



Beginner Class One

WELCOME TO BEGINNER CLASS!

Training should be fun, rewarding, and easy to understand for both you and your dog. This homework packet will help you practice the skills we worked on in class and build a strong foundation for future training.

Dogs learn best through:

- ✓ Consistency
- ✓ Repetition
- ✓ Clear Communication
- ✓ Positive Reinforcement
- ✓ Short, Fun Practice Sessions



IMPORTANT THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT DOGS

Timing Matters

You have about 3 seconds to reward or to reward or redirect behavior before your dog may no longer connect your response to the action.

Consistency Is Key

Everybody in the home should follow the same rules and expectations

Dogs Read Body Language

Dogs communicate mostly through body language, which is why we begin training with hand signals first

Socialization Matters

Socialization is more than meeting people and dogs. Dogs & puppies should safely experience:

- ✓ New Places
- ✓ Sounds
- ✓ Different Types of Environments
- ✓ Different Surfaces
- ✓ New Objects

Keep Training Sessions Short

Practice for about 3-5 minutes at a time, aim for 3 or more training sessions each day

If You Are Getting Frustrated

If your dog struggles or you find yourself frustrated, move farther away from distractions or practice in an easier, quieter environment

Short sessions help keep learning fun and successful!

BEGINNER TRAINING TIPS

- ✓ Reward behaviors you want repeated
- ✓ Use a calm and confident voice
- ✓ Practice Daily
- ✓ End training sessions on a positive note
- ✓ Reward calm behaviors around the house



CLICKER & MARKER TRAINING



A clicker is a marker that tells your dog

“Yes! That Was Correct!”

The click sound helps your dog understand exactly which behavior earned the reward

You can also use a verbal marker like

“Yes!” or **“Good!”**

if you don't have your clicker with you

If you choose to use a marker word instead of a clicker, remember to

SAY IT THE EXACT SAME WAY EVERY TIME

Use the clicker or marker within **3 Seconds** of the behavior

The faster you mark the behavior, the clearer the communication becomes

HOW TO CHARGE THE CLICKER

Step One:

Click the clicker

Step Two:

Immediately give your dog a treat

Step Three:

Repeat several times



Example:

Dog Sits → Click → Treat

TIPS FOR SUCCESS



- ✓ Use small, soft treats
- ✓ Reward quickly
- ✓ Train before meals
- ✓ Practice in quiet environments first
- ✓ Keep sessions fun for your dog

THE SIT CUE

Sit is one of the most useful foundation behaviors your dog can learn. We will begin with a hand signal before we add a verbal cue.

Step One:

Hold a small treat between your thumb and fingers

Step Two:

Place the treat near your dog's nose

Step Three:

Slowly raise your hand upwards

Step Four:

As your dog's head follows the treat upwards, they will naturally sit

Step Five:

The moment your dog sits:

Dog Sits → Click → Treat



For this first week, do not use the word "SIT"

We will learn how to add the verbal cue next week so we get a strong behavior



TRAINER'S TIP

Ask your dog to sit before

- ✓ Meals
- ✓ Going outside of a door
- ✓ Greeting guests
- ✓ Getting on the furniture
- ✓ Receiving toys or treats

THE WATCH / FOCUS CUE

Watch or Focus teaches your dog to make eye contact and pay attention to you

This skill is extremely helpful for

- ✓ Working around distractions
- ✓ Come when Called
- ✓ Meeting new people
- ✓ Loose leash walking

Step One:

Hold a small treat between your thumb and fingers

Step Two:

Place the treat near your dog's nose

Step Three:

Move your hand towards your face

Step Four:

The moment your dog looks in your eyes

Eye Contact → Click → Treat



TREAT AT NOSE



HAND TO NOSE



DOG MAKES EYE CONTACT



EYE CONTACT = GOOD!

For this first week, do not use the word "Watch" or "Focus"

We will learn how to add the verbal cue next week so we get a strong behavior

If you find yourself getting frustrated during a training session:

- ✓ Take a short break
- ✓ Ask for an easy behavior
- ✓ End on a fun, positive note

Training should feel safe, fun, and rewarding



BARKING ISSUES

Barking is normal dog communication. The goal is not to stop your dog from ever barking. The goal is to teach your dog when to bark, how to settle, and what to do instead.

