

## Leave It

**Step 1:** Begin with treats in each hand in closed fists. Put both treat-filled fists in front of your dog about a foot and a half apart. Whichever one your dog goes to sniff first, say “leave it” once. The moment your dog looks away or backs away from that hand (whether it’s to look at you, look away, look at the other hand, or just back up and sit), say “yes” and reward from the opposite hand. If your dog is always going to the same hand first each time, try to tempt them towards the other hand so they learn leave it with both. Remember, whichever treat you have told your dog to leave is not the one you give. Always reward from elsewhere.



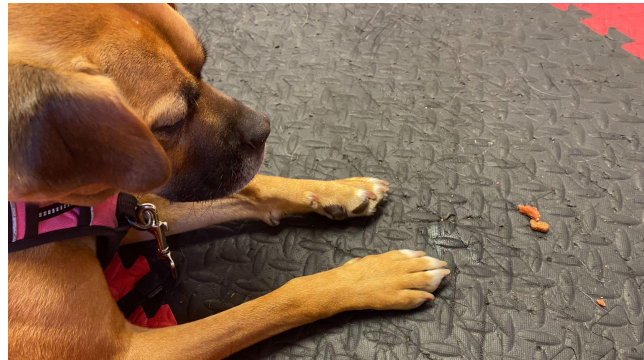
**Step 2:** Switch to one hand in front of your dog. Your other hand can be held behind your back. Once your dog shows interest, say “leave it” once and mark the moment your dog gives up trying to get the treat. Reward using the other hand.



**Step 3:** Once you have said “leave it” and your dog has backed off, begin to open your hand. If your dog goes for it, shut your hand. Be faster than your dog, never let them get the treat! If your dog doesn’t go for it, mark and reward from your other hand. Work on opening your hand flatter and flatter with the treat in your palm. Note: When your dog goes for the treat, close your hand but don’t pull your hand away. It is your dog that should be moving away, not you moving the treat away from your dog.

**Step 4:** Slowly begin to lower your open hand towards the ground. Mark and reward when your dog does not go for it, slowly increasing duration as well. Make sure you are ready to snap your hand shut if your dog attempts to go for it. It's important not to let your dog reward themselves for breaking the leave it.

**Step 5:** Place treat on the floor with your hand over it. Start to lift your hand up off of the treat. Be ready to cover it again if your dog goes for it.



Once your dog is very consistently ignoring treats on the ground, move to step 6.

**Step 6:** Add movement (start with tapping the treat that is on the floor or dropping it from an inch off the ground and slowly increase the difficulty with more movement. Try adding additional treats, rolling the treats, picking them up and putting them back, moving them closer or further, etc. Remember to slowly increase the distractions so that your dog can be successful. We don't want them to fail. Work towards being able to throw the treats dramatically and still have your dog ignore them. You can even try putting treats on your dog's own paws!

**Step 7:** Try asking your dog for another behavior while they are leaving the treats. Try easier behaviors like touch, look, sit, down, etc.

**Step 8:** Try walking your dog past the treats on the ground. Make sure not to go close enough for the dog to grab them. Set them up for success.

**Step 9:** Repeat the above steps with different objects. Remember not to practice leave its with their belongings because we want leave its to be permanent.

