



## COURSE PHILOSOPHY

### Course Objectives:

1. To teach you the basics of clicker training and how to use positive reinforcement in training.
2. To teach your dog body-awareness and proprioception (where his back feet are) as he grows into his adult size.
3. To help your dog work through developmental fear periods by providing confidence-building exercises and coaching. To continue your dog's socialization to people, places, sights, sounds, and things.
4. To teach you how to use target training as a means of focusing the dog's attention on a particular location.
5. To build toy drive and handler focus.
6. To encourage confident navigation and familiarity with some miniature agility obstacles.

### Operant Conditioning:

**LESSONS FROM DOLPHIN TRAINING:** Since dolphins can't be forced to do things, or overpowered by humans, marine trainers realized long ago that they had to choose another method of training besides physical punishment and force. They use **positive reinforcement**-based training – which means giving the animal something it likes as a reward for a desired behavior. Positive reinforcement training is one type of operant conditioning. **Operant conditioning**, a learning concept popularized by B.F. Skinner, means that the animal learns to operate in his environment in a way that is beneficial to him. There are consequences to all behavior, and the animal will choose the consequences he finds most appealing.

So, how do dolphin trainers begin to teach a dolphin to jump? They start by teaching the dolphin that the sound of a whistle means, "you get a fish". After the dolphin learns that concept, they wait for the dolphin to jump while it is playing, or they entice the dolphin with something interesting like a suspended ball. The instant the dolphin jumps, the whistle blows. The dolphin then comes over to get its reward. The next time the dolphin jumps the whistle blows again. It doesn't take long for the "light bulb to come on", and for the dolphin to figure out that jumping causes the whistle, which causes a fish. This is called "**operant learning**". It means the animal learns to operate on its environment to get what it wants.

The whistle is called a "**conditioned reinforcer**" or a "bridge". To the dolphin it basically means "Very good! You earned a fish!" The dolphin understands that after he hears the whistle blow, he can swim over to collect his reward. This enables the dolphin trainer to work with the animals from a distance and to communicate what behavior is desired at exactly the instant it occurs. Another advantage of the whistle is that each whistle sounds very distinct to a dolphin – so many trainers can be working at once and the dolphin knows exactly which whistle is meant for him.

Once the dolphin figures out himself that jumping causes a fish reward, the dolphin loves to jump. It is only then that the marine trainer introduces a signal or command for the jump, because the dolphin already knows what to do and he likes doing it. At this stage, the trainer basically just puts a name to the game. Introducing a signal or command *before* an animal knows what to do or likes

doing it would only cause confusion and frustration for the animal because it can't speak our language.



**DID YOU EVER WONDER WHY?** *If you had to work in a foreign country and you didn't speak the language, wouldn't it be frustrating if your boss kept trying to tell you what you should do, but you didn't understand the exact meaning of the words? What things do think you would remember the best – the things you're your boss tried to tell you how to do...or the things you figured out yourself and then were praised for?*

In the last 15 years, these dolphin training techniques have permeated the dog training world. "**Clicker training**", popularized by marine mammal trainers like Karen Pryor, has revolutionized dog training to become more like marine mammal training. Like the whistle, the clicker is a consistent and distinct sound to the dog that means "Very good! Just what I wanted you to do". Unlike the phrase "good dog", the clicker sounds exactly the same every time and the dog can distinguish the sound of his clicker from another clicker.

Many people will ask – well, what does a dolphin trainer do if the dolphin misbehaves? The answer is that dolphins do misbehave, but dolphin trainers don't hit them or physically punish them. Dolphin trainers know that there are other things besides getting a fish that can "reinforce" the dolphin's behavior. For instance, if the dolphin is splashing the crowd when he's not supposed to, and the crowd laughs and applauds, then the dolphin is rewarded and the behavior gets stronger. The dolphin trainer knows to manage the situation so that the dolphin doesn't get rewarded for that behavior anymore. One example would be to teach the dolphin an incompatible behavior, like diving down on cue when they see the dolphin winding up to do a splash. Another alternative would be to teach the dolphin that he will only get rewarded if he splashes on cue from the trainer. In either case, if the dolphin is no longer rewarded for the wrong behavior, but is rewarded for the correct behavior, the correct behavior will get stronger and the unwanted behavior will **extinguish**. Dolphins (and dogs) do what works for them. Good trainers learn to make sure only desired behaviors are reinforced and to take control of the unintended reinforcements.

**SIGNALING THE CORRECT BEHAVIOR:** Since most people talk to their dogs in a praising tone frequently during everyday life, we recommend the use of a clicker as a tool in this class to teach the dog something brand new. This sound – like the whistle for the dolphin – will have a very clear meaning and will help the dog to understand quickly. While the clicker doesn't *have* to be used, it brings much faster results because of its distinctness and consistency. A short word like "yes!" or "great!" can be used in place of the clicker as long as that word is only used around the dog for training purposes and is said in exactly the same way each time.

**VARIABLE REINFORCEMENT:** When we first teach an exercise, we will always reward the dog:

**one behavior = one click = one treat**

This will help the dog learn quickly. However, in order to wean the dog away from getting a treat for every behavior, once the dog has learned the behavior, we will eventually ask for several behaviors before clicking and treating. We will also change the types of rewards the dog gets and the numbers of rewards the dog gets each time. This is called “**variable reinforcement**”, and it is used by dolphin trainers to strengthen a behavior.



**DID YOU EVER WONDER WHY?** *Did you ever think about what makes fishing, golf, or slot machines so addictive? In all of these activities, the rewards are not given every time. They are given sporadically. Every so often, there's a really good golf day or fishing day or many coins that come pouring out. It is this variability that keeps the person coming back for more. The same thing is true for dogs. If the rewards are always changing in types or numbers and the dog is asked to do several things before getting a reward (that is, after they have learned the command), the “game” is much more fun to play.*

## Communicating With Your Dog:

**TONE OF VOICE:** There is a similarity between our language and dog language in tone of voice. A **pleasant, higher pitched tone** is associated with praise, and a lower, gruff tone is associated with a reprimand. We will use a lot of praise in this class while the dog is learning new things. We will discuss the appropriate uses of reprimand feedback communication, but it will not be used to when we teach the dog brand new things. Also, when we give a command, it will actually be **neutral and matter-of-fact**, not threatening, like a reprimand.

**PRAISE VS. PETTING:** In “dog language” (especially for young dogs) enthusiastically petting your dog usually means, “let’s get up and play!”. During a stationary exercise, try very hard not to absent-mindedly pet your dog, or you may be giving the dog mixed messages. Use petting as a reward after the release word. When your dog approaches you at home for petting in between training sessions, ask him do something to earn the petting first, such as “Sit,” or “Down”. Petting should not be something your dog trains you to do for him! Petting is reinforcing to the dog – so utilize it as a way to reward your dog for behavior you ask him to do. Don’t give out petting for free or your dog will begin to demand it.

**WORK-TO-EAT/WORK-TO-PLAY:** Often handlers are worried about using toys or food in training -- thinking the dog will only respond if the motivators are present. If used correctly, toys and treats are like a “paycheck” to the dog...they satisfy basic needs and natural drives. While praise is also a very useful tool in communicating with your dog, ask yourself how long you would go to work, day after day, doing exactly what the boss told you, without a paycheck? On the other hand, if you won the lottery, how motivated would you be to still go to work for a paycheck? The idea is for you to **make toys and food** (things your dog desires) **only available in return for obedient behavior**. If your dog has been leading the “good life” of a lottery winner and gets all the pleasures

of life laid out on a silver platter for him, you must first change the rules so that your dog has to “earn a living”. Only then will he be motivated to work for you -- because working for you will have real value to him. Dogs will be a lot more motivated to work for a treat if they don’t have unlimited access to food and they come to class slightly hungry. Dogs will be more motivated to work for toys if they don’t have every kind of toy imaginable lying around the house and yard. While it’s a good idea to have appropriate toys out for your dog to chew on, save some more exciting toys for training sessions and put them away when you are done. This will also teach the dog that all “really good things” can be had by working to please you.



**MAINTAINING MOTIVATION:** Unless your dog has medical problems, don’t feed your dog his dinner right before class. Let him *earn* his dinner or dinner-equivalent in class! Make an effort to bring a variety of things your dog likes and to surprise him with new things every now and then.

**TOYS & GAMES:** Break up your training sessions with play. Only use toys for training that are not available around the house. These should be “special” toys that only appear when you are training. You want the dog to play with and focus on YOU, and you should be in charge of the game. Games during training sessions should be the type that can be played in a small space -- like catching a treat or toy in mid air-- not games in which the dog runs away from you after an object and then carries it off.

**RETRIEVING:** If your dog likes to pick up objects in his mouth, why not make it a game? Teaching your dog to retrieve strengthens his desire to give something to you that is in his mouth. Start your play session with two identical objects – tennis balls often work well. Throw one object, about one foot away, and hide the other behind your back. After the dog picks up the first object and is facing you, encourage him to bring the first object to you by showing him the second object you have. The instant he drops the first object, throw the second as a reward and pick up the first object to repeat the game. If he does not want to release the first object, you can “trade” the first object for a very yummy treat. Note that the dog is “working” to earn his play and that you are the one in charge of the game. (As opposed to you chasing your dog to get the ball, which would send a message that the dog is in charge of the game.)

**COMMANDS:** In your homework, you will see suggested words to use as commands. Please know that you can choose *any* word in any language as a command. It is best, however, to keep a running list of the words you teach your dog. You want to avoid using any two words that sound alike or rhyme or that sound like your dog’s name (i.e. using the command “Sit” for a dog named “Syd”). You also want to give exact meaning to the words and not use the same word for different things (i.e. “down” means lay down, and not don’t jump up on me).

