

# ELEMENT DOG TRAINING

## Establishing a Marker

- Definition
  - A Marker is a word or noise utilized to “mark” when a dog has done something correctly.
- Purpose
  - Acts as a reinforcer which provides us time to deliver the formal reward.
- Process
  - Identify a marker – we’ll use a verbal “Yes.”
  - Identify a high value food reward – Your dog will determine what is high value but chopped up hot dog is a good starting point.
  - Place a handful of treats in one hand. Position yourself in front of your dog. Say “Yes” and then deliver a treat with the opposite hand. Repeat until your dog looks excited when it hears the marker word.
  - Transition the treats to a treat pouch. Position yourself in front of your dog and say “Yes” then deliver a treat. Repeat until your dog looks at the hand delivering treat when it hears the marker word.
  - Position yourself to either side or behind your dog when you say the marker word then reward. Repeat until your dog turns to look at you when it hears the marker word.
  - Generalize the behavior. Take the treats off your person, locate them away from the dog, and incorporate lower value treats. Start close, like a nearby table and work up to treats in another room. Start with high value treats and phase into low value treats (like kibble). Say the marker, move to where the treats are located, and deliver the treat.
- [YouTube video of Establishing a Marker Word](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w1e2L2yKFQ)
  - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w1e2L2yKFQ>
- Common mistakes when establishing a marker:
  - Starting to deliver the treat before the marker.

