



Manners

Attention 1

Attention is the building block of all other behaviors and can be taught just like any other skill. As I'm sure you've seen out and about with your dog, if they are distracted by something and you ask them to Sit or do something else, you get no response. This is because of lack of attention. In a typical situation, if your dog is not looking at you, they are not listening to you. Here are some simple exercises to teach your dog to be more attentive to you and give you some tools to get your dog's attention back when you need it.

Positive Interrupt

Dogs are not native speakers of English and respond much better to sounds and body language than they do to words. This exercise takes advantage of that by using a sound to get our dog's attention rather than words. It is much more effective and useful to use at times when you may not want to use your dog's name, like when they're doing something you would rather them not be doing (sniffing by the garbage, overly interested in the counter tops, trying to dig in the yard, etc.)

Choose a Positive Interrupt noise (a kissy noise or a click of the tongue) that will be used as a way to get the dog's attention. Be prepared by having a handful of cookies.

Begin by making your noise and immediately placing your food on the floor

Remember: We are not waiting for the dog to respond to the sound because they don't know what it means yet. Just make your noise and drop food.

After a few repetitions the dog should start responding to the noise before the food hits the ground.

At this point you can start making your noise when your dog is distracted or facing away from you. If they respond, feed them.

If not, put the treat in front of the dog's nose and lure them back to you and go back to making your noise and feeding without waiting for a response.

Make the noise in increasingly distracting situations and reward for correct responses until the dog has a solid understanding of the exercise.