## GENERAL CLASS INFORMATION

## PUPPY AGILITY CLASS



### **Attendance, Homework & Learning**

**ABSENCES:** Class is where **you** learn and get feedback from your instructor. Another benefit of attending class is that your dog is being asked to perform the exercises in the presence of other dogs and people. The more your dog practices these exercises around controlled distractions, the stronger the dog's reliability will become. If you must miss a class, please let your instructor know beforehand. In fairness to the other students, **make-up classes are not available**, but at the instructor's convenience, a private lesson can be arranged at an extra cost. If your dog is ill or injured or is a female in season, you should attend class *without your dog*. There are no refunds for classes or any portion of the course once classes have begun.

**BUILDING BLOCK APPROACH:** Each week's class lays the foundation for the next week. In order to progress, the dog must be ready for the next lesson. This is accomplished by the homework you do with your dog at home. *The more effort you put into the class, the more you and your dog will get out of it.* Doing the homework assignment enables you to teach the dog in a quiet environment where the dog can concentrate on learning.

**LEARNING CURVES:** You may find that your dog picks up some things very quickly and others not quite as fast. Don't be tempted to only practice the things the dog knows well in your practice sessions. Instead, start with something your dog knows well, and end with something he knows well, but alternate them with the things that are more difficult.

**LEARNING PLATEAUS:** *Have you ever crammed for a test only to draw a blank on something you know you studied very well?* When dogs (or people) learn a lot of new things at once, they can experience a learning plateau while the information goes from short term to long-term memory. If you come to class one week and your dog seems to have forgotten everything he's learned, don't give up on him! After a short break, he will soon remember again. Just remember that the best way to avoid hitting a learning plateau is not to cram, but to work the learning into the dog's every-day life.

**TRAINING SESSIONS:** Training sessions should be short and frequent. Three 5-10-minute training sessions a day are recommended. You should plan your sessions so that they occur before meals and should choose a relatively quiet place to begin training.

### **House Rules**

**DOGGIE BUSINESS:** Allow at least fifteen minutes to exercise your dog before class and give him a chance to relieve himself. Please use the wooded areas on the side or in the rear of the building and **carry a plastic bag in your pocket** to pick up any stools your dog leaves on the grounds. **PLEASE BE CONSIDERATE OF OTHERS. Outside of the building, dogs must be on a leash at all times.**

**WHO'S THE TRAINER, ANYHOW?** While dogs are in class, they should be focused on their owners. Adolescent dogs are like teenagers – they usually don't need to be encouraged to focus on their peers -- the difficult task is listening to their parents. While dog-dog socialization is important, the focus of this particular class is

getting the dog to focus on you

DESPITE the fact that other dogs are present. Remember – other dogs will reinforce your dog's behavior by wagging, whining, giving responses. If you let the other dog reinforce your dog for the barking behavior, it will get stronger. (Like the example of the dolphin splashing the crowd and the crowd applauding and laughing.) **If you don't control the reinforcements, you won't control the behavior.** If your dog is barking across the room at another dog and that dog is staring back and responding, use your body to block the eye contact and get the dog re-focused on you. This concept is called managing environmental reinforcement. Don't let other dogs train your dog!

**UNSOLICITED SNIFFING:** We request that you not let your dog go to the end of the leash to sniff another dog in class, especially while you are turned in the other direction. When you are outside, and want your dog to approach another dog, **always ask the handler's permission first.** Allow the dogs three seconds to sniff and then re-direct them off to the side (don't pull back and up on the leash!) After the "three-second-sniff", you should be able to tell whether the dogs accept each other or not. If you see hackles up, ears forward, tail straight out, lips lifted, or hear a growl, do not allow the dogs to interact any more. While some dogs may enjoy sniffing and close interaction with other dogs, others do not like it or may feel threatened by it. Even the "friendliest" dog will eventually meet another dog he doesn't get along with. **Never assume it is your dog's "right" to sniff another dog.**

**FRIENDS AND FAMILY IN CLASS:** Experience shows that dogs learn best if their initial training is very consistent. Often two adult handlers can agree to train a dog consistently, and sometimes a child-adult team can do the same. **The greatest success is achieved if the one family member whom the dog "respects" the most consistently attends the dog's training class.** (Trainers aged 8-18 in this category are welcome, but must be accompanied by an adult.) This designated handler or handler team can then teach the rest of the family what they have learned. However, any family members or friends are always welcome to watch this class. Any children under the age of 8 attending class need to be under supervision on a non-participating adult at all times.

## PUPPY AGILITY CLASS

### TRAINING EQUIPMENT



**LEASH:** We would like you to bring a six-foot leash to class. We recommend the leash be made of leather, nylon, or cotton and will have some nylon leashes for sale. **Please do not bring a Flexi-leash or a metal chain leash to class.**



**Collar:** We recommend the use of a flat or rolled leather buckle collar for Canine Good Citizen classes. After a few classes, the instructor may recommend that you try a special training collar such as a Promise or Premier collar. **You will use this special training collar only during training sessions or in situations when you need control over your dog on a leash. Do not leave special training collars on your dog when you and a leash are not attached.** Training collars are also only used for training a behavior, and should be eventually weaned off; in order to pass the Canine Good Citizen test, the dog must wear a flat collar. **WE DO NOT ALLOW THE USE OF METAL CHOKE CHAIN COLLARS IN OUR CANINE GOOD CITIZEN CLASSES.**

**TOYS FOR MOTIVATION:** For class purposes, you will want the kind of toy that will allow you and the dog to hold on or one you can toss into the air, but it won't bounce far. Below are some suggestions.

- Tennis Tug
- Braided Tug
- Squeaky mouse
- Soft latex squeaky toy
- Treat pouch toy

**TOYS FOR REWARDING CALM BEHAVIOR:** When you'd like your dog to be quiet at home – say, when guests come over for dinner – here are some suggestions of toy/treat combinations that keep a dog occupied and reward calm behavior. Most are available for sale at Teamworks Dog Training.

- Gummabone. Nylabone
- Cotton (not nylon) rope toys
- Kong stuffed with peanut butter
- Saucer stuffed with dog biscuits
- Buster cube filled with dog food
- Frozen beef soup bones
- Low salt chicken broth “pop-sicles”



### TREATS:

#### What Kind of Cookies to Use:

- It must be something your dog likes!
- It should be soft and easily chewed in one bite without crumbling. (Not large dry dog biscuits)
- You should be able to break it into very small pieces (the size of cheerios for most medium-sized dogs).

#### Here are some suggestions:

- Hot dogs sliced /micro waved/blotted to get fat out
- Chopped up cubes of cheese
- Baked liver pieces or “liver cookies.”
- Cereal - like Cheerios or Kix
- Pounce cat food treats
- Jerky sticks or strips for dogs
- Cooked chicken or turkey pieces
- Moist packaged dog food
- Sliced carrots
- Unsalted pretzels
- Unsalted oyster crackers

**READING LIST:** If you would like to read more about this training philosophy, here are a few recommended books:

- **Don't Shoot the Dog.** Karen Pryor.
- **Clicker Training: A Dog & A Dolphin.** Karen Pryor.
- **How Dogs Learn.** Dr. Mary Burch & Jon Bailey
- **Playtraining Your Dog.** Patricia Burnham.
- **Enjoying Dog Agility.** Julie Daniels.
- **Agility Fun the Hobday Way.** Ruth Hobday.
- **Jumping From A to Z.** Chris Zink & Julie Daniels.
- **Peak Performance – Coaching the Canine Athlete.** Chris Zink.
- **Agility Tricks.** Donna Dufford.
- **Agility Foundation Training.** Greg Derrett.
- **Puppy Primer.** Patricia McConnel & Brenda Scidmore
- **After You Get Your Puppy.** Dr. Ian Dunbar
- **The Perfect Puppy.** Gwen Bailey
- **Crate Training Your Dog.** Pat Storer
- **Building Blocks for Performance.** Bobbie Anderson.



**RESPONSIBLE DOG OWNERSHIP**

**GROOMING:** Every dog needs a good brushing not less than once a week. Longhaired dogs should be brushed no less than 3 times a week.

Use grooming time to check your dog all over. A thorough grooming session once a week will save you a costly trip to a groomer and make you aware of any condition, which needs to be checked by your veterinarian.

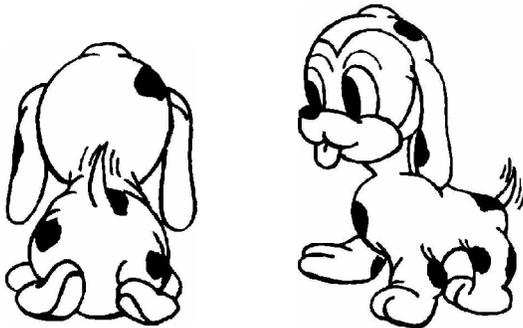
Your dog needs a bath when you can smell him. Most breeds should be bathed once a month.



**KEEPING YOUR DOG FIT & TRIM:** Its essential for your dog to be fit and trim for agility because excess weight will increase the likelihood of injuries. Its tempting to feed your dog the amount of food recommended on the dog food package. However, many packages list amounts that would over-feed the dog. Another aspect to consider is that like humans, dogs gain the most weight from carbohydrates. Wild canines do not eat corn and rice – they are convenient ways to stretch the dollar when making a dog food. If your dog is overweight, consider switching to a low-carbohydrate diet and use meat-based treats instead of carbohydrate-based biscuits.

