



MILO'S PLAYBOOK



Play is our brain's favourite way of learning

w w w . b u s y p a w z . c o m . a u



FUNDAMENTALS

Ditch The Bowl - use Milo's daily food to reinforce wanted behaviours, help her make good decisions, play games to build confidence & promote calmness. (see Ditch the Bowl eBook)

Crate training - this will be a super useful skill for management but also super valuable in helping Milo switch off and empty her bucket. (see Crate Training eBook)

Desensitise triggers whether it's the horses, sheep, chickens or cars we want a NEUTRAL response. use her food strategically to promote calmness when you can predicts things are going to get crazy e.g. give her a bone at feed time or if things happen unexpectedly have treats ready for a scatter feed or to lure her into her crate. It is important for her not to practise those behaviours so if it happens, interrupt it as soon as possible. Also be clear on whats acceptable and what's not - watching the sheep is ok, but barking at them is not. Be consistent.

Mental Stimulation - Mil has a smart, working breed brain that needs to be kept active to avoid boredom and her creating her own fun! Make her food fun and engaging, teach her tricks, set up toy/food treasure hunts in the backyard, let her rip up boxes, give her puzzles and of course play!

Control the controllable - you cannot always control the environment so instead work with Milo to build skills so that she can move away/feel safe and focus on something else. If you are not 100% sure she will be able to do something that is asked of her e.g. eat a bone while you feed the horses, use management to help her out (lead/crate etc)

Clear communication - be very clear with Milo on what you expect. 'Stop it, stop barking' etc is too vague - 'In your crate' or even a scatter feed will be a lot easier for Milo to to understand that you want her to stop barking. If she ignores you, she may not understand what you want or her bucket is too full so help her out.

Calmness Strategies - at this stage management and calmness are the two things you need to concentrate on. Use the majority (if not all) of Milo's food for this each day.

Your energy! Our dogs mirror our energy so it is extremely important for us to be mindful of our own energy around our dogs. When you are working with the animals, you want Milo to be calm, so you need to be calm. If you need to stop and go pop her in her crate, do it calmly. If you are feeling stressed or anxious, that is not the time to try something new - choose something you know she can deal with

Your bucket! It is EXTREMELY important not only to be aware of Milo's stress bucket but everyone's stress bucket - if things are getting stressful, do what you have to (as calmly as possible) to give yourself a few moments to empty your bucket.

LET THE GAMES BEGIN!

Following are games to play with Milo - always start easy and increase the difficulty by increasing the duration, distance and distraction. ***If Milo struggles with a particular game - THAT is the game she needs to play!***

There are A LOT of games to choose from - don't overwhelm yourself and try play them all! Choose 3-4 to start with and gradually grow your repertoire.

Remember, it is not only Milo who is learning how to play, but you too! It takes coordination and practise so be patient with yourself as you learn :-)

Reward Nothing- whenever Milo chooses calmness or makes a good choice e.g. goes and lies down in her crate/bed, calmly give her a treat. Do not worry if it unsettles her - keep capturing those moments and growing that tunnel in her brain.

Luring with food - have a small treat in your hand (hold it firmly between your thumb and palm) and get Milo to follow your hand from left to right. Be sure to keep the food right in front of her nose and move slowly - release the food before she loses interest - start off with a short distance and work your way up. Watch my video for tips [here](#)

THERE'S A GAME FOR THAT

CATCH

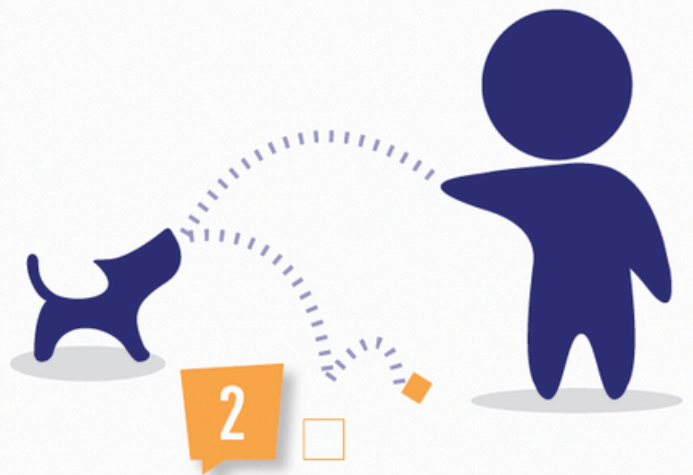
Helps Boost: Focus, Proximity, Confidence

HELPS WITH...

- ✓ Recall
- ✓ Walk on the leash
- ✓ Barking at passers by
- ✓ Reactivity



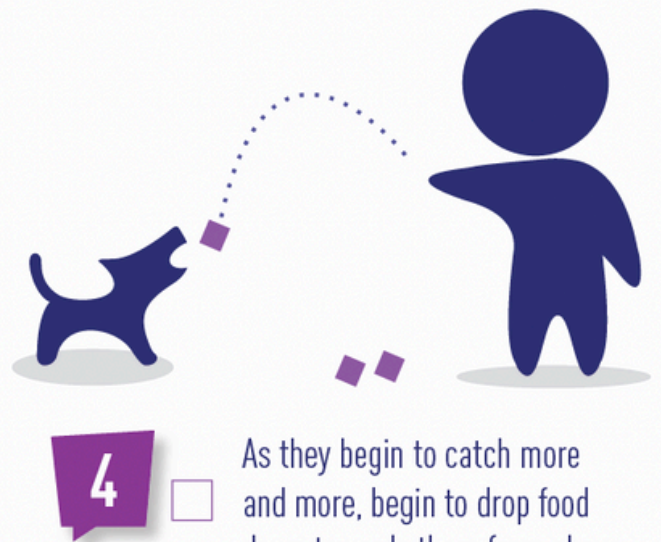
Start with a piece of food that's easy for them to see and easy for you to handle



Toss food towards your dog. Make it very informal and fun, if they drop it don't worry



Reinforce them for EFFORT. If they try REWARD IT



As they begin to catch more and more, begin to drop food down towards them from above



They can catch more than food....play catch with toys too

THERE'S A GAME FOR THAT

FOOD FUN

HELPS WITH...

