

## Marker/Clicker Training

**Description:** A [MARK] can be a word (monosyllabic and sharp YES, GOOD, HOT) or sound (clicker/snap) is used to positively communicate with the dog. Teach dog to listen for a Marker/Clicker to identify desired behavior.

**Solution for:** Foundation training for just about everything you do with your dog. Think of this like the Hot/Cold game you played as a child. This is a way to help the dog understand what you want them to do by allowing them to think for themselves.

**Prerequisites:** None.

**Equipment/Supplies:** High value reward (either great treats or most favorite toy) & Clicker (optional).

### CLICKER CAUTION:

A clicker is a way of communicating with your dog. Proper use of a clicker in the learning process may cause humans to be ultra creative when working with their dog. It has also been known to make dog training so much fun you become addicted spending time with and teaching your dog!

A clicker is a *tool*, NOT a *toy*. Although it's admittedly a fun sound and neat feeling to play with the clicker, inappropriate use may confuse your dog and will diminish the benefits of the device. If the whole purpose of training is to teach your dog appropriate behavior, let's set a good example and use the clicker appropriately.

It is NOT a substitute for the recall [come] command. In short order you will see the clicker could (inappropriately) be used to get your dog to come when you call them, please resist this temptation! It will greatly reduce the effectiveness of the clicker as a teaching device.

The [MARK] is a way of communicating with your dog and once begun can be used through their life to teach new things, reinforce behaviors and to fine tune things the dog already knows to great detail. Once employed the dog human team is limited only by their imaginations.

The sound of the click will come to mean 3 things to your dog.

1. "What you are doing right NOW is exactly the proper behavior" or "pay attention to what you are doing at the moment you hear this [MARK]" (click/marker word)
  - a. *Timing matters!* [MARK] simultaneously when the dog performs the behavior you want.
2. "You are going to get a treat."
  - a. Treat must follow within a few seconds
3. Ends the behavior. In other words the [MARK] lets the dog know that they are done with what they were doing and can come to you for a treat.

All marker training as at least a three step process: Behavior, [MARK], Treat.

1. BEHAVIOR - Dog offers the behavior. You can either wait for the desired behavior (Shaping), or you can lure the dog into the position you desire.
2. [MARK] – you mark the behavior at the EXACT moment it occurs with a clicker or marker word.
3. TREAT. Dog receives incentive to repeat desired behavior.