

ELEMENT DOG TRAINING

Drop It

- Definition
 - Teaches your dog to drop whatever is in its mouth
- Purpose
 - Provides a safety mechanism for if/when your dog picks up something it shouldn't eat or chew on
- Process
 - There are 2 methods to teach drop it. The "Trade" (recommended) or the "Loss of Interest" method.
 - Trade
 - The Trade method utilizes an object to exchange for the one they are holding
 - Find something safe to play with – like a ball
 - Present a reward that is more interesting than what is in the dog's mouth – like a treat or an identical toy
 - When the dog drops the object **mark and reward** the behavior. Continue to play with the dropped ball
 - Once the dog realizes that dropping the ball extends the play session, he will readily drop the ball for you
 - Loss of Interest
 - This method involves removing the excitement from the item in the dog's mouth.
 - This requires using a toy large enough to grab
 - The dog is interested in the toy because it represents excitement. So as an owner we will grasp the toy and make it inactive
 - Eventually the dog will let go of the toy and we will **mark and reward** the instant they let's go
 - Rewards other than the toy can be used each time the dog successfully drops the toy but the play session should continue as part of the reward
 - Once the dog is reliably dropping an item start to add in the verbal cue, "Drop," right before they drop the item
 - Generalize the behavior by working on Drop with a variety of items



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- [YouTube video Drop It](#)
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QlDipDt-lmg>
- Common mistakes when teaching Drop It:
 - Consistently ending play sessions immediately after a drop or without rewarding the drop. If the dog associates dropping an item with playtime ending, they will avoid dropping the item in order to facilitate more play time
 - Not making an item go entirely dead. It's human nature to try to pull a toy out of a drop's mouth when teaching drop but by creating tension it keeps the toy "alive" and encourages the dog to continue playing

