

Teaching Your Dog Watch Me

Step One:

Teaching your dog to look at you when you ask is the foundation of all training. Without this focus, teaching other commands will be impossible.

To start, encourage your dog to make eye contact: hold a treat in your hand and use it as a lure—move it from your dog's nose straight to your nose. As soon as your dog makes eye contact, say "Yes!" and give a treat. Repeat several times. Do not use any words yet.

Step Two:

Next, combine the cue and the action. Say your dog's name a second before you lure. As soon as your dog makes eye contact, say "Yes!" and reward with a treat. Repeat several times. Now, start adding the cue: say "Watch me" before you lure, and continue to practice.

Step Three:

The last step is increasing duration and proofing the behavior adding challenges. 1. Work up to multiple seconds of holding eye contact. 2. Slowly add simple distractions. Add a distraction by dropping a treat on the floor. Call your dog and say "Watch me." If your dog goes after the treat, don't repeat their name yourself. Use your hand or foot to cover the treat while using your other hand to lure eye contact. Teach your dog to respond to their name under a variety of situations. 3. Work on this skill in other places, such as at the park .



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