

Look

Many dogs may find prolonged eye contact uncomfortable or threatening, this exercise will help such dogs to build a positive association with prolonged human eye contact.

WHY TEACH IT?

Teaching your dog to look at you in response to a verbal cue can be an effective exercise to redirect their attention away from an undesirable stimulus and prevent a reaction.

It is important to remember to begin teaching your dog to look in an environment with very little distraction, for example, your lounge room. Over time, gradually increase the level of distraction.

INSTRUCTIONS

- Step one:** Begin with your dog sitting or standing in front of you.
- Step two:** Take a treat and slowly move the treat up towards your eyes. Remember to remain upright and do not loom over your dog.
- Step three:** When your dog makes eye contact with you for one to two seconds, bridge and reward.
- Step four:** After two to three successful repetitions, begin to fade the lure. Repeat the same hand motion but leave the treat in your pouch until you are ready to reward.
- Step five:** Once your dog is reliably looking on hand signal, you can add the verbal cue "look". This will teach them to associate the exercise with the verbal cue.
- Step six:** Once your dog is reliably watching your eyes for one to two seconds, you can build duration on the behaviour by asking for longer eye contact (an additional few seconds) before you bridge and reward.

Touch

TARGET AND FOLLOW A HAND

Teaching your dog to target and follow your hand has many practical benefits. It can be useful for repositioning your dog without relying on a lead.

In addition to this, teaching your dog to touch can be an effective exercise for redirecting attention away from an undesirable stimulus. This help prevent practising undesirable behaviour, such as lead reactivity.

Begin teaching your dog to touch in an environment with very little distraction, for example, your lounge room. Over time, gradually increase the level of distraction.

INSTRUCTIONS

- Step one:** Present a flat hand in front of your dog's nose.
- Step two:** The moment you feel your dog's nose touch your hand, bridge and reward.
- Step three:** Begin to generalise the behaviour by alternating the hand you ask your dog to touch and presenting the hand at different heights.
- Step four:** Once your dog is reliably touching your hand, you can begin to increase the distance your dog travels to touch your hand.
- Step five:** You can add the verbal cue "touch".



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More questions? Need help?

Email our professional behaviour trainers on petsquad@dogshome.com

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