



## Drop It

Keep practising what you have learned in Week 1, 2 and 3 this week.

Teaching your dog to drop something will take some time, so patience is required with this exercise. You can use the command "Drop it" or "Let go". Have your dog grab a toy with the "Take it" command. You may have to excite your dog a little to now hold something in their mouth. You can play some tug-of-war to get started. A tug toy works best for this exercise.

### *Exercise*

- ❖ Have one of your dogs' favourite toys in your hand.
- ❖ Make your dog sit (not required but often helps).
- ❖ Hold the toy in front of him and say "Take it".
- ❖ As your dog takes it, still hold on to the toy, praise him.
- ❖ Play a little tug-of-war.
- ❖ After a short while, stop playing and wait, while still holding the toy.
- ❖ Wait for your dog to release the toy and tell him to "Drop it".
- ❖ Once he releases the toy, click/mark the behaviour immediately.
- ❖ Reward your dog with a treat.

Keep practising till your dog consistently lets go of the toy when you say "Drop it". Then we can proceed with:

- ❖ Have your dog take a toy, now let him walk around with it.
- ❖ As he is having the toy in his mouth, tell him to "Drop it".
- ❖ Because he now knows this command he should be able to drop whatever is in his mouth when you tell him to "Drop it".
- ❖ Mark the behaviour and reward your dog.

### *Troubleshooting*

This is often found to be one of the more challenging exercises in the Beginner Training. You may have to repeat Take It & Leave It some more before trying the Drop It command. It is possible that it may take more than one week for your dog to get this. Have patience and keep practising.

### *Goal*

To have your dog release whatever is in his mouth when you give him the command "Drop it" and walk away from it - even when it is food.

### *Practical application*

Your dog may get into something that may be dangerous for them, whether it be medicine, a sharp object or even a dead animal. They sometimes just can't help themselves but put it in their mouth. So to have your dog release it from their mouth could save their life. On a lighter note; your shoes, your purse, your kids toys etc, stop disappearing.





## Loose Leash Walking with Leave It

We are going to teach your dog to leave something while Loose Leash Walking. When you are going for a walk dogs often follow their nose and want to keep sniffing or get into something they are not supposed to. Now we are going to teach them to "Leave It", so the walk can continue.

### *Exercise*

- ❖ Make sure you have them "Sit" and "Wait" before going out the door.
- ❖ Take your dog for a walk, practising Loose Leash Walking.
- ❖ When your dog stops to smell something, tell him to "Leave it" and have him come back to you.
- ❖ When he listens, praise him.
- ❖ If necessary use a treat to get him to listen.

You can also practice this in the house or backyard with favourite toys or treats on the ground to entice him and then when he comes near them, have him "Leave it". Make sure to praise him for leaving the toys/food etc.

### *Troubleshooting*

Some dogs are more high strong than other dogs and will try to "stretch the leash" as far away from you as possible trying to sniff something. Learning how to walk properly has everything to do with a structured walk. He needs to learn to respect you and obey you when you tell him to leave it. During everyday walks have some time for him to explore, but also have a time for a structured walk where he has to "leave it". Using "ah-ah, Leave it!" and continuing the walk forces him to follow you.

### *Goal*

You need to be able to walk your dog as taught in our Loose Leash Walking exercise and have your dog leave it, let go or ignore whatever you encounter on your walk when you tell him to "Leave it".

### *Practical application*

A daily walk is often the highlight of your dogs' day. So if it was up to him he would stay out for hours... He gets to sniff new things, chase birds, meet new people and other dogs, it's so exciting! Make sure you have some time for your dog to explore during your daily walk. But most of your daily walk should be structured and he should learn to "Leave it" when you tell him to leave something alone. You may come across another dog on the other side of the road and both dogs keep staring at each other, using "Leave it" will continue the walk. There may be other pedestrians and by telling your dog to "Leave it" makes him ignore them and not jump up on everyone passing by.





## Come When Called

Probably the most important command you can teach your dog is to have him come when called. Coming to you should always be a positive thing. Always praise your dog when he comes to you.

### *Exercise*

- ❖ You can make your dog sit, but isn't necessary.
- ❖ Have a treat between your index finger and thumb.
- ❖ Hold the treat in front of his nose.
- ❖ Take a few steps back and tell your dog to "Come".
- ❖ Because they badly want that treat in your hand they will follow and come to you.
- ❖ Click/mark the behaviour.
- ❖ Praise your dog and give him the treat.

When your dog is consistently following you he will learn very quickly he will get a treat when you say "Come". The next step is to have helper hold your dog and when practising outside use a long leash.

- ❖ Make your dog sit.
- ❖ Have your helper hold your dog.
- ❖ Walk back about 10 feet.
- ❖ Tell your dog to "Come".
- ❖ Your helper should release your dog when he gets up and come towards you. If your yard is not fully fenced, have your helper hold the end of the leash.
- ❖ Click/mark the behaviour.
- ❖ Reward your dog with a treat and release him.

Practice the "Come" command when you have free time in your yard by calling your dog over to you randomly and then release him to continue playing. Repeat often to keep the "Come" command a positive thing.

### *Troubleshooting*

You shouldn't have too much trouble with this command, as long as you always stay positive. If he gets disciplined often when he has come to you then the natural response is to run away from you.

### *Goal*

To have your dog come to you immediately when you use the "Come" command.

### *Practical application*

If you use the command "Come" only when playtime is over, or when you want to discipline your dog, coming to you becomes a negative thing. Coming to you should always be a positive thing; it may one day save its life.