If your dog is fit, you should see an indent at his waist as you look at him from above. You should also be able to easily feel his ribs as you lightly rub your hand along his sides. If you have to press down to feel ribs, your dog could stand to lose a few pounds. If you can't feel ribs at all, your dog should definitely change diets.

Feed your dog at specific times and then take his food away. **Do not leave food out for your dog all the time.** This will help your dog stay fit and be important for training reasons.



**SPAYING & NEUTERING:** Have your dog neutered or spayed about 3-5 months of age. Neutered pets live longer, healthier lives and make superior pets. Spaying and neutering early often prevents

undesirable behaviors like mounting and object possessiveness. Breeding a dog is an expensive and time-consuming undertaking that requires extensive knowledge of genetic diseases or purebred dogs. More importantly, there are far too many unwanted dogs and puppies into the local area.

**CLIPPING NAILS:** Make sure you clip your dog's nails before the first class. **This is especially important in agility so that the dog is not uncomfortable climbing.** You need to clip your dog's nails when you can hear him coming on a hard surface.

(1) With your dog lying down next to you on the floor, gently take hold of one paw. Hold for a few seconds, praise and give treat. Repeat until you can hold each paw to the count of 10.

(2) With your dog lying down, take paw in one hand and touch one nail with the clippers. (Do not cut the nail.) Praise and give treat. Repeat until you can touch each nail with no struggle.

(3) With your dog on a "down" by your side, use the clippers and cut the TIP of one nail. (If it bleeds, you have cut off too much!) Praise and give treat. Repeat until you can do one nail on each foot.

(4) With your dog lying down by your side, take hold of paw, put a little pile of treats under his nose. Let him eat the treats while you cut the nails on one foot. Repeat until you can cut all the nails on all four feet. Praise.

(5) Repeat Step 4, but give treat after you have done one foot.

*See the next page for a diagram of how to trim a dog's nails.*

**PARASITE PREVENTION:** The climate in North Carolina requires that dogs be on heartworm preventative medication year round. Heartworm infections are carried by mosquitoes and can be fatal if left untreated. Please talk to your veterinarian about making sure your dog stays heartworm free. Roundworms, hookworms, and tapeworms are common parasites that can also be treated with combination heartworm medication. In addition, you will need to have your dog on flea and tick preventative most of the year.

# PUPPY AGILITY CLASS

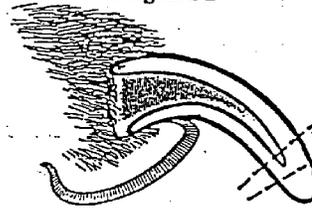


Diagram 1



The blood supply (Kwik) in a short nail.

Diagram 2

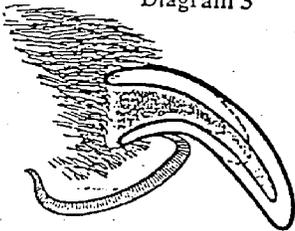


A cut here will cause bleeding and the nail will still be too long.

TRIM HERE and the blood supply will begin to get shorter.

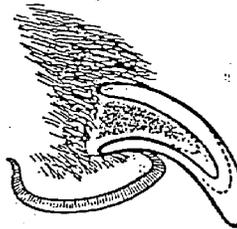
Note how the blood supply gets longer as the nail grows.

Diagram 3



If you clip or file a little off of a long nail every few days, the blood supply will continue to recede.

Diagram 4

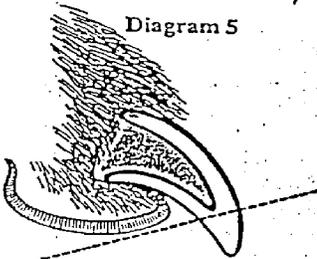


As the nail gets shorter so does the blood supply.

# Rich Health

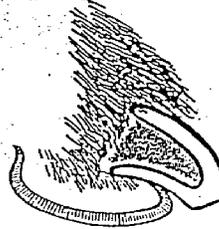
## KWIK-STOP STYPTIC POWDER

Diagram 5



Only when the nail is kept short can it be trimmed without bleeding. If the same cut had been made on the long nail in Diagram 2, it would have caused bleeding.

Diagram 6



A properly trimmed nail.

67.



## HOUSETRAINING HINTS

**FEEDING:** Puppies need to be fed 3 times a day; adult dogs, twice a day, unless you have an extra-large dog prone to bloat (these dogs need to be fed several small meals per day). Always feed at the same time, even on weekends. Keep the diet constant; abrupt diet changes will cause digestive upsets. Loose stools are a sign of overfeeding, dry stools a sign of underfeeding. Make sure you ask your dog to sit and stay while you're holding his food bowl. Slowly set the bowl down on the floor – whisk it back up and away if your dog breaks his stay. When he does stay, release him and let him eat his food. After 10 minutes, pick up dish and put it away. Remember that you want your dog to “work for a living”; *leaving food out all the time (free-feeding) not only causes dogs to be overweight, but it causes them not to value their food.*

**ESTABLISH A TOILET AREA:** Always take your dog to a specific toilet area when he should eliminate. If possible, this area should be in a straight line from the house. Ask your dog to do his “business”. Stand still and let him concentrate on what he is doing. Be patient, let him sniff around. After he has finished, praise him.  
**\*\*If you walk your dog on a leash in order to get the dog to eliminate:** Many people make the mistake of walking the dog *until* he does his business and then promptly ending the walk. It doesn't take most dogs very long to learn to “hold it” as long as possible so their walk will last as long as possible. This can cause a lot of stress on both the dog and you. Instead, bring your dog immediately to his toilet area, ask him to do his business, praise him, then REWARD him with a nice walk.

3) **When to take the dog to the toilet area:** After eating or drinking, after waking up, and after playing or chewing. Watch for sniffing and circling.

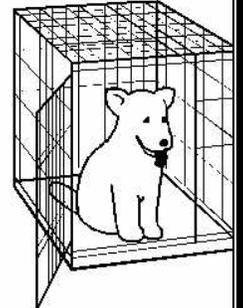
4) **Dealing with accidents after the fact:** If your dog has had an accident in the house, do not call him to you to punish him. Not only is it too late, your dog will simply associate going to the bathroom in your presence with punishment, and choose a back bedroom next time! Dogs also DO NOT understand rubbing their nose in their own scent; otherwise, why would dogs roll on the grass where another dog has eliminated if they truly disliked the scent so much? Always keep calm. Clean up the mess, making sure your dog is not watching you. Use white vinegar or enzyme-based solutions as cleaners. Do not use any ammonia-based cleaners (they smell a lot like urine to the dog). Most importantly, make sure that when your dog does go outside, you praise him a lot for going in the correct place and be very vigilant for future signs of sniffing and circling. If your dog continues to have accidents, take him to the vet to check for health problems.

**CATCHING YOUR DOG IN THE ACT:** Give your dog verbal feedback by telling him “wrong” or “eh-ent”, but stay calm and *do not get angry.* Do not try to drag him outside because that will make your clean-up job much more difficult. It is very important not to let the dog associate eliminating in your presence in general with fear; this results in dogs that will not eliminate outside (because,

after all, you are standing there) and will seek out hidden areas of the house to eliminate. Again, make sure that when your dog does go outside, you *praise him a lot* for going in the correct place and be very vigilant for future signs of sniffing and circling. Hint: Until your puppy is reliable, it is not a good idea to let him have the run of the house.

### THE USE OF A CRATE GREATLY SIMPLIFIES HOUSETRAINING AND PUPPY CONTROL.

Crates are no more cruel to a puppy than a playpen is to an infant. Crates can ensure that your young puppy is safe from harm while you are gone and will encourage the dog to sleep during this time; making it less likely that he will have to eliminate. (Dogs need to sleep 16-18 hours a day!) Crates can be weaned off gradually after the dog is housetrained and has stopped a lot of its chewing. **Interestingly enough, as adults, most crate-trained dogs choose to sleep in their crates after they are no longer required to stay in them!**



**HOUSETRAINING RELAPSES:** Should your dog have a relapse once he has been housetrained, have him examined by your veterinarian. Chances are, he is ill.

### GUIDELINES FOR INTRODUCING THE CRATE:

- Practice going into crate, sit with dog, praise and pet.
- Everytime the dog goes into the crate, feed the dog treats and praise heartily.
- Feed every meal in the crate, requiring dog to go into crate before food dish is set down. Close the door while dog eats.
- Close door and walk away. Don't respond to whimpers! Do not open door again until dog is quiet.
- Only make a big deal about going into the crate not coming out.
- Leave crate door open when home.
- Place crate in someone's bedroom at night for dog to sleep in.
- Never allow children to play in crate.
- Don't use the crate as punishment.
- Always have your dog eat in his crate - it makes for much simpler clean-up and ensures that no other pet will disturb him during his meal.
- At least until your dog is through with adolescence (ages 2-6, depending on breed) have your dog stay in his crate at night and when you are away from home. You will prevent unwanted destructive behaviors.
- Remember, dogs sleep about 16 hours per day. Putting a dog in a crate to sleep is similar to putting an infant in a crib.

