**How to Do the Homework with Your Dog**

The ideal amount of practice when you are teaching your dog something new is:

1. 10 repetitions in a row of the same cue. Example: 10 sits in a row.

2. Take a 1 minute break to love up on your dog, give them a water break or throw

the ball several times.

3. Do 10 repetitions like above.

4. Take a 1 minute break

5. Do another 10 repetitions.

This will be a total of 3 sets of 10 repetitions. This is the practice guide you should use

when training your dog not only for this class, but also for all of the other classes.

If possible, take your dog out for playtime or a walk after the training session. Just like

people, dogs should finish up their training by looking forward to something fun to

relieve stress. If a walk is not possible, make sure to take 2 - 5 minutes to love on and play

with your dog right after training. This is a way for you to bond with them to make sure

the training session ends with your dog relaxed and happy.

That would count as 1 practice session, and should take 5 - 7 minutes.

Training, just like our own homework, is taxing on a dog’s brain. Sometimes, your dog may

become frustrated when things are new or have increased in difficulty. Make sure that

you are continuing to build your dog’s confidence by always ending on a good note, or

by going back to an easier command to end the training session.

dog to become an A+ student!

Ideally, 3 of these sessions a day (spaced out throughout the day)is all it takes for your

This means that if you have to teach2cues in a week (like WATCH and TOUCH), you should

Just do a total of 6 such practice sessions each day (3 for WATCH, and 3 for TOUCH). This is of

course a suggestion- feel free to customize your training sessions based on what works for you.

**The WATCH Cue**

The homework suggestions below are just that - suggestions. Remember that just like

people, dogs have different learning speeds. So, don’t become frustrated if your dog

seems to be behind the homework schedule. As long as you are setting your dog up for

learning success by setting realistic training goals, doing 3 training sessions a day, and

staying positive through practice, you are doing everything right. For some dogs,

different commands need more repetitions for them to learn, especially when we bring in

distractions. Don’t become discouraged or worried - this is normal. Simply repeat the

same steps during the next training session until your dog can respond to the command

every time you give it.

Day 1

Steps:

1. Hold a treat in your fingers.

2. Move the treat so that it’s right in front of your dog’s nose.

3. Then, move the treat towards your eyes.

4. As soon as your dog looks at your face, give the treat, but don’t say anything.

Location:

Quietest room in the house with no distractions.

Day 2

Same as day 1. Even if your dog was quick to pick up this cue on the first day of practice,

the homework is still the same. One day of practicing a new cue isn’t enough time to

commit it to muscle and mind memory.

Day 3

On Days 1 and 2, you gave the treat as soon as your dog looked at your face, without

your dog necessarily looking at your eyes. On Day 3, you may increase the difficulty by

waiting for direct eye contact before giving the treat.

Steps:

1. Hold a treat in your fingers.

2. Move the treat so that it’s right in front of your dog’s nose.

3. Then, move the treat towards your eyes.

4. Wait for eye contact from your dog.

5. Give the treat, saying nothing, as soon as eye contact is made. Do not give the

treat if your dog only looks at your face or looks at your hand containing the treat - they

MUST look at your eyes before getting the treat.

Location:

Quietest room in the house with no distractions.

Day 4

Repeat of day 3. Just like the first day, teaching this needs lots of repetition to form

muscle and mind memory.

Day 5

You can now add the verbal “watch” command.Steps:

1. Using a treat, lure your dog’s eyes to your eyes, making eye contact.

2. As soon as you get eye contact, give the treat and say “watch”.\*

\*Only say “watch” once.

Location:

Quietest room in the house with no distractions.

Day 6

Say the “watch” cue before the dog makes eye contact.

Steps:

1. Say “watch” before your dog makes eye contact.

2. Use a treat to lure your dog’s eyes to yours.

3. As soon as your dog makes eye contact, give the treat.

Location:

Quietest room in the house with no distractions.

Day 7

Repeat of day 6.

Your dog should now be able to give you eye contact when you say the “watch” cue and

they see a treat. We are nowhere near weaning off treats at this point in training.

Location:

Your dog should be able to respond to your “watch” cue with small levels of distraction in

your home.

To further the “watch” cue, you should start in the easiest room in the house and then

move through all rooms, hallways, and the kitchen (which is likely one of the most

distracting places in your home). Slowly move from room to room and/or add people to

the room to increase the level of distraction. The extra person shouldn’t try to distract

the dog, just their presence is enough. If your dog has trouble with one room or person,

or maybe around a particular distraction, practice that more often and don’t increase the

level of difficulty further until they have mastered the current one.