number of times with food, the bell took on the properties of a conditioned stimuli- meaning the dogs would start to salivate as an unconditioned response. When the dogs heard the bell, after some repetitions, they were conditioned that food was on its way and would begin to salivate. The important thing to remember about classical conditioning is that it involves reflexes and bodily responses, things you have no control over. If someone were to have a puff of air blown into their eye, it would be impossible for them not to blink! No matter how hard you try to control this sort of reflex, you simply cannot.

Clicker Conditioning: Clicker Conditioning occurs when your dog has associated the neutral stimulus of the click sound with a primary reinforcer, such as a treat. Once this occurs your dog will be conditioned to respond to the sound of the click alone in anticipation of the treat, allowing you to mark a moment in time. NOTE: It is important that a primary reinforcer follows the click, at least on a variable basis, so the association does not become extinct.

Consequence: What happens in response to a behavior.

Continuous Reinforcement: With continuous reinforcement, your dog receives a reward every time he performs a behavior as you asked. For example, every time you put the right amount of money in a soda machine, you get a soda.

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Extinction: Extinction decreases a targeted behavior. It occurs whenever a behavior that has been previously reinforced (strengthened), such as begging at the table, is no longer reinforced in any way. NOTE: Behaviors that have been intermittently rewarded, such as begging at the table, are more resistant to extinction. Ignored behaviors that have been previously rewarded usually increase in intensity before they drop off. This is called an extinction burst.

Fading: The gradual removal of prompts (training aids) as your dog begins to understand the expected behavior.

Generalization: Generalization involves teaching your dog an identical behavior in many different environments. This helps your dog understand that a command means the same thing in different areas or situations. For example, if you only teach the Sit while your dog is in the kitchen, your dog will think that sit means sit only while in the kitchen. For your dog to thoroughly understand that Sit means sit on grass, gravel, cement, carpet, or while other dogs walk by, it is essential that you practice it in many different environments.

Leadership: Leadership from you provides your dog with clear direction and rules. By communicating with and training your dog, you provide them with the guidance they need to be a mannerly pet.

Luring: With luring, your dog follows a lure (typically a treat in your hand or a toy) until he has performed the desired behavior. When luring, it is important to wean away from having the lure, otherwise your dog can become dependent on it. In training you initially use a lure to help show your dog what the desired behavior is. When your dog is beginning to understand the exercise slowly fade the lure away.

Negative Reinforcement: Negative Reinforcement is an occurrence subtracted or removed to strengthen a behavior.

Operant Conditioning: Operant Conditioning is the science of behavior that explains the functional relationship between environmental events and behavior. Simply put, all living organisms (including humans) learn through trial and error that there are consequences for their actions. These consequences either strengthens or weakens behaviors, and makes them more or less likely to reoccur in the future.

Pairing: Pairing happens when a stimulus is associated, or connected, with a response after enough repetitions. In clicker conditioning you pair the sound of the clicker with food. When you are teaching your dog a verbal command you connect the behavior with the sound of the word or a signal from your body.

Positive Reinforcement: Positive Reinforcers are things your dog wants to acquire more of

that are paired to a behavior to make the behavior more likely to occur. It can be either a conditioned and or an unconditioned reinforcement, such as the StarMark Clicker™ and/or the treat that follows.

Primary /Unconditioned Reinforcement: Primary reinforcers are based on what your dog instinctually wants, such as food, drink, play, social interaction.

Prompting: Using training aids to bring out the correct behavior from your dog and to rule out the possibility of error. These aids can be verbal, gestural, or environmental.

Proofing: In proofing an exercise you build your dog's commitment to performing an exercise. This is done by the gradual introduction of distractions. Proofing is also known as generalizing.

Punishment: Punishment, whether positive or negative makes behaviors less likely to occur. With positive punishment something is added to make your dog stop or be less likely to repeat a behavior. An example of positive punishment is when your dog receives a pop of appropriate intensity from a training collar for pulling on the leash. The pop, timed appropriately with your dog pulling on the leash, teaches your dog that a tight leash leads to a pop. This causes your dog to be less likely to pull on the leash. With negative punishment something is removed to cause your dog to be less likely to repeat a behavior. Negative punishment is when your dog loses something he enjoys as a result of his behavior. For example, you have a treat in your hand and when your dog jumps on you, you put the treat away and ignore the dog. The behavior of jumping up is reduced because your dog learns that he loses social interaction and/or the treat when he jumps up.

Reinforcement: Reinforcement is a stimuli that causes a behavior to be strengthened. Reinforcement is also relative. If your dog likes to be petted, then petting is a reinforcer. However if your dog does not like to be touched, then petting would not be a reinforcer. It's all in how your dog perceives it and what he desires.

Release word: A release word communicates to your dog that the exercise he was performing has finished.

Secondary/Conditioned Reinforcement: Conditioned reinforcers have been learned or paired with primary reinforcers to make them meaningful to your dog, such as a clicker or praise.

Shaping: A training technique in which successive approximations of a behavior are reinforced until the desired response has been achieved.

Dog Training Made Easy- A Step-by-Step Guide to Using the StarMark Clicker™

Stimulus: Any event that can be perceived with one of our five senses (hear, see, taste, touch, smell).

Successive Approximations: Any behaviors that get your dog closer to or resemble the final desired behavior.

Variable Reinforcement: With a variable schedule of reinforcement your dog receives a reward intermittently for performing a behavior. The reward can be anything that your dog perceives as desirable whether it's food, play, toys, social interaction, petting, or praise. Once your dog has learned a behavior, we recommend you switch to a variable schedule of reinforcement to help your dog retain the behavior and make it stronger. Slot machines are a perfect example of variable reinforcement in action.