

ELEMENT DOG TRAINING

Common Training Terms:

- **Arousal** – Refers to your dog's level of responsiveness. Many factors of life contribute to a dog's arousal state including excitement, fear, play, frustration, happiness, pain, etc.
- **Capturing** – The process of marking and rewarding a behavior that occurs naturally for the dog or does without being prompted
- **Counter-Conditioning** – Changing the association that your dog has with an item by pairing it with something new.
- **Criteria** – The arbitrary set of behaviors pre-determined by the owner to identify whether or not a response is acceptable or not. Acceptable behaviors should be rewarded. Criteria starts easy and then the difficulty is increased (criteria is not a Goal)
- **Cue** – Signal given to elicit a specific behavior
- **Desensitization** – Exposing the dog in a gradual manner to a trigger or entity they react to in an undesirable fashion. Exposures are done in a controlled environment and at an intensity that allows the dog to process the trigger without reacting.
- **Extinction** – The process of eliminating a behavior by removing all reinforcers
- **Extinction Burst** – A stronger more intense outburst of a behavior going through extinction. Not uncommon to see in an extinction protocol. Can indicate that the dog is learning and frustrated and is trying to determine what methods will work to get a reinforcer.
- **Fading a Lure** – is the process of teaching the dog to perform a behavior without the lure present
- **Fluency** – Means the dog performs the desired behavior correctly, smoothly, and without hesitation
- **Generalized Behavior** – A behavior that is consistently performed in a variety of environments

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- **Goal** – The desired end state for a specific behavior or activity
- **Hand Signals** – The unique movement of the hand (or body) associated with a behavior
- **Introducing the verbal cue** – Introducing a verbal cue is typically done after the dog has established some fluency in a new behavior. Starting too soon with a word/verbal cue can desensitize the dog to that word and can weaken the association of it to the behavior.
- **Life Reward** – Utilizing everyday items to reward behavior. This includes greeting people or dogs, getting play time outside, chasing a stick, or a free sniff session on a walk. Everything that your dog enjoys can be used as a life reward.
- **Lure** – An item that the dog will follow. Food and toys are two very common lures.
- **Management** – Tools and techniques used or put in place to prevent dogs from performing unwanted behaviors or from experiencing undue stress. Crates are a classic example of a management technique used during house training.
- **Marker** – A word, noise, or click that is used at the instance a desired/requested behavior occurs.
- **Phasing a Lure/Hand Signal** – The process of eliminating the lure or hand signal to get a behavior on a verbal cue only. Chaining items is most successful way: Verbal Cue -> Hand Signal -> Lure
- **Prompt** – Extra noises, gestures, or movements used to encourage the dog to respond to a cue
- **Punishment** – Anything that will make a behavior less likely to occur again in the future
- **Reinforcement** – Anything that will make a behavior more likely to occur again in the future
- **Reward** – A “prize” or item given to the dog for successfully performing a desired behavior. Like lures, food and toys are common. Remember that people, praise, toys, and affection can also be rewards.

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- **Shaping** – The process of using incremental steps that build on each other to create a desired behavior
- **Threshold** – An arbitrary line that describes your dog's emotional state. Under Threshold is where your dog is able to control their own behavior. Over Threshold is where they are not able to control their behavior and their base animal instincts drive their decision making
- **Trigger** – Is an item, person, or animal that precedes an action or behavior in your dog
- **Trigger Stacking** – An accumulation of multiple triggers. When enough triggers are stacked it can put a dog over threshold and prevent them from being in a state where they can learn.

For more terms and definitions:

<https://www.vetstreet.com/our-pet-experts/dog-training-a-to-z-brief-glossary-of-terms>

