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## TEACHING A STEP UP

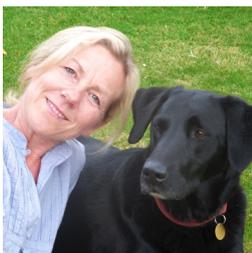


Training a parrot is relatively easy because they are highly intelligent and learn quickly. However, remember to take your time. Be mindful that birds that have been re-homed will often be traumatised and may need time to settle. In these cases let them acclimatise to their new surroundings and don't rush things.

The Step up is a command is a good basic training technique. It enables you to retrieve your bird safely but also helps build mutual trust.

1. Parrots tend to respond better when they are placed at lower levels. Therefore begin training with them positioned in front of you and below eye level.
2. Make sure their cage is out of sight and chose a room where there are few distractions and places to hide
3. The best place to ask for the step up is on the hand. For some heavy species like the Macaw, the forearm might be preferred. Remember though, the elbow should be held below the shoulder to prevent them climbing up. Bites from the shoulder location can be dangerous!
4. For birds that have a history of biting, use a T perch to begin with. You can use a gauntlet and cover your forearm with a towel but make sure it is well padded.
5. Calmly, place your hand, arm or T perch very gently against the breast, above the legs and ask for the "Step Up"
6. Pressure applied to the chest should help your bird to step up.
7. In the early stages of training, even a gesture in the right direction should be followed up with praise and maybe even a treat. Save their absolute favourite though for a proper step up
8. Try to make the "Step up" a regular part of your parrots routine. Ask for it at least once daily. This will help in the practical sense but also reinforce good behaviour.

World Parrot Trust <https://www.parrots.org/>



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