- ✓ Engagement
- ✓ Focus
- ✓ Reactivity
- ✓ Relationship

Daily food amount



1



Use your dogs daily food amount for any games you play across each day

CATCH



FLICK



ROLL



CHASE

2

Play with your food...



3



No rules...No pressure
Catch them doing something right eg...

CHOOSE YOU



NOT JUMPING



CHOOSING A BED



*This will be super helpful for when she comes inside - use her bed and reward her ON the bed.
(you can use a crate instead of a bed)

THERE'S A GAME FOR THAT

BOUNDARY GAMES

GROWING CALMNESS

- HELPS WITH...
- ✓ Recall
 - ✓ Chase
 - ✓ Saying hello to everyone
 - ✓ Relationship

You will need

DOG + YOU + FOOD + BOUNDARY

1

Warm-up with hopping on and releasing off the boundary.

2

Sloooow delivery of food!

Begin to grow CALMNESS on the bed. As you slow yourself down and remain calm, your dog will become calmer too.

3

Vary how and when you feed, ping-ponging the delivery of food to the bed.

Wait a few seconds between delivering one piece of food and the next, then deliver one or two pieces a little closer together. Look for moments of relaxed behaviour and feed those too.

4

Food fiddle – play with the food in your hands. If your dog remains on the boundary when you move around, deliver food to the bed.

5

Begin to pair Step 4 with real-life distractions. Reward your dog for CHOOSING to stay put when distractions are at a distance. If playing outside, use your lead to keep your dog safe.

- HELPS BOOST...
- ✓ Calmness
 - ✓ Confidence
 - ✓ Self-control
 - ✓ Focus

*Magic hand is dropping food to Milo while she is in a 'heel' position - this is the next level of catch and will help with loose lead walking (with or without a lead attached!)

THERE'S A GAME FOR THAT

MAGIC HAND ON THE MOVE

HELPS WITH...

- ✓ On lead walks
- ✓ Relationship
- ✓ Reactivity

You will need



DOG + YOU + FOOD

1 ✓ **CATCH!**



Warm-up first with Catch and stationary Magic Hand.

2 **CATCH!**



Begin to shift your weight forwards and backwards. Drop a piece of food if your dog follows your movements. Don't be in a rush to move on from this step!

3 □ **CATCH!**



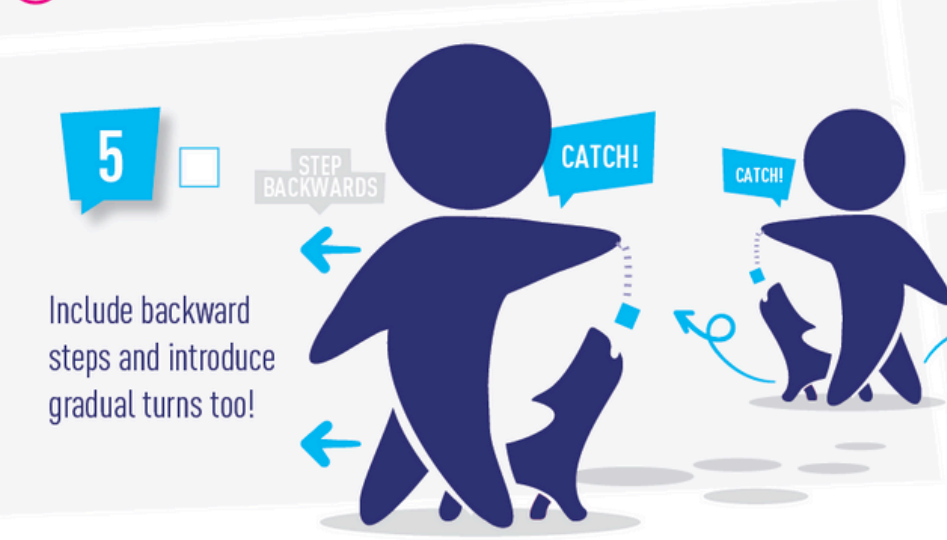
As your dog begins to mirror your movements and catch the food, take a step forward. Drop a piece of food for them to catch while on the move.

4 □ **CATCH!**



Add more steps forward, so your dog is catching food as you both move.

5 □ **STEP BACKWARDS** **CATCH!** **CATCH!**



Include backward steps and introduce gradual turns too!

HELPS BOOST...

- ✓ Focus
- ✓ Optimism
- ✓ Confidence
- ✓ Thinking in arousal
- ✓ Proximity

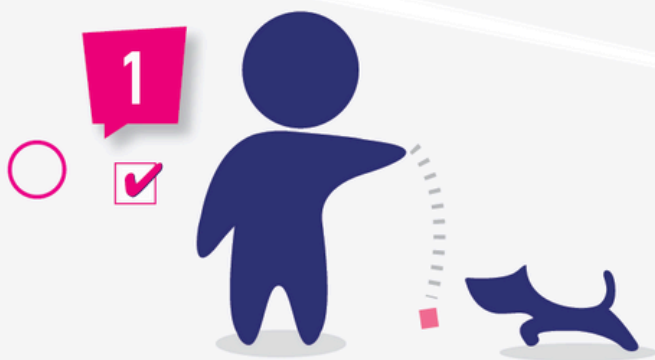
THERE'S A GAME FOR THAT

ORIENTATION GAME

HELPS WITH...

- ✓ Recall
- ✓ Walking on leash
- ✓ Listening to you

Helps Boost: Disengagement, Focus and Value for Proximity



Start this game by dropping a piece of food on the ground. Allow them to eat the food



And when they TURN towards you - mark that moment with a word like 'yes' or a click with a clicker, and drop another piece of food away from you



Repeat a few times continuing to 'mark' that choice to orientate back towards you each time



Add a leash and play the same game



then take the game outside and play too

THERE'S A GAME FOR THAT

DISENGAGE GAME

HELPS WITH...

- ✓ Reactivity
- ✓ Recall
- ✓ Hunting
- ✓ Chasing
- ✓ Retrieve

You will need



DOG

+

YOU

+

FOOD



1



Throw a piece of food away from you and let your dog get it.

