

Clicker Basics

Why Use a Clicker?

- The clicker marks the exact moment a desired behavior has occurred and removes doubt for your dog about what it is they are being rewarded for.
- The click is a *unique* and *consistent* sound that stands out among all the sounds we as humans make.

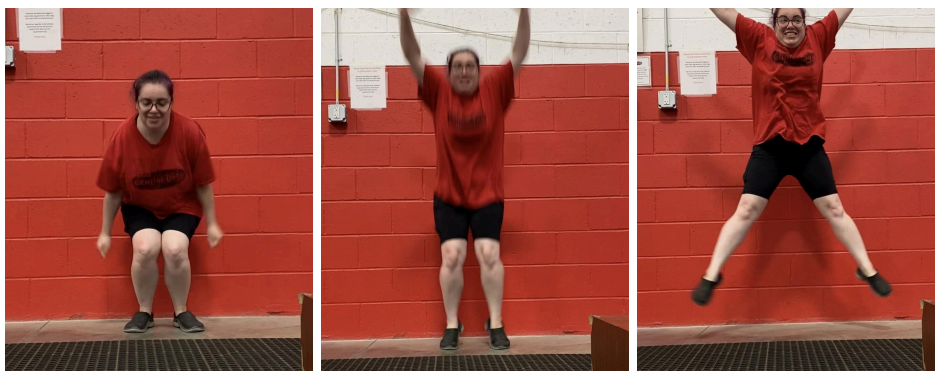
How is the Clicker Used?

- The click marks a behavior you want to see more of – it doesn't tell a dog what to do and it should not be used to get their attention. It is not a whistle or a remote control.
- Click AS your dog is doing the behavior – timing is important! If you click too early or too late, you will be marking the wrong behavior. Think of it like taking a picture of the exact moment a behavior has occurred.
- Every single click MUST be followed by a treat. It doesn't have to be instantaneous, but if you click without delivering a treat, the clicker loses its meaning. Even if you accidentally click, you must deliver a treat.

How Do I Get Started Using a Clicker?

- The first thing you want to do is “charge” the clicker. Do this by simply clicking (once) and immediately delivering a treat to your dog. Repeat this process (one click, one treat) until your dog exhibits signs that they recognize a treat is coming when they hear the click. This might be turning their head in your direction when they hear the click or their ears instantly perking up.
- Once they understand that a click means a treat is coming, use the clicker to mark behaviors you would like to see more of. Deliver a treat every time.
- A verbal click such as “yes” works well if you don't have a clicker available, but the clicker is best and really speeds up the learning process. That being said, a properly timed “yes”, will be better than an improperly timed click.

Think of clicking like taking a picture of someone jumping:



Wind up - too early

Landing - too late

Jump - perfect timing!!