## PUPPY AGILITY CLASS



### PUPPY DEVELOPMENTAL STAGES

*Your puppy will go through several distinct developmental stages over the next few months.*

#### 8-12 WEEKS

Your puppy will:	You should:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Have a strong desire to please</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Take every opportunity to praise your dog for doing things right</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Will want to follow you around</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Play hide and seek games and praise your dog for finding you in a safe, secure environment</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Will be exploring his new environment &amp; learning every day</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Take every opportunity to expose your dog to new people, places, &amp; things in a positive way</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ May begin to test out members of the family to determine their social status in the "pack"</li> </ul> <div style="text-align: center; margin-top: 10px;">  </div>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Teach your puppy to inhibit play-biting by yelping and then showing him what things are appropriate to chew on</li> <li>▪ <i>Not</i> chase your puppy, but encourage him to find you and run toward you</li> <li>▪ Establish good rules of the house for everyone to follow that will give the puppy consistent messages</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ May go through a fear period</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Encourage your dog to be "brave" and be careful not to accidentally "soothe" the dog while it is being fearful...if you do this, you will reinforce the fearful behavior, making it stronger!</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Will <i>not</i> have the muscle control to have bladder control</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Introduce the crate and institute a regular feeding schedule</li> <li>▪ Go outside after every nap, play session, feeding, long drink of water, session of sniffing or circling around</li> <li>▪ Praise the dog heartily for going outside</li> <li>▪ Should ignore accidents</li> </ul>

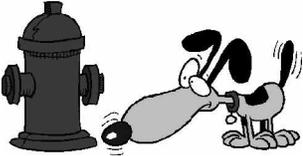
#### 3-6 MONTHS

Your puppy will:	You should:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Still have a strong desire to please</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Take every opportunity to praise your dog for doing things right</li> <li>▪ Always follow any verbal reprimand with what the <b>correct choice</b> is and praise the puppy for the correct choice</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Still be pretty dependent on you and follow you around</li> </ul> <div style="text-align: center; margin-top: 10px;">  </div>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Continue to play hide and seek games and praise your dog for finding you in a safe, secure environment</li> <li>▪ Do not take risks with your puppy or become over-confident in his dependence (see next the stage!)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Will be exploring his new environment with more confidence</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Take every opportunity to socialize your puppy in a positive way</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Will begin chewing and mouthing behaviors to facilitate teething and to explore the environment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Continue to reinforce appropriate things to chew on</li> <li>▪ End all play if puppy chooses to bite</li> <li>▪ Continue games in which the puppy comes to you</li> <li>▪ Make sure everyone in the house is giving puppy consistent messages</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ May go through a fear period</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Encourage your dog to be "brave" and not accidentally reward the dog while it is being fearful.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Will have muscle control to learn bladder control</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Have introduced the crate, a regular feeding schedule &amp; should start to see puppy getting bladder control</li> <li>▪ Should still be praising the dog heartily for going outside</li> <li>▪ Can give a mild "ahhnt" for accidents caught in the act</li> </ul>



**PUPPY DEVELOPMENTAL STAGES**

**6-12 MONTHS**

<u>Your puppy will:</u>	<u>You should:</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Will gain a sense of independence and challenge your authority</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue training and establishing your authority using humane, behavioral techniques, not force.</li> <li>Have patience. This is the toughest stage of dog ownership, but it doesn't last forever.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Will be very likely not to come when called if something else is more interesting</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Not take any risks with your puppy by having him off leash</li> <li>Continue to play hide and seek games and praise your dog for finding you in a safe, secure environment</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Will reach sexual maturity and become notably more territorial</li> </ul> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consider spaying or neutering your puppy before sexual maturity</li> <li>Be very aware of the effects of having an intact dog and have a plan for dealing with females in heat (remember that a male can smell a female in heat up to five miles away through brick or stone walls and will dart away to find her if given the chance!)</li> </ul>

<u>Your puppy will:</u>	<u>You should:</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Give chewing behaviors top priority</li> </ul> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Remain very consistent with the dog during this phase and be sure that all family members are doing the same</li> <li>Make sure your puppy remains in his crate when unsupervised until these behaviors start to diminish</li> <li>Provide the puppy with many different types of durable things to chew on, like Kong® toys and treat saucers</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>May go through another fear period</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encourage your dog to be "brave" and not accidentally reward the dog while it is being fearful.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Should be close to house-trained</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Seek your veterinarian's advice if you are still having trouble with houstraining to be sure there is nothing wrong medically</li> <li>Make sure that no one in the house is using punishment and fear techniques when the dog has an accident</li> <li>Minimize the emotion in greetings and departures and ask for sitting before petting</li> </ul>



**PUPPY CLASS HOMEWORK -- SOCIALIZATION**

Numerous studies show that exposing puppies to a variety of people, places and things in the early stages of development help puppies develop confidence as adult dogs. There are two very important things to remember when socializing your puppy:

- ◆ **THE EXPERIENCE SHOULD BE POSITIVE!** Try to make sure that you monitor interactions so that your puppy has good experiences with all he meets. Don't allow your puppy to just run up to a strange dog unless you are sure that dog is friendly toward puppies. Try and gradually expose him to noises of increasing intensities, rather than scaring him with a really loud noise. If you puppy has a bad experience despite your careful supervision, try to set up the same experience again, but this time, be prepared with treats. Let you puppy get used to the "scary" thing from a distance first, feeding him treats in its presence, and then gradually decrease the distance to the "scary" thing.

- ◆ **REINFORCE CONFIDENT BEHAVIOR, NOT FEARFUL BEHAVIOR!** If your puppy shows fear or hesitation, do NOT soothe your puppy by petting him. While it is human instinct to want to "comfort" the puppy, petting the puppy while it is showing fear reinforces the puppy for being fearful. Instead, move your body closer to the "scary" object and touch it. As your puppy takes a step toward it, praise and treat your puppy heartily.

Below is your socialization list. You should try to expose your puppy to as many of these things as possible in a positive way. Tell your puppy to "Say Hi" and reward him for confident behavior. Check these objectives off as you go and remember to introduce each item with praise and treats, starting at a low intensity and/or far distance.

**PEOPLE**

- Adult females
- Adult males
- Seniors
- Teenagers (13-19 yr)
- Children (4-12 yr)
- Toddlers (2-4 yr old)
- Babies (0-2 yr old)
- Person with a beard
- Person with a hat on
- Person with a backpack on
- Person with sunglasses
- Person of a different nationality
- Person of another different nationality
- Person with a deep voice
- Person with dangling jewelry
- Person with cigarette
- Person in a raincoat
- Person with a stiff gait
- Person in uniform

**PLACES**

- Park
- Another park
- Playground
- Veterinary office (not for a visit)...just go in and have fun with your puppy
- Groomers or Kennel (not for a vista)...just go in and have fun with your puppy
- Flea market
- Pet store
- Dog show
- Someone else's house
- Outdoor shopping mall
- Downtown
- Hotel (Red Roof Inn, Days Inn, Motel 6, & Comfort Inn often allow dogs)
- The beach (The WhaleBone Motel in NagsHead welcomes dogs)
- The mountains
- Camping
- A Boat

**THINGS**

- Bicycle
- Cars (from a distance)
- Motorcycle (from a distance)
- Rollerbladers/ skateboarders
- Wheelchair
- Dishwasher
- Pots & Pans clanging
- Vacuum cleaner
- Electric can opener
- Floor fan
- Blinds
- Garage door opener
- Umbrella
- Tent with flaps
- Whistle
- Loud speaker
- Car Keys
- Measuring wicket



**POST-ORIENTATION HOMEWORK**

1. **MOTIVATORS:** Keeping training enjoyable is the best way for your dog to learn. In order to create a tail-wagging attitude toward learning, you will need to have "objects of attraction" to use in training your dog. These objects should **not** be things that the dog has unlimited access to. For instance, if the dog's tennis ball is always around, chances are if your neighbor's dog gets a squeaky ball, your dog will be much more interested in the squeaky ball than his tennis ball because it is new and interesting. The same goes for food rewards; everyday dog food is much less exciting than cut up pieces of beef hot dog or dog beef jerky. List your dog's favorite rewards for each category and rank them from (#1) most motivating to least motivating:

	FOOD	FOOD	TOYS	GAMES
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				

**TEST THESE FOOD ITEMS ON YOUR DOG**

- Cut up beef hot dogs
- Chopped up cubes of cheese
- Moist dog food treats
- Cereal - like Cheerios or Kix
- Pounce cat food treats\*
- Jerky sticks or strips for dogs
- Cooked chicken or turkey pieces
- Moist packaged dog food
- Sliced carrots
- Unsalted pretzels
- Unsalted oyster crackers
- Dried liver pieces
- Unsalted popcorn
- Shelled, unsalted peanuts

\*Don't feed your dog too many of these because they are not a very nutritionally balanced food for dogs.