When they orientate back to you, place lots of pieces of food close to you.



2



Repeat Step 1 a few times.



3



Add a distraction away from you (e.g. a bowl of food, toy or person). Throw one piece of food towards your distraction and reward closer to you when your dog chooses to disengage from the distraction. Don't make it too hard!



4



Add different levels of distraction.

Have a helper available in case they fail so they can prevent access to the distraction. If no helper, stay close so that you can prevent access by covering it with your hand, etc.



5



Play in proximity to real distractions at home or outside.



HELPS BOOST...

- ✓ Disengagement
- ✓ Proximity
- ✓ Confidence
- ✓ Optimism

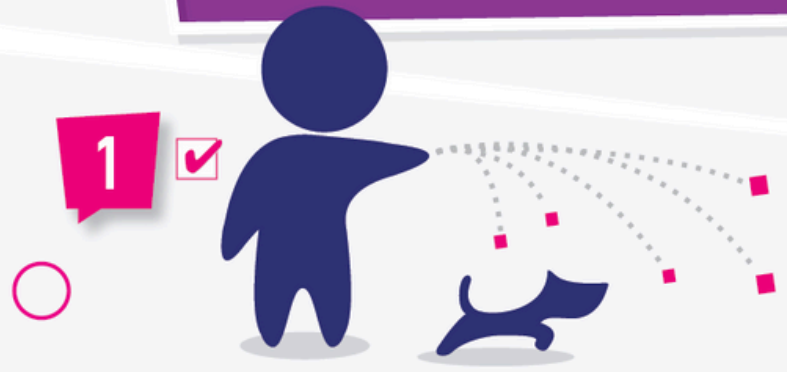


*Get her sniffing - this will help empty her bucket and keep her brain focussed - use this when you get home or any other times when you need a quick distraction

THERE'S A GAME FOR THAT

SCATTER FEEDING

- HELPS WITH...**
- ✓ Lowering stress levels
 - ✓ Reactivity
 - ✓ A dog that worries
 - ✓ Relationship building



Scatter feeding is a simple but effective strategy to use in different situations. It lowers excitement levels, allows us to achieve better focus and a calmer behaviour with one or multiple dogs, as well as growing tolerance of frustration.



Scatter feeding when you arrive home is a great way to lower excitement levels.



Entering a vehicle can be an exciting event. Lower the excitement levels by scatter feeding into the cage or crates as your dog enters the vehicle.



Taking dogs out of a vehicle can send energy levels skyward again. Lower the excitement levels by scatter feeding as your dog exits the vehicle.



Life is exciting, and daily distractions can increase energy levels. Scatter feed away from distractions to regain focus with one or multiple dogs.

- HELPS BOOST...**
- ✓ Arousal up/down
 - ✓ Calmness
 - ✓ Thinking in arousal
 - ✓ Optimism
 - ✓ Grit and tolerance of frustration
- 

THERE'S A GAME FOR THAT

NOSE TOUCH

HELPS WITH...

- ✓ Optimism
- ✓ Retrieve
- ✓ Focus

This is a great game with many practical uses. We love to play this game to get the process of retrieve started. If your dog has an amazing nose touch, they are more likely to be able to figure out how to deliver an object to your hand. This game can grow confidence, as well as optimism.



With your dog's attention on you, extend your palm out to the side at your dog's eye level, perhaps 2-3 inches away from their nose. If they move toward your hand and touch your palm with their nose, say "Yes" and then toss a piece of food away. Remove your hand and as soon as they have eaten their reward and turn back, offer your hand again.

If, for some reason, your dog is hesitant to touch their nose to your palm, that's okay. Offer your hand and then with your other hand deposit a piece of food into your palm. This should encourage them to interact. Quickly fade this out once their confidence in moving toward your hand grows. Alternate hands and then, when your puppy is doing really well, delay your "Yes" and reward to see if they'll press even harder.

*This will help Milo control her impulsiveness and also teach her patience and self control

THERE'S A GAME FOR THAT

AEROPLANE FEEDING

HELPS WITH...

- ✓ Jumping up
- ✓ Counter-surfing
- ✓ Barking at visitors or passers-by

1



You will need



YOUR DOG

+

TASTY FOOD (aeroplanes)

+

YOU

+

BOUNDARY (optional)

2

TAKE IT SLOW!



Use a boundary (a bed, mat or anything your dog can sit or stand on). SLOOOOWLY deliver a piece of food (aeroplane) in your hand to your dog's mouth.

3

If your dog gets excited or tries to grab the food, the aeroplane reverses, and the food moves away from your dog.



4

GO AGAIN!



When your dog settles, SLOOOOWLY deliver the food again. If there is no snatching or grabbing, give the food to your dog.

5

This game helps make your dog much more thoughtful and calm around things that excite them. SLOOOOW delivery is vital when playing this game.



HELPS BOOST...

- ✓ Listening to you
- ✓ Recall
- ✓ Impulse control
- ✓ Patience

THERE'S A GAME FOR THAT

MOUSE GAME

HELPS WITH...

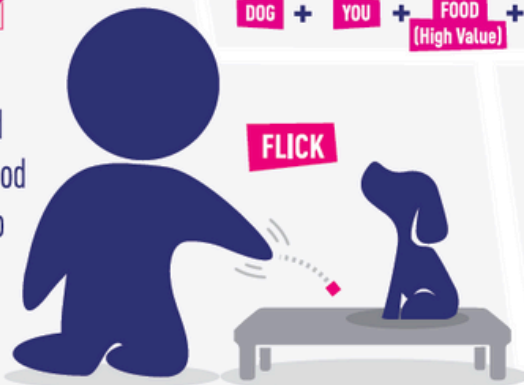
- ✓ Chasing
- ✓ Recall
- ✓ Counter-surfing
- ✓ Jumping up

You will need



1

Get your dog engaged by delivering some food to the boundary (or to your dog if you're playing on the floor).



2

Place a small handful of food in front of your dog, on the floor or on the edge of the boundary.



If they show impulse control, deliver pieces of food from the pile. If your dog tries to get the food, cage it with your hand.

