

The Lure:

A lure is a desirable item that you hold in your hand to guide your dog's head through space. We use the lure when training new behaviors, such as sit and down. The “golden treat” is generally a good lure for teaching dogs.

The Reward:

A Reward is something you use to congratulate your dog for doing the correct thing. When teaching a new behavior, food and treats make excellent rewards. Over time, it is best to also use praise and play as rewards. These are called Life Rewards. A reward can be anything that your dog wants. The important thing is that he wants it!

Jackpot:

A Jackpot is 5-10 treats delivered one after another, coupled with very excited praise. We use jackpot to reward the very best examples of a behavior, or to train particularly difficult behaviors.

How to Lure:

When training a new behavior it is important that the dog is focused on the lure. You must use something of high value to the dog. For some dogs that may be their regular kibble, for others it might need to be bits of hot dog. Whatever you use, your dog must find it more desirable than anything else in the environment.

Treat the lure and your dog's nose like a magnet. If your dog removes his nose from the lure, your job is to get the lure back on the nose as soon as possible. As you are moving your dog's nose through space, move slowly, let your dog sniff and maybe even lick the treat. Your goal is to keep the dog's nose on the lure. Pretend you are on a tightrope. Rather than looking across to the other side of the rope, you need to focus on each step one at a time.

How to Reward:

When first training a new behavior, you will treat 100% of the time for correct responses. **Be sincerely appreciative!** Say “thank you” or “good!” as soon as you get the behavior, and quickly give a treat in order to keep the dog in the position you asked for. For example, if you are asking for a “Down”, get the treat down to his head before he has a chance to get back up! As your dog begins to improve his new skill, you will begin varying the rewards. The best responses will get lots of treats (jackpots!) and playtime and lots of thank you's all at once!

The Rule of 3:

Anytime you get 3 good repetitions of a behavior in a row, you must increase the difficulty by just a little bit. Remember, when you teach 1+1, you don't go straight to long division. Go from A to B, not A to Z.

See back side of page for Step by Step to Teaching & Improving a Skill!

Training a New Behavior Using Lure/Reward & The Rule of Three

Step 1

Lure Behavior with Treat.

Dog Does Behavior.

Reward with Treat and say Thank You.

Repeat. After 3x consecutively getting it right, move on to Step 2.

Step 2

Have treats in both hands.

Lure Behavior with Treat.

Dog Does Behavior.

Reward with Treat coming from NON-luring hand and say Thank You.

Repeat. After 3x consecutively getting it right, move on to Step 3..

Step 3 (Teaching the Hand-Signal)

Hold treats only in NON-luring hand.

Lure Behavior without Treat.

Reward with treat from non-luring hand and say Thank You.

After 3x consecutively getting it right, move on to Step 3.

If dog does not get it right, go back to Step 2.

Step 4

Hold treats only in NON-luring hand.

Using an open hand, recreate the luring motion.

Reward with treat from non-luring hand and say Thank You.

After 3x consecutively getting it right, move on to Step 5.

Step 5

Say the Behavior Name one time, in normal tone of voice. Ex: "Sit".

Wait 1 Mississippi.

Using an open hand, recreate the luring motion, but attempt to make it more subtle (for example, if teaching "Down", don't go all the way down with the hand.

Reward with treat from non-luring hand and say Thank You.

At this stage you will want to begin getting more and more subtle with your hand signals until your dog is responding the verbal cue.

Tip: Make your dog think that you have a treat in the luring hand, even if you don't!

Tip: If you are holding treats in your non-luring hand, keep the hand behind your back.