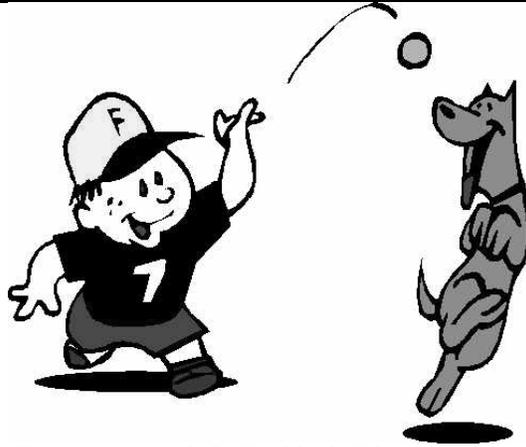
**Lures, Bribes, and Rewards.** *There is a big difference between a bribe and a reward. A bribe is presented before a request to perform a behavior. A reward is given after a behavior and is not present before the behavior occurs. While we may use initially as a lure to show the dog what to do or as a means of counter-conditioning, it should not become a bribe.*

2. **BUILDING TOY DRIVE:** While food can be a useful training tool, it is also very valuable to get your dog motivated by toys. Food works on the nervous system and actually "calms" the dog down. Therefore, food is an excellent motivator to use when an exercise is brand new or the dog is a bit worried. However, once the dog is confident on the obstacles, it probably doesn't need to be "calmed down" using food. Toys work on the nervous system and usually get the dog excited and focused. Even if it seems that your puppy has plenty of energy right now, you will want to build some toy drive for training purposes. Another benefit of having toy drive is that you can throw a toy to reward a dog at a distance. Building toy drive also helps ensure your dog isn't just out on the agility field looking around for treats. If too many treats and not enough toys are used, often a dog starts to sniff around to look for more treats rather than thinking about the obstacles. Building toy drive helps the dog think of agility as a game – not a meal. **Your homework this week is to find at least one toy or game you and your dog can enjoy together.**

**DID YOU EVER WONDER WHY?**  *Did you ever wonder why people who go out on a first date usually go out to dinner? Food works on the nervous system to calm us down. Think about how you feel after a bowl of ice cream or a Thanksgiving dinner. Now think of how you feel when you are playing a sport like basketball or softball. Which situation makes you feel focused and on your toes? Which one makes you feel relaxed and calm? When we use toys in training, we keep our dog "on its toes" and ready for the next thing. When we use food in training, we help the dog relax and feel more at ease. You will want to be able to use both types of motivators for this class and for training in general.*



## How to Play with Your Dog...and be Fun to Play With!



*Have you ever watched two dogs play? Have you ever watched a "pack leader" dog play with a subordinate dog? In order to initiate play with your dog, you have to play like a dog plays, not like a human plays. Like a "pack leader" dog, you can still retain status if you play the game correctly. Note: these suggestions are for competition dogs, not for dogs with dominance aggression issues.*

DON'T	DO
<p>Don't leave toys all around the house and yard for your dog.</p>	<p>When two dogs play with an item, it is always an item of value. If you want your dog to value toys, you need to select some toys that are for play just with you. Store them out of your dog's reach. Leave the non-valuable chew toys out, but keep all of the squeaky toys, tug toys and interactive toys for "invitation only".</p>
<p>Don't let the dog choose which toys to play with and when to play with them.</p>	<p>You should initiate the CHOICE TO PLAY. The toys you use for motivational play should be special toys that are pulled out only for this purpose and later put away. Start with toys you think your dog will really enjoy, but work your way toward less exciting toys as you get better at this game.</p>
<p>Don't let playing with you be optional.</p>	<p>Try to start your play sessions in a relatively distraction-free environment so that if the dog doesn't play with you, there's nothing else fun to do like go sniff out a trail or chase squirrels. <b>PLAY WITH YOUR DOG ON LEASH SO THAT HE DOESN'T HAVE THE OPTION OF RUNNING OFF WITH THE TOY.</b></p>
<p>Don't shake a toy at your dog's face.</p>	<p>There's nothing fun about having something shaken in your face. If you want to get your dog excited about a toy, make a big deal about getting it out and try to hide it from the dog in your arms. Say "Ooooh. What do I have here???" Then drag the toy along the ground and encourage the dog to pounce on it. You might even want to tie the toy to a rope. <b>BUT THEN, LET THE DOG HAVE THE TOY.</b> Don't be so quick to grab the toy away! (Don't treat a toy like its something you don't want the dog to have or he will give up playing.) Let him shake it around and while he does, put your hands on the dog, ruff him up, and let him celebrate getting the toy.</p>



## How to Play with Your Dog...and be Fun to Play With! Continued...

DON'T	DO
Don't have your hands on the toy all the time.	Let the dog spend most of the playtime possessing the toy. Spend more time revving up the dog by ruffing him up than holding the toy. Convince him that the game is even more fun because you are playing with him.
Don't let the dog just stop playing with the toy.	If the dog stops playing with the toy, pick it up and play with it yourself. Act like a dog!!! If he comes back for the toy, let him get it and ruff him up to initiate play again.
Never tug harder than your dog can tug back.	Tugging for motivation training is not a battle of wills. If you always win then your dog will stop trying to tug. Let your dog think that he pulled the toy out of your hands and "won" every now and then. Go ruff him up when he does.
Don't get in the habit of always throwing the toy far away from you.	Encourage your dog to play <i>with you</i> . The toy should only be fun for the dog when you are around. While retrieving can be fun and useful for distance work, you want to make sure your dog relies on you to "activate the toy". Toys on ropes can help make this transition.
Don't get caught with only one toy around.	Have alternate toys ready nearby in case one breaks or gets thrown in a place that you can't retrieve it.
Don't play until your dog is exhausted.	Quit while your dog still wants more.
Don't grab the toy out of the dog's mouth or over-use the "release" command.	Try to stop the game when you have possession of the toy. It sends the strongest message about the start and end of the game. However, if you need your dog to give back the toy, its better to just gently hold the dog's collar and go still and quiet until he gives the toy up. Don't ask him to release the toy every few minutes while playing. That's not a game or play, its very demotivating to the dog.
Don't let your dog run off with the favorite toy.	Have your dog on leash when you play. Always have more than one toy on your person to play with and retain the better toy hidden. If your dog breaks free and runs off with the toy, start whooping it up and playing with the "better toy" that you have hidden. Run around, leap, throw the toy in the air until he comes back and wants to play with your toy.
Don't get boring.	Change toys frequently and be genuine. Dogs know when you're having fun and when you are pretending. But more importantly, after you play this game correctly for awhile, your dog should start to view the toy as secondary. It's YOU and your play with the dog that makes the toy fun. If you do this well, your dog won't even want to play with the toy until you "activate" it.



## POST-ORIENTATION HOMEWORK

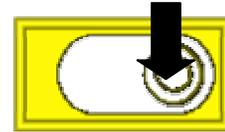
### HOMEWORK PROGRESSION:

The next step in your homework is to introduce the clicker to your dog. From now on in the homework sheets, you will notice that each section objective is first described in *italics*. Under that, marked in **small diamonds**, are some things you should think about before doing the exercise. Then, the **arrows** tell you, step-by-step, what to do. There are occasional “Notes” sections in boxes with helpful hints or trouble-shooting ideas. You will also see several “levels” for each exercise. The homework is divided into levels for several reasons:

- You should practice with your dog in **several short sessions (5-10 minutes each)** per day, rather than one long session. Try to incorporate training right into your dog’s daily routine; when he gets up, before he eats, before you leave the house, when you come home, before bed, etc.
- Every dog will progress at a different rate. The “levels” will give you goals to strive for (which is what the check-boxes are for). However, **anytime your dog seems confused, ALWAYS DROP BACK ONE LEVEL. LET THE DOG SUCCEED AT THE PREVIOUS LEVEL, AND END THE SESSION THERE, ON A GOOD NOTE.** Then, the next time you practice, start with the lower level and reach towards the next level.
- It can be confusing to the dog to try to learn two different **brand new** behaviors in one session. Try to get to the level at which you **introduce a command before starting on another brand new exercise.** It’s fine to work on already-learned commands in the same session as one new behavior.
- **You do NOT have to reach the highest level of one exercise before going onto the next exercise.** The levels are provided to keep each exercise challenging and fun for you and your dog and to encourage you to train in short sessions. Your homework will describe only a few exercises that have a “pre-requisite” exercise.
- We will usually practice the “level one” exercises in class and maybe demonstrate higher levels. At home, try to progress beyond what we did in class in preparation for the next week’s lesson.

### CLICKER TIPS:

- 1) **CLICK = TREAT.** Practice using your clicker when your dog is out of earshot. Don’t let children play with the clicker. Remember, the idea is for this sound to have a specific meaning to your dog.



#### **PRESS HERE WITH YOUR THUMB**

**ALWAYS CLICK FIRST, AND THEN TREAT.** The click means, “That’s correct! You earned a treat!”

- 2) **CLICK THE BEHAVIOR WHILE IT IS HAPPENING.** Keep your eyes glued to your dog and your thumb on the clicker when you are doing a training session. As the trainer, it is your job to catch the dog doing what you want it to do. If you miss an opportunity, it isn’t the end of the world, but the harder you concentrate on your dog, the quicker he will learn.
- 3) **DON’T WORRY ABOUT THE TIMING OF THE FOOD REWARD.** The important part is the click. Once the dog knows click = treat, he will understand that the treat is coming.
- 4) **CLICK ONLY ONCE.** Resist the temptation to click more than once. The timing of the click tells the dog “that’s it! That’s what I wanted you to do!”. Multiple clicks would be confusing to the dog.
- 5) **DON’T USE THE CLICK TO GET THE DOG’S ATTENTION OR JUST TO GET THE DOG TO COME TO YOU.** Again, click the behavior you want as it’s happening, don’t use the clicker as a command.
- 6) **WHEN YOU DOG “GETS IT”, GIVE HIM A JACKPOT.** When the you get an especially good performance, give your dog a handful of treats and end the session with a round of play. This would be like getting a bonus at work for a job well done.
- 7) **ADD THE COMMAND ONLY WHEN THE BEHAVIOR IS RELIABLE & FUN.** When teaching a brand new behavior, stay silent and let the dog figure it out – the dog’s going to understand the behavior better if he’s figured it out himself. When you start to see quick responses, add a command as the dog does the behavior. After a few times, then add the command just before the dog does the behavior. Now the behavior is “on cue” and its time to test the reliability of the behavior versus position, time, distance, and distractions.