3



While the food is caged you might find your dog sniffs, paws or licks your hand. Wait for that moment of back off before you reward with another piece of food from the pile.

4



Vary your delivery. Feed straight to your dog's mouth, flick food from the pile or occasionally release your dog to "get it!"

5



Increase the difficulty by keeping the food uncovered for longer, playing with it before feeding or using higher value food.

HELPS BOOST...

- ✓ Desire
- ✓ Self-control
- ✓ Focus
- ✓ Connection



PLANT POT PRISON

LEVELS 1 & 2

Boost Engagement & Relationship

1



You will need



PLANT POT
(OR SIMILAR)

+

YOU

+

DOG

+

FOOD

Allow your dog
to sniff and
investigate



Food under plant pot

2



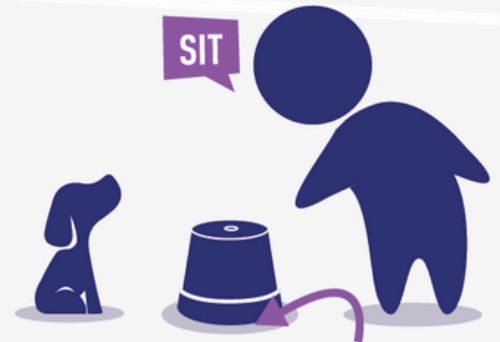
Place a piece of food beneath the plant pot

3



As soon as your dog shows some self control...
(stepping back, a sit or similar) lift the plant pot and
allow your dog to access the food. Repeat a few times

SIT



Food under plant pot

4



Repeat step 2...while they are sniffing ask for
a simple behaviour they know well eg. 'Sit'.
When they do...allow them to get the piece of food

5



GET IT

REPEAT x 3



Repeat steps 2,3 & 4 a few times and remember to
balance control with allowing them to get it too....



THERE'S A GAME FOR THAT

PROXIMITY VORTEX

Helps Boost: Engagement, Disengagement, Value for proximity

- HELPS WITH...
- ✓ Recall
 - ✓ Walking on leash
 - ✓ Relationship

1

You will need

YOU + DOG + LOWER VALUE FOOD + HIGHER VALUE FOOD

2

LOWER VALUE FOOD

Place lower value food out

3

HIGHER VALUE FOOD

When they orientate back to you...deliver higher value food

4

LOWER VALUE FOOD

Place lower value food out

5

HIGHER VALUE FOOD

Deliver higher value food on returning to you...watch them return to you faster each time!

THERE'S A GAME FOR THAT

THE CONE GAME

- HELPS WITH...**
- ✓ Novel situations
 - ✓ Reactivity
 - ✓ Visits to the vet
 - ✓ Relationship

1

You will need

DOG + **YOU** + **FOOD** + **A CONE**

2

YES!

Present the cone to your dog... As your dog moves towards the cone mark 'yes' and reward with your other hand away from the cone

3

YES!

As they move towards the cone again 'mark' and reward movement closer and closer to the cone, each time still feed away from the cone

4

YES!

Present the cone and see if they can put their nose into the cone. Mark 'yes' and toss a piece of food away from the cone. Build duration up gradually

5

YES!

Switch the cone for another item to generalise to other things... a muzzle, a harness, a plant pot.

- HELPS BOOST...**
- ✓ Confidence
 - ✓ Optimism
 - ✓ Flexibility
 - ✓ Value for proximity
 - ✓ Focus

*Start with one box on it's side and work up from there - this may be more for fun as Milo is pretty confident!

THERE'S A GAME FOR THAT

CARDBOARD CHAOS

HELPS WITH...

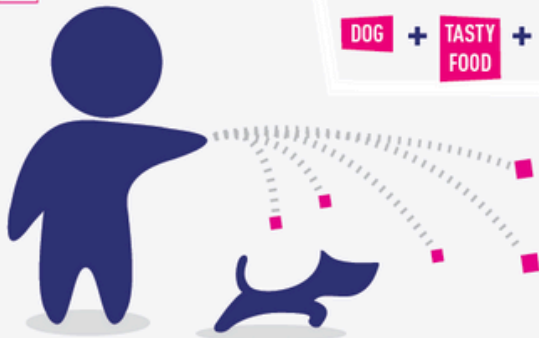
- ✓ Reactivity
- ✓ Being cool with novelty
- ✓ Recall

You will need



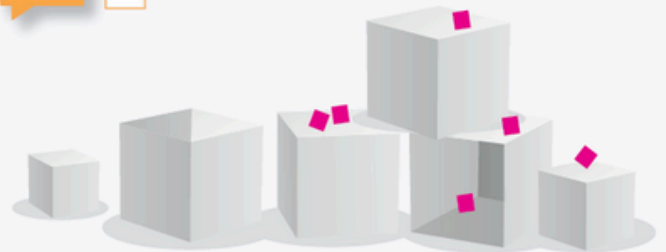
Build your cardboard chaos, be creative. Include spaces to go under, over, on and through. Scatter some food among the boxes

1

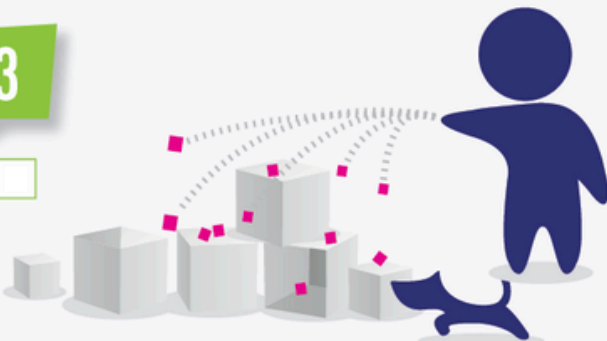


Make sure your dog is ok with scatter-feeding first

2



3



Allow them to investigate. As they investigate scatter more food amongst the boxes without them noticing

4

Observe carefully. Notice their reactions. Are they comfortable and confident?



5



Build gradually to make sure they are confident. Every now and then call them to you and then send back in to the cardboard.

HELPS BOOST...

