

Charging the Clicker



The purpose of this exercise is to teach your dog (*by association*) that the sound of the click means something wonderful is coming next. Once the clicker is charged, you can use it as a timing aid in training.

The most important thing to remember is to “be a statue” when you click. The click should stand alone and not coincide with reaching for a treat, offering a treat or other “telegraphing” actions. Clicks come *before* all these.

Exercise 1

- Prepare about 10 high value treats and store them in the fridge or other place that doesn't tip your dog off to their existence
- Settle yourself comfortably with your dog near you and a clicker ready
- When he seems to least expect it, click the clicker one time
- Right after the sound, start praising your dog as you head over to the fridge. Give him a nice generous treat from your store, then resume your day
- Several times per day, at random times, repeat the process: click the clicker and then happy talk your dog all the way to a fabulous treat

Exercise 2

- Prepare 20 treats and store them in a bait pouch or zip lock baggie in your pocket
- Get your clicker and sit down to read, watch TV or work on your computer for a while, until your dog gives up interest in your bag of goodies
- When he's settled down, click the clicker and then give him one treat
- A minute or so later, do it again: click followed by treat
- Repeat at random intervals between 5 and 60 seconds until your stash is gone

Your clicker is now charged!

What if He's Afraid?

If your dog shies away from the click or leaves, stop charging. Muffle the clicker (wrap it in a towel or thick cloth until you can barely hear it) and begin again. As he begins to respond to the muffled sound by looking for the treat, gradually unwrap the clicker.