ASK YOURSELF: WHY YOUR DOG IS BARKING?

Training works best when you treat the cause, not just the noise

1. Alert Barking

"I heard or saw something!"



- Focused and intentional
- Triggered by something in the environment
- Goes away once the situation is resolved

2. Demand Barking

"Give me attention, food, play, or access!"



- Repeated and persistent
- Happens when the dog wants something
- Stops when the dog gets what they want

3. Excitement Barking

"I am happy and overstimulated!"



- High energy and often jumpy
- Triggered by greetings, play, or excitement
- Usually stops when the excitement settles

4. Fear or Anxiety Barking

"I am worried or uncomfortable."



- Tense body, tucked tail, ears back
- Triggered by fear, uncertainty, or perceived threat
- May be paired with pacing, trembling, or hiding

5. Boredom Barking

"I need more activity or enrichment."




- Happens when the dog is under-stimulated
- May be repetitive and seem aimless
- Often seen with other signs of boredom (e.g., chewing, pacing)

6. Separation-Related Barking

"I am distressed when left alone."



- Occurs when the dog is left alone
- Often starts shortly after you leave
- May be paired with whining, howling, pacing, or destructive behavior

 Understanding why your dog barks is the first step to helping them feel more secure, confident, and calm.



The 4-Part Barking Plan

A step-by-step plan to help your dog bark less and feel more calm and confident.

1 MANAGE THE ENVIRONMENT

Set your dog up to succeed before barking starts.

TRY:

- ✓ Close blinds or use privacy window film.
- ✓ Use white noise, a fan, or calming music near noisy areas.
- ✓ Move your dog away from front windows or doors.
- ✓ Give your dog a quiet resting space.
- ✓ Use gates, crates, pens, or leashes when needed.
- ✓ Avoid leaving your dog outside to bark at neighbors, dogs, wildlife, or sounds.

★ Management is not "cheating." It prevents your dog from practicing the behavior while you teach a better one.



2 REWARD QUIET BEFORE BARKING HAPPENS

Look for quiet moments and reward them.

When your dog notices a trigger but stays quiet:

- ✓ Say "Yes!"
- ✓ Give a treat.
- ✓ Praise calmly.
- ✓ Repeat before your dog has a chance to bark.

EXAMPLE:

Your dog sees a person walking by the window but does not bark.

Say: "Yes, good quiet."
Reward right away.



★ This teaches your dog: Notice something → stay calm → good things happen.

3 TEACH A REPLACEMENT BEHAVIOR

Your dog needs to know what to do instead of barking.

GOOD REPLACEMENT BEHAVIORS:



Look at me



Go to mat



Touch



Come away



Find it



Sit



Bring a toy



Relax on bed

★ Pick one or two. Keep it simple.

4 PRACTICE WITH EASY TRIGGERS FIRST

Do not wait until your dog is already barking hard.

Start with a version of the trigger your dog can handle.

EXAMPLES:

- ✓ Doorbell sound played quietly on your phone
- ✓ A person far away
- ✓ A dog across the street
- ✓ One soft knock instead of several loud knocks
- ✓ A low-volume recording of outside noises



★ Reward calm behavior. Slowly make the trigger more realistic as your dog improves.

Consistency, patience, and small steps lead to big changes.

You've got this!



THIS WEEK'S HOMEWORK

- Practice loading the clicker - rewarding when your dog hears the sound
- Practice the Sit hand signal and behavior with your dog daily
- Practice the Watch / Focus hand signal and behavior with your dog daily
- Make sure to train in different rooms of your house!

Don't Forget

You should be practicing no longer than 3-5 minutes per session

There should be 3-5 training sessions per day



IN THE TRAINING SWEAR JAR THIS WEEK

Using The Words
Sit
Watch / Focus

Never use the word
"NO"



HELPFUL TIPS FOR DOG OWNERS

- ✓ Make sure your dog's collar is appropriately sized, allowing two fingers of space, no more and no less
- ✓ Save the treats for training only, this will keep them exciting for your dog
- ✓ When training with many treats, make sure to take a little of their daily food kibble away to prevent excess calories
- ✓ Practice handling your dog's feet, ears, tail and collar. Reward the calm behavior during handling to help your dog become more comfortable with grooming and vet visits

