



KALMPETS

Creating calm for all

Creating Great Conversation with your Canine

What's in it for dogs? The first step in training is to identify whether your dog is motivated to talk to you. Think about what you are offering in return for work and choose a salary that you know your dog can't refuse.

Some salary options are:

- Tug toys
- Ball play
- Food

*Note: Pats and praise should always be free and should never be part of a salary package.

How long should a training session be? Long training sessions can be boring and typically end with your dog (and you) becoming frustrated and losing interest. The shorter the training session the more likely you can both finish with a 'win'. Start with three 1-2 minute long sessions each day.

Where should training take place? Set your dog up for success by training in a low distraction environment, such as inside your home. As your dog learns the desired behaviour, gradually increase the level of distraction.

Finish on a 'win': It is easy to become frustrated when your dog does not appear to understand what you want. If things are not working, ask your dog to do something really easy e.g. 'sit', reward heavily and finish the training session.

It is easy to get carried away when your dog is doing wonderful work. Avoid over-doing it and finish while things are good to ensure you preserve your dog's good work ethic.

Train like no one's watching!

Training should be fun. If your dog learns best when you are enthusiastically leaping about..... then do it!

Tick tock, timing is everything...

- don't train tired. Find time in your day when you are both able to put in 100%.

Improve the quality of your conversation with your dog by using a marker

What is a marker?...

- A marker is a sound used to let your dog know the instant they have done something right. When your dog understands what you want, it is much easier for them to repeat the desired behaviour.
- A marker is a powerful training tool. Used correctly, it speeds up understanding between you and your dog.

What can I use for a marker?

- Single syllable words e.g. “yes”, “good”, “pop” – word use is ideal for the family dog.
- Non-verbal sounds e.g. tongue click.
- A clicker – small plastic device that makes a “click” sound – clicker is ideal for use in canine sports or trick training.

What marker is the best fit for me and my dog? Choose a marker that:

- is short and sharp;
- comes naturally to you when you are happy;
- is not used too often in your daily conversation;
- is not confused with your dog’s name or other cue words;
- is always with you when you want to train (if you use a clicker).

How does my dog learn the marker? The goal is for your dog to learn that the marker predicts a treat is coming. For this to work the:

- marker must always be followed by a reward;
- reward must be desirable. Pats may not cut it here folks.

Follow these two simple steps to teach a marker:

Step 1. Say the word/click and instantly deliver a treat into your dog’s mouth.

Step 2. Repeat 2-3 times daily for 30 seconds at a time and until you see your dog is excited the instant it hears the sound.

Step 3. Use the marker to increase the frequency of behaviour’s you like by ‘marking’ (and rewarding) the instant your dog performs the target behaviour.