- ✓ Confidence
- ✓ Optimism
- ✓ GRIT
- ✓ Flexibility



THERE'S A GAME FOR THAT

NOISE BOX

HELPS WITH...

- ✓ Novelty situations
- ✓ Noise reactivity
- ✓ Fear reactivity

You will need



1



Start with your empty box. Drop food near the box. Reinforce any slight interaction with the box.

2



As your dog's confidence grows, drop food into the box. Hold the box to keep it steady to avoid your dog becoming frightened.

3

Once your dog is in the box, keep dropping food into it to build confidence.



4

Add a few safe items to the box...



Items can be a mixture of paper, foil, bubble wrap, plastic bottles, etc. Add food to the box when they choose to get in and explore. If your dog is cautious, one item is enough to begin with.

5

As your dog's confidence grows, add more items with different noise levels. Keep adding food into the noise box to encourage foraging and noise making.



HELPS BOOST...

- ✓ Confidence
- ✓ Resilience
- ✓ Grit



THERE'S A GAME FOR THAT

AROUSAL UP, AROUSAL DOWN

HELPS WITH...

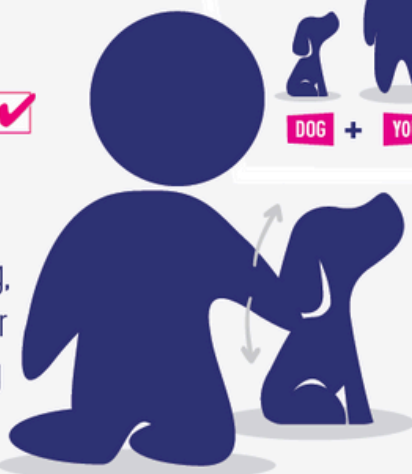
- ✓ Calmness
- ✓ A dog who can listen
- ✓ Reactivity

You will need



1

Begin by calmly stroking, massaging your dog. Everything is relaxed.



2

GET IT,
GET IT!

Bring the arousal up with high energy play.



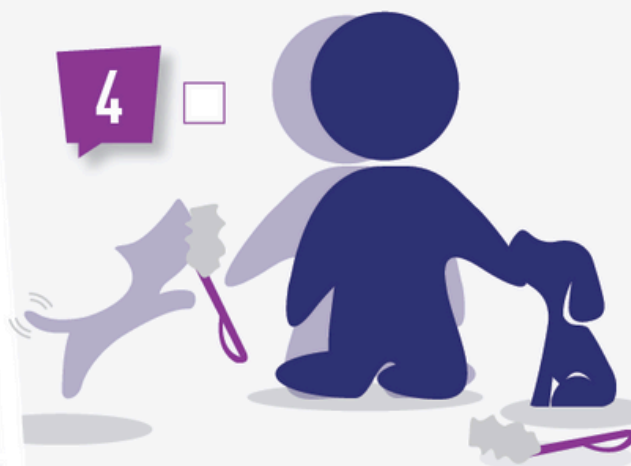
3

Back to arousal down – let your dog keep the toy and return to calm stroking and gentle massage.



4

Keep rotating around exciting play and back to calm strokes and gentle massage.



5

Keep sessions super short! Training should be a fun time, not a long time.



HELPS BOOST...

- ✓ Calmness
- ✓ Thinking in arousal
- ✓ Self-control
- ✓ Confidence



THERE'S A GAME FOR THAT

TOY SWITCH

HELPS WITH...

- ✓ Relationship
- ✓ Fitness
- ✓ Obedience

You will need



DOG

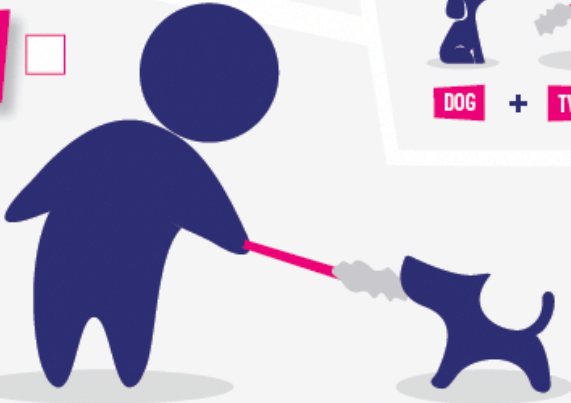
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TWO TOYS

+

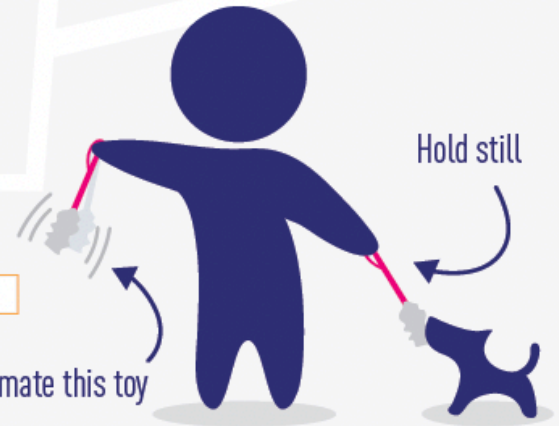
YOU

1



Engage in a game of tug...

2



Then, animate this toy

Hold still

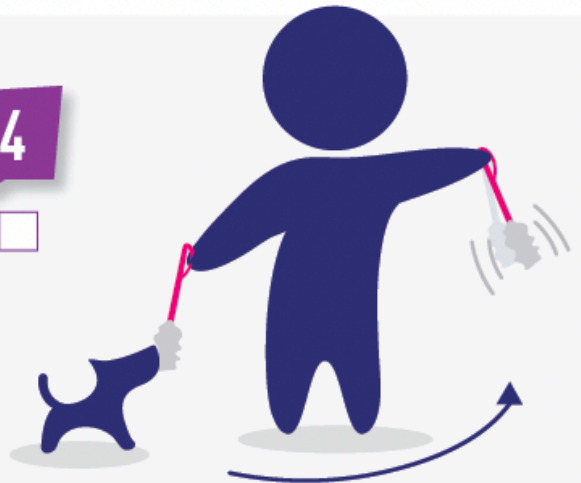
After a short few moments hold the first toy still & bring a second toy out and animate the second toy

3



Your dog should switch to the toy that's 'alive'... (It might take a few moments)

4



Animate the second toy after a short play, hold that toy still and animate the other toy...
BRING ALIVE!

