



CLICKER TRAINING BASICS



Clicker training is a scientifically driven, positive reinforcement-based technique that can not only bring a more focused and concise method to your training, but also creates a partnership between you and your dog that is mutually reinforcing and enjoyable.

- The clicker is used as a communication marker to tell your dog that they just performed the correct behavior.
- It is a unique and consistent sound that is unlike anything else in the environment. It therefore allows you to send a clear and efficient message to your dog that is the same no matter who is using it.
- The clicker allows the dog to learn new behaviors quickly because you can limit confusion as to what it is that you want from them.
- The clicker is only used to teach NEW behaviors. It is faded early in the training process once the dog understands the verbal cue associated with the behavior you have been clicking for and is later replaced with praise and other life rewards.
- Once your dog understands the meaning of the clicker, they will look forward to hearing it and learn new behaviors faster than they did without it.

CLICKER RULES

- The click is ALWAYS followed by a treat for maximum reinforcement. If not used in this way, the clicker will become ineffective as a training tool.
- The treat should follow the click as soon as possible (within 1.5- 2 seconds). Timing is extremely important as you may end up accidentally reinforcing the wrong behavior.
- Only click ONCE. If you want to express more enthusiasm for a great response then increase the number of treats, not the number of clicks. For example: See the behavior – click – treat – release your dog.
- NEVER click just to get your dog's attention. It may work initially but eventually lose its novelty or become associated only with one behavior, preventing you from using it for anything else.
- ALWAYS know what you are clicking for. Your timing and communication will be much more efficient if you know what the behavior that you want your dog to perform looks like.
- The clicker may not be appropriate for dogs that are very sound sensitive.