



HARRISBURG'S  
GREAT DOG PROGRAM

# A GUIDE TO CLICKER TRAINING



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# ABOUT CLICKER TRAINING

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Clicker training is a fun and effective way to teach obedience exercises, solve behavior problems, and even teach tricks!

A clicker is a small plastic box with a metal tab that makes a clicking sound when pressed. Clicker training has been used with marine mammals for years, and is a clear, effective way to communicate with your dog. The click acts as a marker to let your dog know the exact moment he is doing something correct.

## CLICK EQUALS TREAT

Why would your dog care if you click? Because each click is followed by a treat!

Dogs learn quickly that click equals treat, so they try to figure out how to make us humans "click".

## CLICK INSTEAD OF SHOUT

Because a click is faster, audibly consistent, and more precise than words. Your verbal tone can vary.



# WAYS YOUR PUP CAN LEARN

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## LURING

Leading your dog into position by having him follow a treat.

## SHAPING

Rewarding progressive bits of a behavior. For example, to get your dog to lie down from a sit, you might click and treat at first for a slight dip of the head, then for the head lowered further, then for head lowered further combined with one paw reaching forward, and so on until your dog was fully lying down. Luring and shaping are often combined.

## CAPTURING

Clicking each time your dog happens to do it on his own. For example, if you click and treat each time your dog voluntarily makes eye contact, you will soon have a dog who is staring at you!





## WHAT NOT TO DO

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**Do not** point the clicker at the dog, especially if they are afraid of the sound. You can muffle the click by putting it in your pocket, putting a piece of tape over the metal tab, or using a ballpoint pen or a quiet brand of clicker such as the i-click.

**Do not** use the clicker to get the dogs attention



## KEEP SESSIONS SHORT

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Aim for 3 to 5 sessions of 3 to 5 minutes daily, broken into 30-second rounds: work on one behavior per round.

Break up the rounds with short play/petting sessions.

End each round and session on a good performance.





## ADVICE

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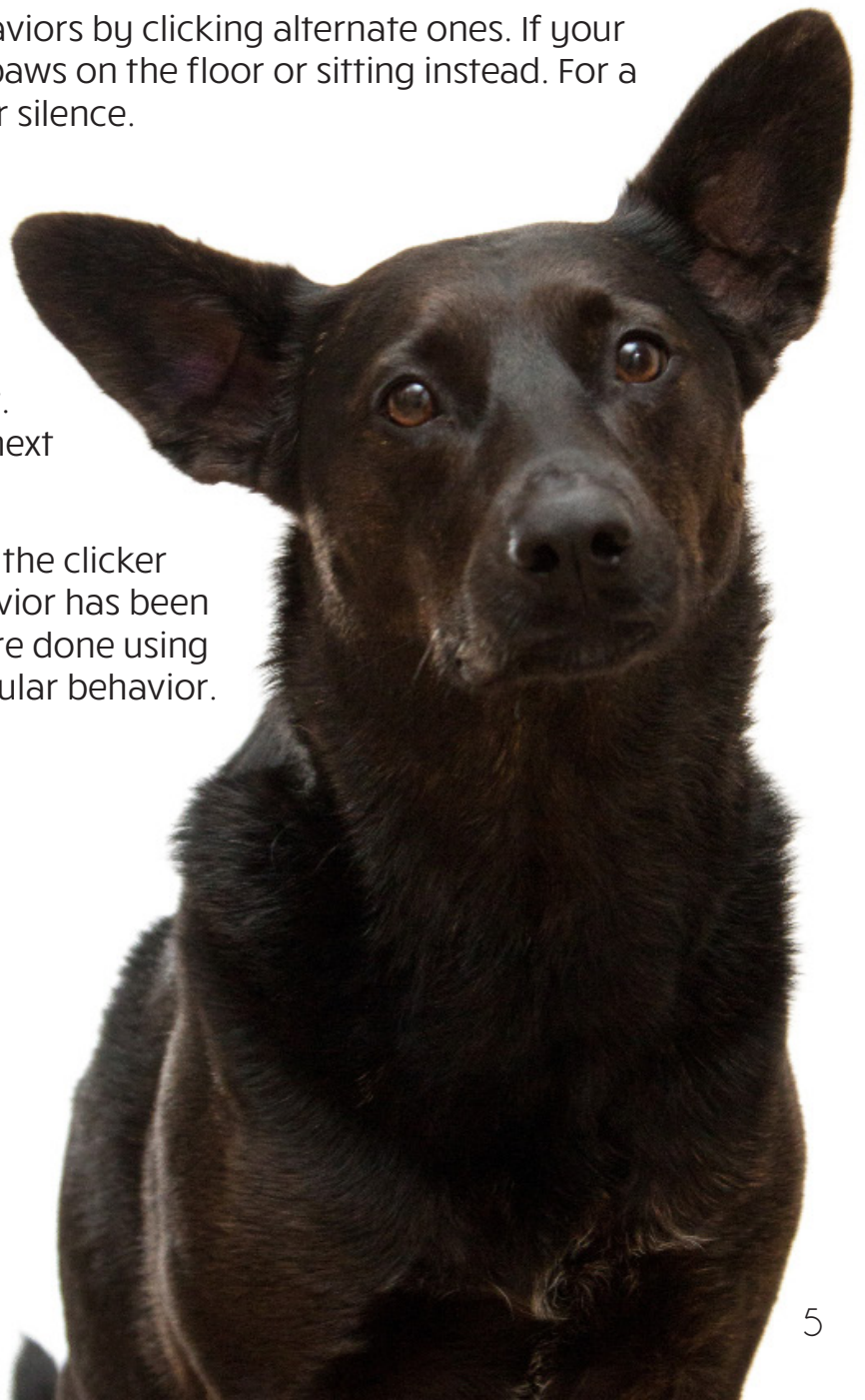
While the timing of the click is very important, almost no one has perfect timing at first. Don't worry; your timing will improve with practice. In the meantime, if you click a bit early or late, your dog still gets the treat.

If your dog performs a behavior especially well, click only once, but give him a jackpot by offering a few treats in a row, along with especially enthusiastic praise.

Change undesirable behaviors by clicking alternate ones. If your dog jumps, click for four paws on the floor or sitting instead. For a barking problem, click for silence.

When working on a behavior such as sit or down, after clicking, toss the treat a short distance away so your dog has to stand to get it. That sets him up for the next repetition.

You do not have to carry the clicker all the time! Once a behavior has been put on a verbal cue, you're done using the clicker for that particular behavior. Have fun!





**IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS  
PLEASE DON'T HESITATE TO GET IN  
TOUCH!**

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