5



Allow your dog to play for a few moments with the animated toy & switch again... play this until they happily switch between toys.

HELPS BOOST...

- ✓ Confidence
- ✓ Focus
- ✓ Thinking in arousal
- ✓ Self control



*You can add movement when Milo gets good at this - this is a great skill to use this when you need to get her 'under control' or in a safe spot.

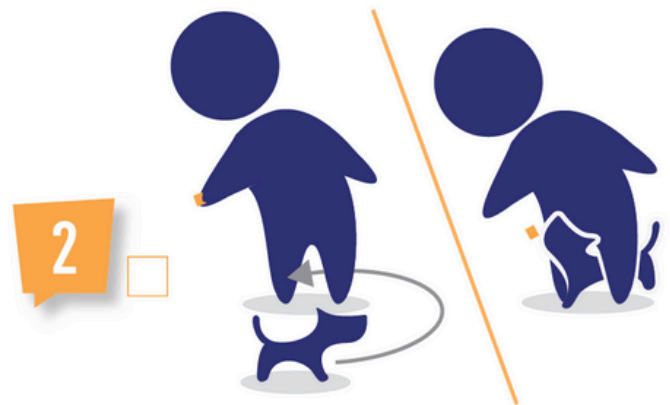
THERE'S A GAME FOR THAT

MIDDLE & SIDE

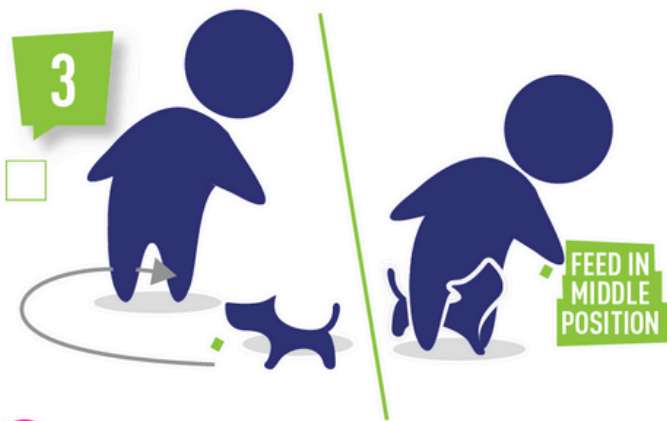
Helps Boost: confidence, Value for Proximity
Arousal Concepts

HELPS WITH...

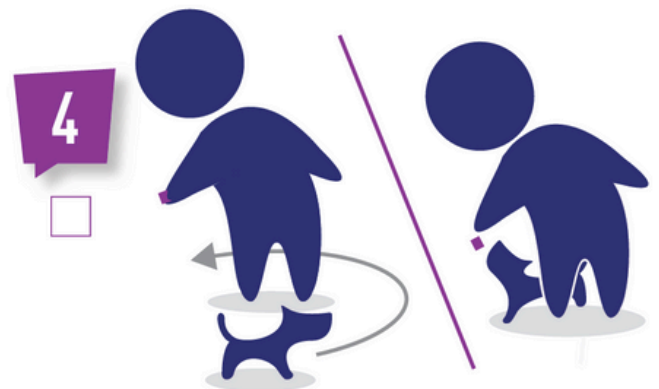
- ✓ Reactivity
- ✓ Recall
- ✓ Listening to you.



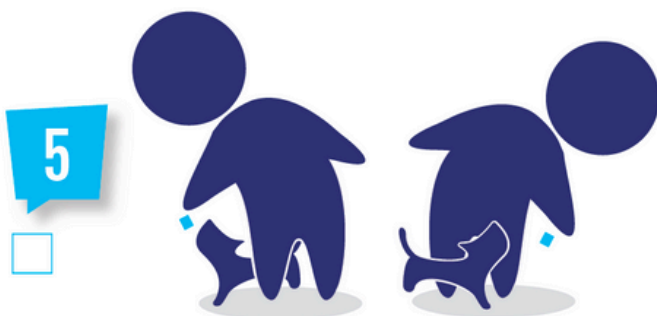
With your dog in front of you lure your dog around your leg & into a 'Middle' position between your leg, feed in the 'middle' position



Toss a piece of food away & as your dog returns lure again around your leg



As an alternative to middle you can lure round to your side & feed in position at your side... feed in that position



Remember to play the game in both directions and both sides

THERE'S A GAME FOR THAT

LEG WEAVES

HELPS WITH...

- ✓ Recall
- ✓ Lead walking
- ✓ Greeting without jumping up

You will need



DOG

+



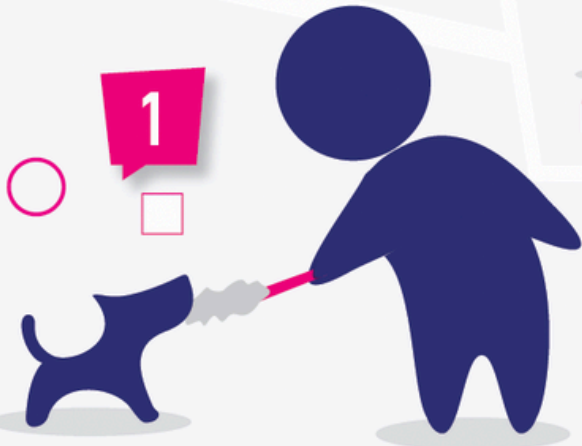
FOOD OR TOY

+

YOU

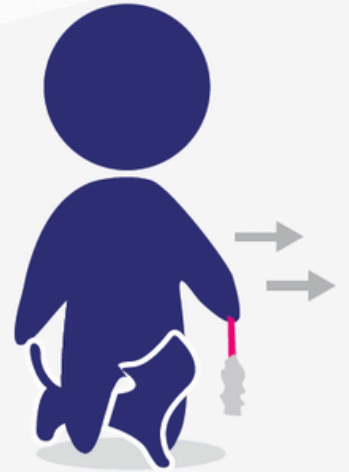


1



Warm up with a short play with the toy

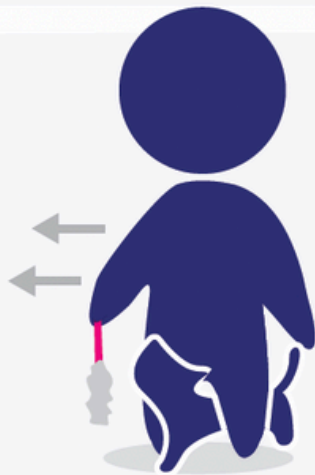
2



Step forward with one leg & present your toy behind your leg, let your dog go through your legs to get the toy... play!

