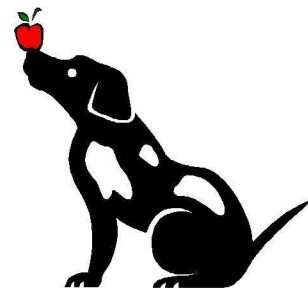


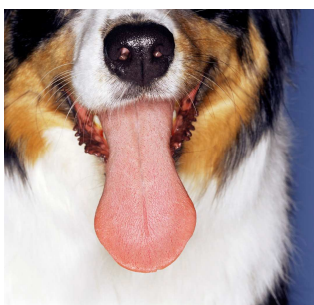
TEACHER'S PET TRAINING SPRING NEWSLETTER



March 2009

NEW! POLITE GREETINGS ELECTIVE

One of the most common problem behaviors that owners report to us is jumping up on people. Dogs jump up to get attention, and because they like to greet by faces (think of two dogs meeting – ever seen one sniff and lick



the corners of the other dog's mouth?).

We always stress in class to remove your attention

from a jumping dog, and teach them to sit politely for greetings. Often our dogs get pretty good at sitting for us, but the excitement of new people is just too much, and they jump on visitors, or people at the dog park or pet stores. Since jumping is such a common issue, we are now offering an elective class designed to focus on polite greetings. In this class we'll work on well-behaved greetings in a variety of situations. As an owner, you will get help with your dog, and you'll also be able to help other owners too! Not only is this a great class for exuberant jumpers, but you can also take it with your shy dog who needs to gain confidence in greeting new

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people. Check out our schedule page for dates and time!

BE A FACEBOOK FAN

Are you addicted to Facebook? We've started a Teacher's Pet facebook page! Become a fan and you can join in discussions, share training success stories, see upcoming events and more. Our page is just starting out and we need your help for it to grow – see more information on our contacts page.

TRY THIS TRICK

Alright, so this isn't really a trick, but let's take a look at the technique of capturing. Capturing means waiting for a behavior to happen, and then marking and rewarding it, making that behavior more likely to happen in the future. We use capturing for lots of

things in classes, like teaching our dogs settle and gentle, but it's also fun to teach new tricks!

Spend some time watching your dog and thinking about what things you might be able to reward. Does your dog do a cute head tilt when curious? Kick at the ground with her back legs after going potty? Scratch at his



collar? Pretty much any behavior your dog does on a semi-regular basis can be captured. Get out a bunch of tiny treats and a clicker (or just use your marker

word if you don't have a clicker), and then just wait for the behavior to happen, click and treat. Your dog may offer you behaviors like sit or down when she knows you have treats – just ignore these and wait for the behavior you want to capture to happen again, click and treat.

Eventually you will see the light bulb go off over your dog's head, and he'll start to offer the behavior a few times in a row. This is when you can add your verbal cue. Let's say you want your dog to tilt her head when you say "curious".

When your dog is doing the tilt a few times in a row, say curious just before each tilt.



Don't get frustrated if your dog seems to backslide a bit in a training session, just take a break and try again later – often you will see a stronger response right off the bat on your next session. Here are some suggestions for tricks to capture: scratch collar, tilt head, put head on floor between paws, wave a paw, speak, sneeze, yawn and stretch your legs.

TREATING TREAT DEPENDENCE

Without a doubt, positive reinforcement training is a great way to teach your dog new and useful behaviors, as well as form a strong bond. However, there is one criticism frequently voiced by people who question this method: *My dog only does it when I have a treat in my hand!*

If your dog is an all-star when you have the treats out, and seems like he's deaf when you don't,

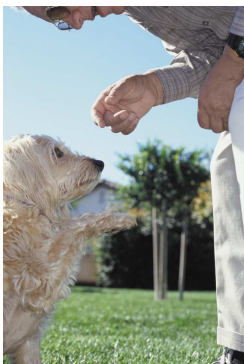


your goal is to try to make your training sessions more like real life, and make real life more like a training session. Here are some pointers to help your dog overcome a serious case of treat dependency:

- Place some treats strategically around the house so that you know where they are, but your

dog doesn't. When near a secret spot, ask your dog for a simple skill, and then whip out the treat. Your goal is to make it harder for your dog to distinguish the paid trials from the unpaid ones.

- Use those life rewards! Sit before opening the door, come for dinner, down to have the ball thrown, heel for ten feet before getting to sniff the bushes, etc.
- Keep testing your marker word. If you don't see a reaction from your dog (perked up ears, tail wag, etc), go back and put some more money in the marker word bank.
- Change the setting for your training sessions. Take 5 treats outside and ask for a few skills before releasing your dog. Take



5 treats and do five skills in the parking lot of the grocery store.

Stop in

the middle of your walk and ask for a few things. These are training sessions where your dog knows you will be paying, but

you're not wearing a treat pouch, and you're in a new environment. You want the dog to think "Ah! The training game could break out at any point, not just when they have a pouch on and show me treats first!"

- Take breaks in your training sessions to do other things. So your dog knows you have treats, but you stop and fold the laundry, or make a phone call, or send an email, then go back and ask your dog for something. You want the dog learn that the presence of treats is not the key factor - it's you asking the dog for a skill.

Questions? Comments?

If you have any questions or comments about this newsletter, please call us at 608-824-8728, or email us at info@teacherspettraining.com

