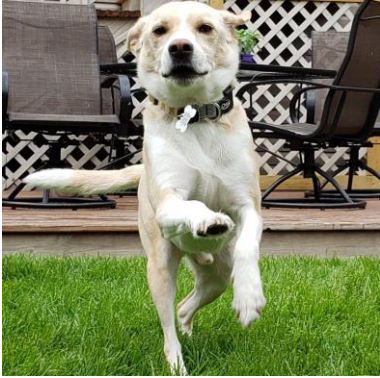


HAND TARGETING “TOUCH”



Why do we teach hand targeting?

The hand target is my favorite skill, because it has so many applications: come to me, get down from that counter, get off that couch or bed, come inside, come to this side of the gate. **It helps You get your dog from A to B without playing chase or grabbing their collar.**

Cooper runs to me every time I show him my hand or give him the verbal cue, “touch”.

How we teach dogs hand targeting

1. At your dog's head height, from 6 inches away, show your dog your hand with two fingers extended. A dog's curiosity will result in them touching your hand with their nose, mouth or tongue.
2. The instant your dog does this, give them verbal praise to let them know they did what you wanted, “yes” or “good boy!” Within 5 seconds of the praise, reinforce the behavior with a [high value treat](#).
3. Repeat this until your dog executes the skill 5 consecutive times. Repeat this process with your hand 1 foot from your dog's nose. Continue to add distance using the [framework described here](#).
4. When you get to 10 feet generalize the behavior by practicing in other rooms in your home, and in your backyard. Stay with the framework and don't hesitate to regress by decreasing the distance.
5. Now, add a verbal cue (word) just before you show your hand signal. Do this during training from this point forward.
6. Blow your dog's mind and take this skill to the next level. Before you ask for a “touch”, prepare 2 - 6 oz. of cooked shrimp, steak, or salmon, cut into ½ - 1 inch chunks. When your dog executes the skill correctly, give them extra praise in a high pitched voice and feed them this special treat from your open hands.
7. Repeat this twice a week for 1 month. Then once a week for a month. Then once a month. YOUR DOG WILL ALWAYS COME RUNNING WHEN YOU GIVE THE CUE.

PRO TIP: Be careful not to give the verbal and physical cue at the same time. That's called over shadowing and can cause your dog to be confused.