**POST-ORIENTATION HOMEWORK**

**3. CHARGING UP YOUR CLICKER /**

**ATTENTION WORK:** *The most important element in successful training is having your dog's attention. If your dog is looking at you, he's much more likely to obey you than if he's looking at something else. This exercise will also aid you in "charging up" your clicker and getting used to it as a training tool.*



- ◆ Choose a quiet environment with no distractions for this exercise.
- ◆ First, prepare a container with some of your dog's favorite treats in it (ranked #1 or #2). Place the treats in your reach, but out of the dog's reach.
- ◆ Make sure you hold the clicker so that you can depress the end without the dimple in it.
- ◆ Sit in a chair so that you are closer to eye level with your dog.
- ◆ Show the dog that you have the treats (if he hasn't already noticed!)
- ◆ For the first couple of clicks, you're going to hold the clicker in your pocket or behind your back.
- ◆ Remember that you aren't going to *say* anything; you're going to let the dog figure this out himself.
- ◆ Also remember...its **CLICK FIRST, AND THEN TREAT.**

**NOTES:**

- If your dog tends to be afraid of noises, start with the clicker in your pocket or behind your back
- If your dog is still afraid of the clicker, you may want to use a bottle lid or a retractable pen instead for a quieter click.

**LEVEL I: Click Means Treat!**

- Start off by simply clicking once then giving the dog a treat
- Repeat this several times
- Then click the clicker and delay a few seconds before giving a treat
- If you see the dog startle and actively look for the treat, end with a jackpot of several treats

**LEVEL II: Getting Eye Contact**

- When your dog looks at you, simply click and then treat.

- Repeat several times, making sure you get direct eye contact.
- After your dog has done this successfully several times, get 3 seconds of attention before clicking and treating.
- Now try for 5 seconds of attention.
- Jackpot (give him a handful of treats) and end the first session here.

**NOTES:**

- If your dog simply stares at you continuously, after you click, throw the treat out and away from you. This way, the dog needs to come back to you to give you eye contact.
- If your dog is not looking at you, increase the level of the food treat and/or decrease the level of distractions or try holding the clicker or the treats near your face.

**LEVEL III: Getting Attention**

- Try to get 10 seconds of attention.
- Work the exercise this week trying these variations with each new session. Start with 3 seconds of attention and work up to 10 seconds.
- Try a new location (still without distractions)
- Try a location with a few distractions
- Try another location with more distractions. (For instance, if you started in the kitchen, first move to the living room. Then try the back yard, then the front porch.)

**LEVEL IV: Adding the Command**

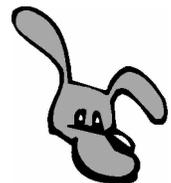
- When the dog will look at you reliably, its time to add a command. *While he is looking at you*, say "watch", "look", "attention", or some other command, then click, then treat (toss it away from you so the dog has to come back to look at you)
- Repeat several times, jackpot on a really good note and then end the session.

**LEVEL V: Attention for Dinner**

- When you've prepared the dog's dinner, holding the dish, ask for attention first, click, and then lower the bowl to give the dog his dinner.

**NOTES:**

- If your dog won't give you eye contact, place the bowl out of sight. Ask for attention before picking up the bowl.



**\*\* PLAY WITH YOUR DOG!**



**WEEK ONE HOMEWORK**

**1. TEACHING A RELEASE:** *Many dogs entering a beginner dog obedience class have already heard the command "sit" and "down". However, most owners say that the dogs still get up from the position whenever they please. If you want your dog to stay put, you must teach the dog a word that means it is free to get up. ("O.K.!", "FREE!", "AT EASE", "ALL DONE!")*



- ◆ For this exercise get some #4 or #5 ranked treats out.

**☒☐ LEVEL I: Relax and its Yours**

- Sit down next to your dog & hold your dog gently by the collar with one hand.
- With the other hand, slowly lower a low-ranking treat to the ground out of your dogs reach.
- Pick up your clicker.
- Your dog will probably strain forward to get the treat. Hold him back from the treat and just wait.
- The instant he stops straining, click, say "o.k.!" Or "release!" Or "free!" And release the dog to get the treat.

**☒☐ LEVEL II: Yours for Not Pulling**

- Stand up next to your dog, holding his leash, drop treats out and in front of him, just out of reach.
- Pick up your clicker.
- Your dog will probably strain forward to get the treats. Hold him back from the treats and just wait.
- The instant he stops straining, click, and say "release!" And release the dog to get the treats.

**☒☐ LEVEL III: Mother May I?**

- Repeat level II, but ask for attention first, before clicking and releasing the dog.



**2. SIT:** *Even if your dog already knows how to sit, give this a try to see what he does. Using this method, you will learn how to teach the dog to respond to hand signals.*

- ◆ For this exercise get some #2 or 3 ranked treats out.
- ◆ Choose a quiet environment with no distractions.
- ◆ Stand up and have your dog on a leash.

**☒☐ LEVEL I: Shifting Gears Into Sit**

- Hold the treat in the palm of your hand and close your hand.
- With your fingertips over the dog's nose, move your fist slowly in an arc no more than one inch above the dog's head.
- As soon as the dog's rear end hits the ground, click and treat.
- Repeat a few times, jackpot, and end.

**NOTES:**

- ◆ Don't pull your hand back and up if the dog tries to get the treats out of your hand! (You may teach your dog to jump up instead of to sit.) Just refuse to open up your fist. If your dog is too excited about the treats, drop to level #4 or #5 treats.

**☒☐ LEVEL II: Without a Lure**

- Repeat without the treat in your fist.

**☒☐ LEVEL III: Sit on Command**

- When the dog will sit reliably, its time to add a command. *As his rear hits the floor*, say "sit" one time, then click, then treat
- Repeat several times, jackpot and end.

**NOTES:**

- ◆ *Try not to be tempted to say the command before the dog does the action just yet. Remember that we want the dog to really like this "game" of figuring out what you want. What we don't want is for you to sound like you're nagging the dog in a foreign language.*

**☒☐ LEVEL IV: Distractions**

- Try a more distracting environment

**☒☐ LEVEL V: You Change Position**

- Try the same exercise with you sitting in a chair

**\*\* PLAY WITH YOUR DOG!**



## PUPPY AGILITY CLASS



### WEEK ONE HOMEWORK

**3. DOWN:** Many people tend to use the word “down” when they mean, “don’t jump up on me” or “get off the couch”. Make sure you choose a word to mean, “lay down” that is not confused with these other actions. Don’t use the term “sit-down”, its very confusing to a dog trying to learn the meaning of each word.

- ◆ Make sure you have already introduced the command for “sit” before starting this exercise.
- ◆ For this exercise get some rank #1 or #2 treats out.
- ◆ Choose a quiet environment with no distractions.
- ◆ Choose a soft surface like carpet.
- ◆ Sit on the ground and have your dog on a leash.
- ◆ Start with your dog in a sitting position.



**4. FIND ME!!! (COME WHEN CALLED):** The recall is a command that could save your dog’s life. Therefore, of all of the commands he learns, we want this one to be your dog’s absolute FAVORITE. One of the best ways to do this is to make finding you a fun game.



- ◆ For this exercise get some rank #1 treats or toys out.
- ◆ Always do this exercise indoors or a fenced yard for your dog’s safety.

#### LEVEL I: Down “L”

- Hold the treat in the palm of your hand and close your hand.
- With your fingertips under the dog’s nose, move your fist slowly down to the ground in an “L”.
- As soon as the dog’s front elbows hit the ground, click and treat.
- Repeat, jackpot and end.

#### NOTES:

- ◆ This exercise may take a little more patience than the sit exercise. Remember not to pull your hand up and away and to let the dog figure it out. If your dog is too excited about the treats, drop to level #3 or #4 treats.
- If your dog is not putting his rump on the ground along with his front elbows, sit on the ground with your knees bent upward, forming a “tent”. Have your dog on your left side and the hand with the treat on your right side. Reach under your knees and make an “L” pattern, pulling the dog under the “tent” of your knees. This will coax him to put his rump down. A coffee table can also be used in the same way.

#### LEVEL II: Without a Lure

- Repeat without the treat in your fist.

#### LEVEL III: Down on Command

- When the dog will down reliably, its time to add a command. As his elbows hit the floor say “down” one time, then click, and then treat.
- Repeat, jackpot and end.

#### LEVEL IV: Change Position

- Try the same exercise with you sitting in a chair.
- Then try the same exercise with you standing up.

#### LEVEL I: Easy Find Me

- Have someone else hold your dog for you.
- Hide in an easy place – like just around the corner.
- Call out excitedly “Find Me”!
- As soon as the dog comes to you, click and play with your dog. You can also use treats, but this is an exercise that we want the dog to be really excited about.

#### LEVEL II: Harder Find Me

- Try hiding in a more difficult spot like behind a door or in a shower with the curtain pulled.
- When your dog finds you, step out to play and celebrate.
- If your dog seems lost, you can call out again to help him.

#### LEVEL III: With Distractions

- Choose a more distracting environment and repeat.



**\*\* PLAY WITH YOUR DOG!**



**WEEK TWO HOMEWORK**

**1. TARGET TRAINING:** *Target plates and target sticks have been used for years to train animals for movie and television work. It's a relatively simple concept – train the dog to touch a small “target” with its nose and you can get the dog to move to location to location on command. You will receive a target plate in class, but can also teach your dog to target to any object – like a post-it note or a dowel rod.*



- ◆ For this exercise get some level #3 or 4 treats out.
- ◆ Choose a quiet environment with no distractions.
- ◆ Sit on the floor with your dog.

**☒☐ LEVEL I: Touch the Target**

- Hold the target plate in the palm of your hand and hold it out to the dog like you are offering him a plate of goodies –or- hold a treat inside your closed fist (fingers on the bottom) right under your dog’s nose
- When the dog sniffs the target or your fist, and touches it with his nose, click and treat.
- Repeat, jackpot and end.

**NOTES:**

If your dog does not seem interested in sniffing the target, you can rub your treat (hot dog or cheese) on the plate to place a scent on it.

**☒☐ LEVEL II: Change Position**

- Same exercise with you sitting in a chair.
- Same exercise with you standing up.

