



Beyond Beginner Class Three

Cues At A Distance

Now it is time to start working on our dog's ability to listen to you, even if you're further away. Once your dog has a good understanding of a simple cue, we are going to start adding distance, just like we did with stay.

- Start with your dog only about a foot away, standing near you but not right in front of you
- Tell your dog to "sit" and use the hand signal
- If your dog does sit, click and toss them the treat
- If your dog doesn't sit, move a few inches closer and see if they respond better

One of the things you can do is combine behaviors, which will allow you to practice pushing your dog a little harder. Here's how:

- Tell your dog to "sit"
- Tell your dog to "stay"
- Take two steps back
- Tell your dog to "down"

Did your dog lay down where they were sitting? Telling your dog to down when your dog is in a stay can push your dog's understanding of their world. We are asking our dog to remain at a distance and still obey the down cue. It may appear simple to us, but it is definitely a difficult behavior for our dog.

Touch

Target is a simple behavior which allows us to lead into more advanced behaviors and tricks. We use our hands in class, but it is just as simple to get your dog to target using a target stick.

- Place your palm close to your dog's nose
- When your dog touches your palm to sniff it, click and treat

To use the target stick:

- Keep the target stick's handle short, lower it to nose level
- When your dog sniffs the target, touching it with their nose, click and treat

Make sure that the treats are not in the hand you are using to hold the target stick. If you find your dog looking towards your treat hand instead of the target, hold that hand behind your back. Your dog must touch your palm or target as you click! If you click too late while they're pulling away, then your dog learns to pull away from the target. If you click when they are close but not touching, that is what your dog will learn. If your dog shows no interest in the target, rub some treats on it, to make it smell enticing to your pup. After a week of using the target without a command, you may begin to add the word "Target" or "Touch" to the behavior.

Have Some Fun With Your Dog!

Now it is time to have some fun with your dog! Training does not only need to be behaviors which your dog needs to follow along with, it can also be behaviors that your dog views as play! Create an obstacle course in your back yard and have some fun with your dog! Here are some ideas:

- Weave through cones like we practiced in class two
- Set down two brooms to create an "alley" that your dog needs to back up through
- Lay down a hula hoop and make your dog do a focused sit/stay inside of it
- Set up a chair and get your dog to stand on it

You've seen a great example of how regular things can become wonderful obstacle items to have some real fun with your dog. Additionally, these sorts of activities can be completed outside, which makes it perfect for you to do with a friend who also has a dog!