

THE 4 RULES OF KINDRED

1) Set up for Success – Arrange the environment so that the behaviour that you are looking for is the easiest option. This can include supervision, restricting access to certain places or objects, as well as periodic containment by way of the crate, exercise pen or use of baby gates.



2) Reinforce behaviour you are looking for – Have reinforcement easily accessible so that you can provide it to your dog as the desired behaviours occur. Use a portion of your dog's daily ration of food, measured out and placed in small containers throughout your home. Having reinforcement readily available in the places that you spend time with your dog makes it so easy for you to play / *Spy* with sit, down, looking at you, walking towards you, or chewing on their own toys. You can also have your dog's favourite toys easily accessible so that you can use play as a form of reinforcement, too. Throw their favorite ball for them as a reward for looking at you or walking towards you.

3) Provide Mental Stimulation and Enrichment – Toys enrich your dog's day, strengthen their bond with you, and give them something safe and challenging to do with their clever minds. Give your dog toys to play with, chew on, and chase. Puzzle and food dispensing toys to work on are a great way for your dog to eat some of their meals or treats.

4) Walk away from a behaviour – If you ask for a behaviour, such as a sit and your dog does not sit, resist the urge to ask for it again, and just walk away. Your dog has simply lost an opportunity for reinforcement whether it is your attention, play, or a piece of food. There is reinforcement or there is not. It is that simple. If you ask for a sit and your dog does not sit, use this information to your advantage. Your dog is telling you that maybe they did not understand the cue in that context. Perhaps there was too much distraction in the environment, or maybe something changed in the environment and your dog needed time to get comfortable. There may have been some other thing at work that made the behaviour unlikely. Regardless, don't get attached to the behaviour. Simply practice in incrementally increasing distractions to ensure that your dog understands what you are asking in many different environments.