1-2-3 Walking Game

1-2-3 Walking is a pattern game from Control Unleashed™ by Leslie McDevitt. Predictable patterns can help build confidence for dogs. It can also help them move comfortably past distractions or triggers while keeping their focus on you. Plus, games make learning fun!

1. Stand facing your dog in a low distraction environment.

2. Hold a treat in your fist in front of your dog's nose. Say "Three!" and immediately release the treat. Repeat at least five times.

3. Hold a treat in your fist in front of your dog's nose. Say "Two! Three!" and release the treat. Repeat at least five times.

4. Hold a treat in your fist in front of your dog's nose. Say "One! Two! Three!" and then release the treat. Repeat at least five times.

5. Begin to walk backward (with your dog following you and your fist). Say "One! Two! Three!" as you backup and release the treat after three. Repeat at least five times.

6. Begin to walk forward now, holding your fist and the treat on the side you want your dog on. Count "One! Two! Three!" (still out loud!) and then release the treat to your dog right next to your leg. Aim for feeding the treat right along the seam of your pants. Repeat at least five times.

7. Begin to hold your hand up away from your dog's nose as you count. Bring your hand down on three and release the treat. Practice this stage many times.

8. When ready, begin to add low-level distractions. When your dog notices the distraction, continue counting, and release the treat next to your leg on three. Your dog should orient back to you for the treat on three.

9. As long as your dog continues to successfully ignore or return to you in the presence of the distractions, continue to add more difficult distractions.