



## TEACHING TO SETTLE

This training technique will help to change the dog's mood so that you can put a calm state on cue. It can also be done at the end of a play session so that the dog knows when play time is finished. Once your dog has learned the training, you can use it in lots of situations. This can be extremely useful for highly reactive dogs.

- 🐾 Get a toy that your dog likes and one that you can join in and play with e.g. ball, tug toy, Frisbee etc...
- 🐾 Take a food pot or bum bag and fill with small tasty treats
- 🐾 Take your dog into the garden calmly
- 🐾 Ask the dog to sit and give 5-10 food rewards & praise (clicks if using)
- 🐾 Now start playing with the dog – A signal such as 'Play' can be used to signal this.
- 🐾 Play and get really excited.
- 🐾 After about one minute (before the dog gets over excited) become very calm and stop the game using your 'Ah Ah' command.
- 🐾 Ask the dog to lie down using a verbal cue or signal - 'Calm' or 'Settle'.
- 🐾 Whilst the dog is responding give 5 -20 clicks and rewards
- 🐾 Don't start to play again until the dog is calm.
- 🐾 When you are ready to start play again give the play signal as before and start the process again.
- 🐾 For several minutes keep alternating between play and settle/calm with the praise/ click - treats still being used as a reward for calm behaviour.
- 🐾 Finish the game by encouraging the dog to be calm for 10-20 rewards and then offer a small hide chew that will occupy him/her for a few minutes. This enables the dog to end the game in a calm state and anticipating a chew rather than another bout of play.

Regular practice will ensure that your dog quickly responds to the signal being given. Once the settle/calm signal has been learned, this can be used in other situations when your dog becomes excited/ agitated. Gradually the treats and clicks can be phased out but not until the behaviour is consistent.

As with all training it does make sense to keep following a training regime from time to time to ensure that the learning is topped up and maintained.



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