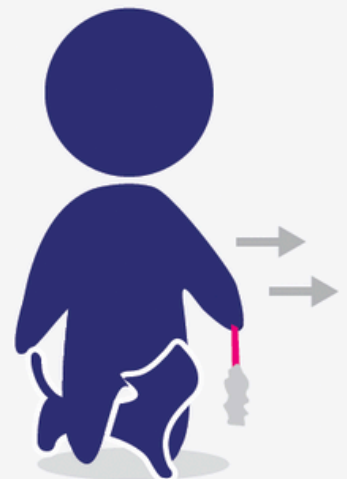
3

As you play allow your dog to wrap around your leg & play in front of you



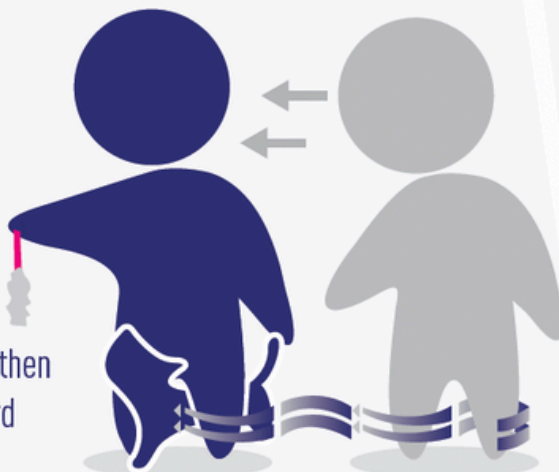
4

Step forward with the opposite leg & repeat step 2



5

Build up by stepping forward to allow your dog to go through one way and then the other...then reward and have a play.



HELPS BOOST...

- ✓ Value for proximity
- ✓ Confidence
- ✓ Resilience
- ✓ GRIT



THERE'S A GAME FOR THAT

TWO PAWS ON

- HELPS WITH...**
- ✓ On leash walking
 - ✓ Listening to you
 - ✓ Relationship
 - ✓ Heel work
 - ✓ Perfect 'conversation starter'

Helps Boost: Confidence, Optimism, Arousal Concepts, Focus

1  You will need

YOU + FOOD + DOG + ANY OBJECT SAFE TO PUT PAWS ON E.G. BOOK OR YOGA BLOCK

Place the object on the ground and reward any steps towards it. Place your reward away from the object



2 



WAIT for your dog to choose to return back to the item and reward steps towards it


3 

THROW FOOD AWAY AGAIN


REWARD



As they get closer each time then reward any paw on the item. Then throw a treat away

4 

BREAK



Begin to reward for choosing to stay and add duration and begin to add a 'release' cue eg. 'Break', 'OK', 'Free'

5 

YES!



Take 'Paws On' to new locations

*Another fun one to get her focused on you!

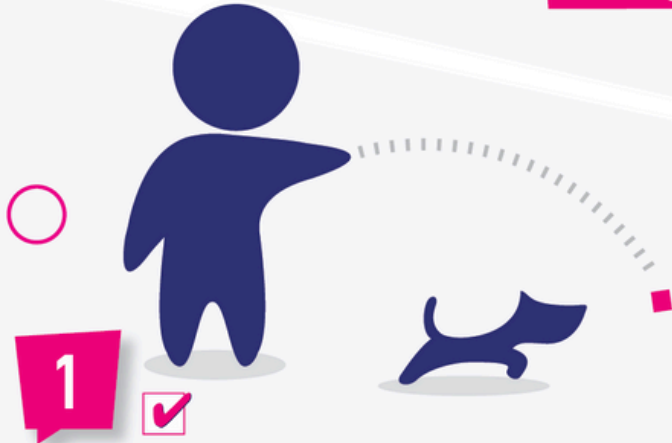
THERE'S A GAME FOR THAT

FUNDER

Helps Boost: Confidence, Proximity, Disengagement

HELPS WITH...

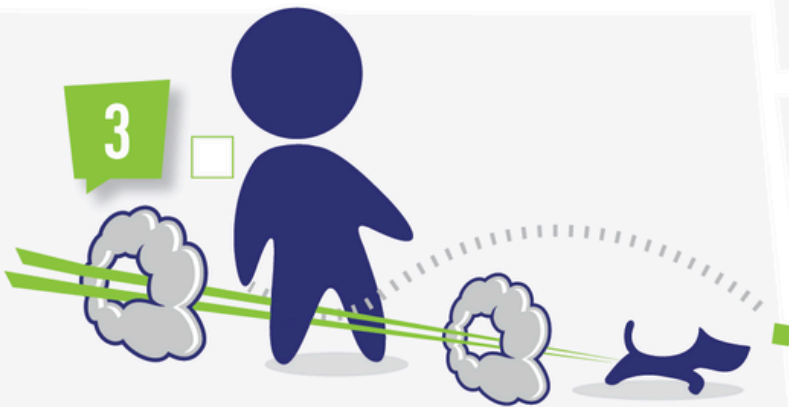
- ✓ Recall
- ✓ Staying close
- ✓ Walking on leash



Start this game by throwing a piece of food and see if they will chase it



This time throw the food through your legs for them to chase running through your legs to get the food



Turn around and throw another piece of food through your legs for them to chase again running through your legs to get the food



Every few goes feed them in front of you, touch their collar and feed, clip on the lead and feed, clip off the lead and feed



Begin another game of Funder....

