

ADDING A VERBAL CUE



Why do we need a verbal cue?

The main reason we want a verbal cue is because humans are verbal creatures. Some skills also *depend* on a verbal cue, like the hand target, or name response. Because dogs primarily communicate using body language, we start with physical cues and then insert a verbal cue only after they've learned the skill.

Here's how to insert a verbal cue?

- 🐾 If your dog knows a skill by physical cue, they're ready to learn a verbal cue!
 - › Say the word you've selected ("come" is what I use).
 - › **Pause for ½ a second.**
 - › Give the physical cue you've used all along.
 - › Your dog executes the touch.
 - › You say the verbal praise marker to confirm the correct response, "Yes".
 - › You reinforce the response by delivering a treat.

NOTE: Overshadowing is when you deliver the verbal and physical cue at the same time, and can cause your dog confusion. Be sure to deliver the verbal cue, pause, and then the physical cue. Once your dog knows the verbal cue, you can stop using the physical cue.