

How to Train Your Dog to Focus

Introduction Focus is about getting your dog's attention and keeping it. Focus is imperative to training obedience and commanding respect. Your dog will live a lifetime in a world of distractions. To keep him and others safe, you will need to be able to get his attention and hold his focus. Everyday pets need to know how to stay on task and remain focused, but you might also be training a working dog whose job it will be to save lives. Those dogs will need to remain focused in order to do their jobs. No matter the role of the dog in your life, you will need to take on the role of his leader.



Having control over your dog and leading him will be a huge aspect of building the bond between you two. Having your dog focus on command is it part of building that bond.

Defining Tasks Teaching your dog to focus gives him an opportunity to pause and focus his attention on you. Dogs do not inherently have good manners. They must be taught. Anytime you see your dog losing focus in a way that could potentially cause harm or make someone uncomfortable is a great time to use these focus methods, because even though manners aren't something your dog is born with, most people are going to expect a well-mannered dog if they are to be around him.

Getting Started Be sure to train basic commands before you try focus methods. This may take several weeks but be patient and consistent. Focus is not difficult to train, it just requires a lot of repetition and placing yourself in different situations

where your dog varying degrees of distraction to keep him challenged and growing. You will need just a few things the teach your dog to focus:



Treats, A leash to teach him to focus while on walks, A clicker if you clicker train, Patience and time for small training sessions several times a week.

The Watch Me Method

1 Get your dog's attention While walking together, if your dog is distracted, grab his attention by saying his name.

STEP 2 Stand still Plant

yourself firmly without moving until your dog stands calmly as well.

STEP 3 Treat Hold a treat up to your face and use the keywords, 'watch me.'

STEP 4 Attention When you have your dog's attention, give him verbal praise and offer the treat.

STEP 5 Repeat Each time your dog is distracted on your walk, use the 'watch me' tactic to get his attention again.

STEP 6 Practice Continue practicing this method on several walks until your dog gives you his attention every time you use the command 'watch me.'



The Clicker Method

Step 1 Treats Prepare yourself with lots of treats and a clicker.

STEP 2 Entice Toss a treat over your dog's head and behind him. Allow him to get it and eat it.

STEP 3 Eye contact When your dog looks at you after eating the treat, say the word, "focus", click, and give him another treat. Be sure to reward as soon as he makes eye contact with you.

STEP 4 Repeat this about ten times in one training session.

STEP 5 Practice Practice daily for a week or two.

STEP 6 Introduce distractions Once your pup has the behavior mastered, put him in a place with distractions and repeat.

STEP 7 Command only Practice and move toward only using the keyword only without tossing the treat.

STEP 8 Reward Be sure to reward your dog once he makes eye contact with you.

The Wait Method

STEP 1 Leash Starting in your home or your backyard, begin a small walk with your dog on a leash.

STEP 2 Start and Stop Take a few steps with your dog and then stop.

STEP 3 Command Face your dog. With your palm out facing your dog, put your hand up and say the command “wait” while blocking his path forward.

STEP 4 Treat Once your dog stops walking and focuses his attention on you, give him a treat.

STEP 5 Continue walk Wait a few seconds and move a few more steps.

STEP 6 Repeat Repeat the above steps until your dog is used to the command. He should stop and stay still, focused on you when you ask him to wait.