GIVE IN TO LEASH PRESSURE LEVEL 1

Boost Engagement & Relationship

1 You will need



YOU + DOG + FOOD + LEASH & HARNESS

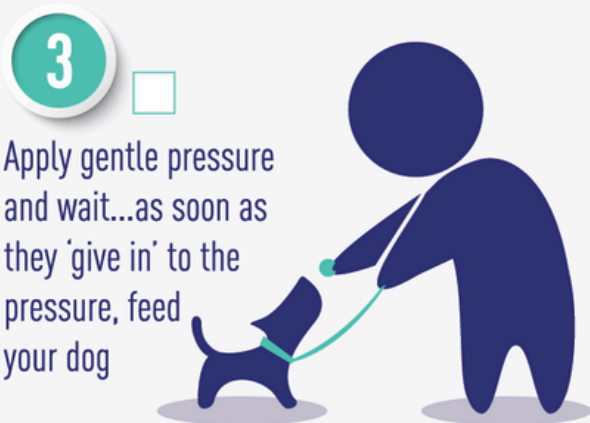
2



LIGHT EVEN PRESSURE

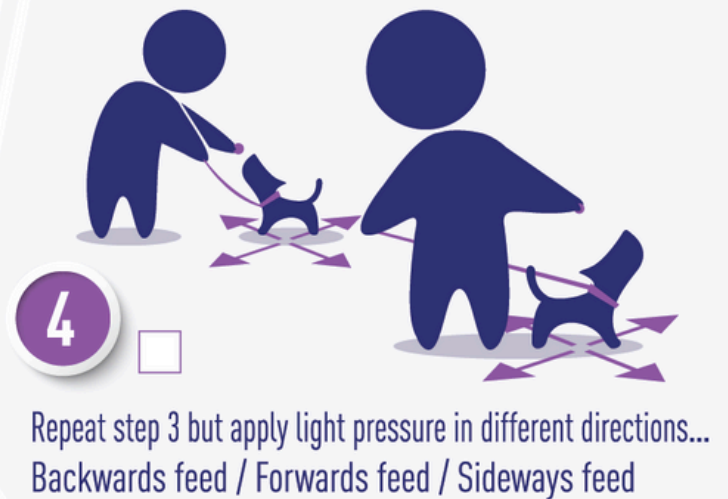
With your dog on leash apply gentle pressure to the leash & feed*

3



Apply gentle pressure and wait...as soon as they 'give in' to the pressure, feed your dog

4



Repeat step 3 but apply light pressure in different directions... Backwards feed / Forwards feed / Sideways feed

5



NICE!

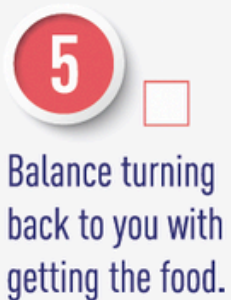
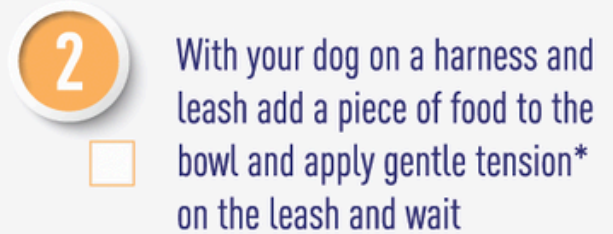
Reinforce each time your dog 'gives in' to the leash pressure...master this game before adding another level of difficulty...Coming soon!



*Smooth gentle tension on the leash is important throughout this game

GIVE IN TO LEASH PRESSURE LEVEL 2

Boost Engagement & Relationship



*Smooth gentle tension on the leash is important throughout this game

THERE'S A GAME FOR THAT

HANDLING GAME

HELPS WITH...

- ✓ Grooming
- ✓ Vet checks
- ✓ Health checks
- ✓ Nail clipping



1 ✓

Begin with a gentle, calm touch, then feed. Repeat a few times.

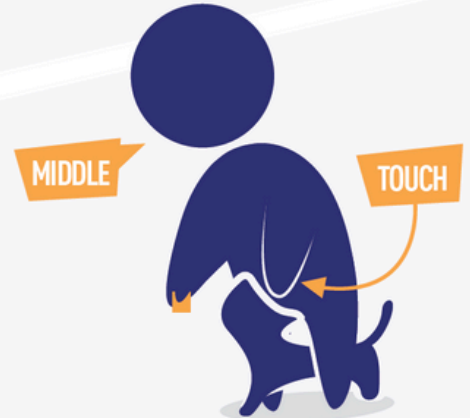


MIDDLE

TOUCH

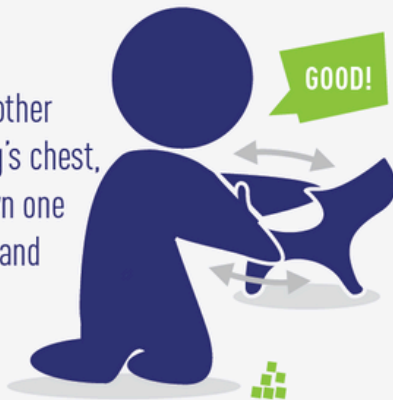
2 □

Have your dog in Middle. Touch and feed. If your dog chooses to leave they are not comfortable – take the pressure off and build up more slowly.



3 □

Progress to touching other areas. Stroke your dog's chest, or run your hands down one leg. Can you lift a leg and hold your dog's paw? Touch and feed!



4 □

Progress to lifting each paw, examining ears, checking gums, feeding between each repetition. Go at your dog's pace.



5 □

In lots of short, positive sessions, work up to being able to stroke and touch every part of your dog's body. Feed away from position as a pressure release.



HELPS BOOST...

- ✓ Confidence
- ✓ Optimism
- ✓ Calmness
- ✓ Flexibility



REMEMEBER



Milo is learning lots of new things it will take repetition and time for her to learn new skills and grow her confidence



Notice the small steps in the right direction :-)



Training is not linear - you will have good days and not so good days.



Be patient and consistent :-)

If you have any questions along the way don't hesitate to get in touch!

Deb xo