**☒☐ LEVEL III: Target on Command**

- When the dog touches the target reliably, its time to add a command. *As he touches it*, say “touch” or “target” or “point” or some other command, then click, then treat
- Repeat, jackpot and end.



**2. TEACHING YOUR DOG TO STRETCH:**

*Like any other sport, it is important that your dog stretch his muscles before he plays to prevent injury. You can now use your charged-up clicker to teach your dog to stretch.*

**☒☐ LEVEL I: Introduction**

- Place your right hand gently under your dog’s belly
- Put treats in your closed left fist and lure the dog through its paws from its belly, but
- Once the dog has the idea, take the treats out of your hand as use treats as a reward rather than a lure.

**☒☐ LEVEL II: Touch the Target**

- Place your right hand gently under your dog’s belly
- Use your left hand to point to the target on the floor.
- Click and treat when your dog dips his nose to touch the target plate.
- You may also put treats in your closed fist and lure the dog through its paws from its belly, but try to lure no more than three times before taking the treats out of your hand.

**☒☐ LEVEL III: Without a Target**

- Use your clicker to mark the behavior and then reward your dog with a treat or toy.

**3. PALM TOUCH** *Many dogs like to use their noses – sticking them in all sorts of places. If your dog likes to use his nose to investigate the world, you can ask him to touch his nose to the palm of your hand and he will find it very rewarding.*

- Offer your cupped hand out to the dog at nose level as if you have a treat in it. (c/t) When your dog touches his nose to your palm.
- Take your hand away. Repeat.
- Next session, offer your other hand in the same way.
- Next session you can repeat and name the command.
- Next session, hold your palm off to the side for the dog to touch.
- Next session, hold your palm slightly above the dog’s head, so he has to lift a little to touch it

# PUPPY AGILITY CLASS



## WEEK TWO HOMEWORK

**4. SURFACES:** Most agility equipment is coated with sand-paint for traction. Your agility dog will have to get used to this surface. Equipment can be made of metal, wood, or plastic. It's a good idea in general to be sure your dog is comfortable with lots of types of footing. Below are some ideas of surfaces you should bring your dog to. Click for confident behavior and walking. Treat if your dog seems worried, get out your toy and play if your dog accepts the surface pretty readily.

**LEVEL I: One Paw**

- Click when your dog puts one paw on the surface.
- Toss the treat on the surface for the dog to eat.
- (Do not force your dog onto the surface by pulling on the lead.)

**LEVEL II: Two or More Paws**

- Click when your dog puts two or more paws on the surface.
- Toss the treat on the surface for the dog to eat.

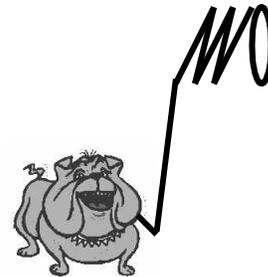
**LEVEL III: Four Paws**

- Click when your dog puts all paws on the surface.
- Toss the treat on the surface for the dog to eat.

- Bridges
- Storm grates (make sure grates are thin enough to support dog)
- Docks
- Water (introduce safely & gradually)
- Paneling
- Shingles
- Astro-turg
- Sand Paper
- Gravel
- Kitty Litter
- Indoor-outdoor carpet
- Old baking pans
- Linoleum
- Tall grass
- Mud
- Wet grass
- Sand



**5. CONTROL POSITION:** In order to walk on a sidewalk and be able to pass another person, you should have your dog walking close by your side, rather than the dog having full rein of the six-foot leash. Take your leash and bunch up the excess, accordion-style. Hold this portion of the leash in your hand. There should be just enough slack that a "J" forms along side of the dog's head, but the dog should be right next to you.



- ◆ Choose a quiet environment and a rank #2 or #3 treat.

**LEVEL I: Two on the Sidewalk**

- Practice walking in this position. You may want to hold the leash in hand furthest from the dog and a treat or target in the hand closest to the dog. Vary the number of steps before clicking and treating.

**LEVEL II: Circle Round**

- Try some small circle patterns around a chair with the dog on the inside.

### 6. CIRCLE

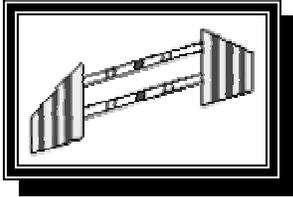
- Use a target plate or a treat to guide your dog around in a circle.
- Get a few repetitions and add a command ("circle", "spin").

# PUPPY AGILITY CLASS

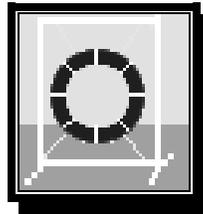


## Basic Obstacle Names

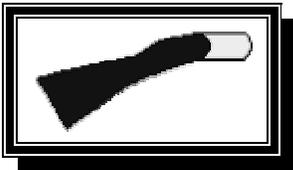
These names are what the agility obstacles are commonly called. You can give your dog any command for each obstacle, as long as you are consistent. Remember, you should only name an obstacle when your dog likes it (tail is wagging). You should also write down a list of all of your dog's commands and make sure your obstacle commands don't rhyme with or sound like other commands your dog already knows.



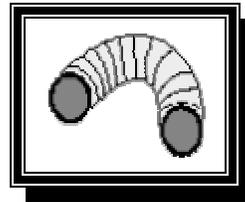
**JUMP**



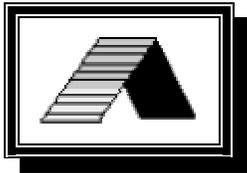
**TIRE**



**CHUTE**



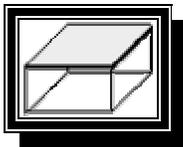
**TUNNEL**



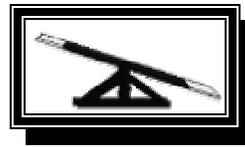
**A-FRAME**



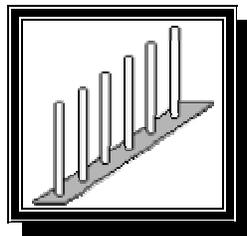
**DOGWALK OR BRIDGE**



**TABLE**



**TEETER OR SEESAW**



**WEAVE POLES**



**WEEK THREE HOMEWORK**

**1. BACKING UP:** *Teaching your dog to walk backwards is a good way to help him learn where his back feet are.*



- ◆ Choose a quiet environment with no distractions.
- ◆ Stand facing your dog
- ◆ Put your hand down at your dog’s chest and walk towards him.
- ◆ Keep your hand down low – rather than over the dog’s head to keep him from sitting.
- ◆ Click and treat for your dog taking one step backwards.
- ◆ With a small puppy, it may help to kneel on the floor and move towards him on your knees.

**LEVEL I: Click for One Step Backwards**

- When the dog likes the game (is wagging the tail), name the command.

**LEVEL II: Click for Two Steps Backwards**

- Now you are asking for what we call a “two-fer”. For the first step backwards, use verbal praise to tell your dog to keep going.
- For the second step backwards, click and treat.

**LEVEL III: Click for a Variable Number of Steps Backwards**

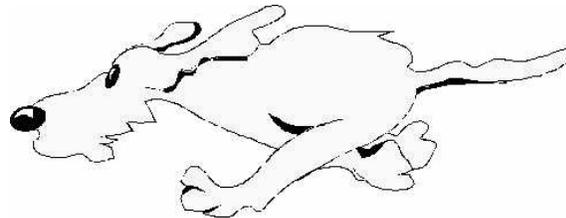
- This is what is called “variable reinforcement”. We are varying the number of times the dog does the behavior before we click and treat. Be sure to use verbal praise to tell your dog to keep going.
- When you are ready to introduce variable reinforcement, you should be “predictably unpredictable” – meaning your dog should not be able to pick out a pattern and know when the reinforcement is coming.

**2. TWO-FERS AND VARIABLE**

**REINFORCEMENT:** (see the description in the previous section on Backing Up.) *Now that your puppy knows how to do several behaviors on command, you can ask for two different behaviors before reinforcing. Try to choose the behaviors he knows the best. Once he has the two-fers down, try to move to variable reinforcement with all of the behaviors he knows. Below is a list of behaviors we have covered for your review. Feel free to add any other commands your dog responds well to. One very simple sequence would be sit, down (stay) , release. Another might be sit (stay), release, come.*

- ◆ SIT
- ◆ DOWN
- ◆ (stay) RELEASE
- ◆ COME
- ◆ PALM TOUCH
- ◆ TARGET PLATE OR PAD
- ◆ CIRCLE
- ◆ STRETCH

**3. JUMPING CHUTE:** *Another good way to teach your dog where his back feet are is to have him go through a jumping chute. In class this will be a series of jump bars that we put down on the mats and ask your dog to walk through.*



*As you dog goes through the bars, listen to see if he touches the bars with his feet.*

*Sometimes you will just hear the faint tick of toenails hitting the bars and sometimes you will see the bars push out from beneath the feet. Before your dog can navigate bars suspended in the air, it is important that he can navigate them on the ground. While this exercise might seem very simple, it is an important exercise to do with your puppy as he is growing. Each growth spurt he has can bring on a readjustment in his coordination – since his legs may actually be different lengths from week to week! Try this exercise at home with pieces of pvc pipe or broom handles. Vary the spacing and angles of the bars.*



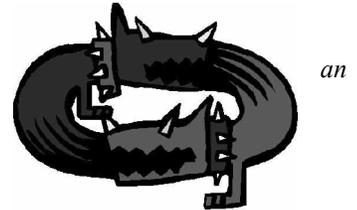
**WEEK THREE HOMEWORK**

**4. THE “GO” GAME:** *Teaching your dog to move out away from you is important in confidence building. It is also a critical skill to have in competition obedience, Frisbee, flyball, and agility.*



- ◆ Choose a quiet environment with no distractions that is secure so that you can work your dog off-lead.
- ◆ Have a toy or food-pouch that you can throw for your dog.
- ◆ If you are right handed, extend your left arm in the direction you are about to throw the toy as a signal. Now, follow-through by throwing the toy or food-pouch in the same direction as your extended left arm. If you are left-handed, extend your right arm first and throw with your left hand.
- ◆ The extended arm serves as a directional cue and is especially useful in agility. Presenting the arm cue before the throw will teach the dog to anticipate the throw and eventually go before you even throw the ball. This will build drive and confidence. However, it is important not to “tease” your dog and “fake” a ball throw if you want him to trust your body movements as directional cues. Try to be sure no one else in the household “fakes” the dog out in this manner.
- ◆ The “go” game can be a lot of fun for you and your dog. However, you may want to be sure you have two identical objects to throw so that the dog does not run off with the object. As the dog picks up the first object, show him that you have a second. When he returns with the first one, throw the second one in the same manner. If your dog still wants to wander off, play this game with your dog on a long line leash or in a smaller enclosed area. Alternatively, you could also reward the dog for a ball return with a treat.

**5. ZIG-ZAG:** *Teaching your dog to weave in and out through your legs is a fun way to warm your dog up and stretch his back muscles. The concept of zig zag, taught when the dog is first learning agility, also reinforces the concepts of going through opening (like a tire or tunnel) and going through straight dividers, like jump standards or weave poles.*



- ◆ Choose a treats that your dog really likes.
- ◆ Stand square with your feet apart and planted.
- ◆ Reach down behind your knee and present a treat to your dog through your legs.
- ◆ Move your treat parallel to your dog’s nose as your move him through your legs.
- ◆ Reward him after he gets through your legs one time.
- ◆ For a very large dog, you can prop one foot up on a chair or elevated surface like a set of stairs.

**☒ ☐ LEVEL I: Follow my Lead**

- Hold a treat in your closed fist. Ask for a few more repetitions where you reward the dog for one pass through your legs.
- Click just as your dog rounds the side of your leg to come front again.
- Try this about three times or so to give the dog the idea of what you want to do.

**☒ ☐ LEVEL II: Without a Lure**

- Repeat the same exercise without a treat in your hand. Reward from your other hand.

**☒ ☐ LEVEL III: Zig on Command**

- When the dog likes the game (is wagging the tail), name the command.

**☒ ☐ LEVEL III: Two-Fers & Variable Reinforcement.**

- When your dog can “zig” on command, you are ready to ask for two-fers.
- When he loves to “zig” you can vary the reinforcement.



**WEEK FOUR HOMEWORK**

**1. SODA CAN JUMPING CHUTE:** *Now that your dog has been practicing the jumping chute, you can vary the height of the bars slightly by using crushed soda cans to give the bars variable lift. (You should note that puppies under 18 months should never jump higher than half shoulder height unless you have radiographs to show that their growth plates are closed. This is why we are only going to the height of soda cans.) Remember to watch your dogs' back feet as he goes through the chute.*



**LEVEL I: Bars in a Straight Line**



**LEVEL II: Bars on an Angle**



**LEVEL III: Bars in an Arc**



**2. DISTANCE RECALL**



- ◆ For this exercise get some rank #1 treats or toys out.
- ◆ Choose a quiet environment with no distractions with at least 15 feet of distance.
- ◆ Put your dog on a Flexi lead or a long rope.
- ◆ Ask for the help of an assistant.

**LEVEL I: Recall Relay**

- Leave your dog with the assistant.
- Walk fifteen feet away.
- Give your dog the recall command.
- As soon as the dog gets to you, click and treat.
- Now, switch places with the assistant, or have the assistant call the dog.
- Repeat back and forth several times, jackpot and end.

**LEVEL II: Distractions**

- Choose a more distracting environment and repeat.

**LEVEL III: Change Position**

- Repeat the same exercise sitting on the floor.

**ATTENTION / RECALL**

- Ask for your dog's attention before calling him. Praise for the attention, (c/t) for the recall.

**TARGET / RECALL**

- Hold your target plate at the top of your thigh.
- Ask the dog to come (praise) and then to touch the target plate (c/t).



**WEEK FOUR HOMEWORK**

**☒☐ LEVEL III:**

**Verbal**

**Distraction**

**3. START LINE STAYS:** *In agility competition, many courses are set up to give a handler what is called a “lead-out advantage”. If you can place your dog in a stay and move out past a few jumps in a row and call your dog over them, you will have an advantage on the course. While this sounds very simple now, once the agility obstacles become very rewarding to your dog, staying put while you move out among the obstacles may be very hard. It is good to put a good foundation to your sit-stays before your dog becomes obsessed with agility obstacles. Sit-stays with distance are also useful in competition obedience and canine musical freestyle. When you do this exercise, the location of the reward is very important.*

- At this point, your dog should have a definite release word.
- Choose a comfortable stay-distance from your dog.
- Choose a word to say (like “banana”) that does not sound anything like your release word.
- Praise your dog if he doesn’t get up from his stay. If he does get up, decrease your distance on the next repetition and don’t emphasize the word you say so much.
- Practice this until you can say words that sound similar to your release word, but not exactly like it. For instance, if your release word is “o.k.”, see if you can work up to saying “oranges” and not have your dog get up from a stay.

- ◆ Before you do this exercise, your dog should have a definite release word from a stay position.
- ◆ Choose a quiet environment with no distractions that is secure so that you can work your dog off-lead.
- ◆ Have a toy or food-pouch or treat that you can throw for your dog.
- ◆ Place your dog in a sit-stay.
- ◆ Walk only as far away as your dog can comfortably handle at this stage of training.
- ◆ Turn back to your dog, praise him, then release him as you toss his reward back to him, preferably right in place or behind him (not out in front of him).

**☒☐ LEVEL I: Ping Pong Distances**

- Once you have built some distance from your dog, vary your distance so that your dog is always guessing how far away you will stop.

**☒☐ LEVEL II: Changing Body Position**

- Choose a comfortable distance away for your dog and change your body position slightly – lift on leg, or bend to the side. If your dog breaks, just repeat the exercise and don’t vary position so much. Try to get the dog to “think” about moving, but not move. Praise warmly and then release and throw the reward.



**WEEK FOUR HOMEWORK**

**4. THE LEFT AND RIGHT GAME:**

*Teaching your dog to move left and right on verbal cue can be very helpful in agility. The hardest thing to remember is that when you give these commands, it is your DOG'S left and right that you are referring to. If you are facing your dog, these commands will be opposite from your left and right sides.*



**This is your dog's left when he is facing you.**

- ◆ Choose a quiet environment with no distractions that is secure so that you can work your dog off-lead.
- ◆ Have a toy, food-pouch, or treat that you can throw for your dog.
- ◆ Get down on the floor with your dog, and shake your toy or food pouch around to get him interested.
- ◆ Say "left" as you throw your reward to your dog's left.
- ◆ Repeat this a few times.
- ◆ When your dog likes the game, say "left" right before you throw the reward.
- ◆ When you can say "left" and your dog respond by turning, you can introduce the "right" command.
- ◆ Try not to switch back and forth between right and left commands until your dog really knows each one separately.

**☒ □ LEVEL I: Dog Facing You**

- Teach both commands with your dog facing you so that you can see his eyes and his intention before he runs.

**☒ □ LEVEL II: Dog Out in Front of You (the two of you facing the same direction)**

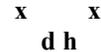
- If your dog is comfortable with it, you can stand with the dog straddled between your legs. If not, you can sit him and then stand behind him.

**☒ □ LEVEL III: Dog Beside You**

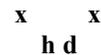
- Place your dog on your left side. Ask for a "left" command.
- Next, ask for a "right" command.
- Place your dog on your right. Ask for a "right" command, then a "left"
- Which directions are toughest for your dog? For you?

**☒ □ LEVEL IV: With Jump Standards**

- Place your "jump standards" out.



- Place your "jump standards" out.
- Stand with your dog on your left side and ask your dog to go "left" around the standard. You can use your arm to guide his path, like we did with the "clock" exercise.
- Next, try the exercise with your dog on your right and ask for "right".



- Now try the opposite of both.



**WEEK FIVE HOMEWORK**

**1. HOW TALL IS YOUR DOG?** *This week we are going to measure your dog in class. Do you know how high your dog will have to jump in agility competition? Your homework is to look up the height your dog would have to jump for these organizations.*

Let's say your dog's adult height is 21" at the withers (top of the shoulder blades). How high would he have to jump in these organizations?

- NADAC (North American Dog Agility Council)  
<http://www.nadac.com/>
- AKC (American Kennel Club)  
<http://www.akc.org>
- USDAA (United States Dog Agility Association)  
<http://www.usdaa.com/>

**WHAT NEXT???**

We sure hope you and your dog had a great time in Puppy Agility Class at Teamworks Dog Training. The skills taught in this class are centered around building a good foundation with your dog and helping your dog proceed confidently through developmental fear periods. If you have a relatively young puppy and want to repeat this class again, we'd love to have you come back! If you would like to sign up for a Canine Good Citizen class, please feel free to. Passing the Canine Good Citizen test is required for entry into the Pre-Agility class at Teamworks Dog Training. After Pre-Agility class, we currently have 12 different types of agility classes. We also have equipment practice night, course of the week night, agility show & gos, and agility trials. We do hope you and your dog will go on to have fun in whatever you do together as a team.

*PUPPY AGILITY CLASS*

