

POSITIVE CANINES

FOR ALL DOGS



REACTIVITY GUIDE

Where to Start?



DECOMPRESSION

Decompression is a period of intentionally reducing stress, pressure, and stimulation in a dog's daily life so their nervous system can settle back into a calm, regulated state.

For dogs especially reactive, anxious, or overstimulated dogs—every trigger adds to their stress load. Decompression is about lowering that load so the dog can think, learn, and cope again. Think of it as letting the dog's nervous system exhale. Decompression is not “doing nothing,” and it's not just exercise.

It usually includes:

- Low-pressure walks (sniffing allowed, no obedience demands)
- Time in calm, familiar environments, predictable routines and distance from known triggers

INTRODUCE MANAGEMENT

Management in dog training is a proactive approach to prevent undesirable or unsafe behaviours by making changes to the dog's environment or routine. For reactivity this looks like completely removing your dog's triggers.

- No walks in suburbia
 - Quiet walks in bush lands or somewhere like Lake Gngara at non-peak times
- No busy environments
 - Examples - No dog parks, no cafes or busy streets
- Introduce barriers in the home such a baby gates or crate training

INTRODUCE ENRICHMENT

Introducing enrichment daily will provide your dog with mental stimulation which is vital to fulfil your dog's needs. Changing your dog's daily meals into a enrichment activity will improve your dog's quality of life by miles. As well as providing you with a more well behaved dog. Enrichment will act as a type of exercise but for the brain.



Health & Welfare



5 DOMAINS OF WELFARE

1 NUTRITION

- 'Balanced' diet with nutritional value and free of allergens.
- Clean food and water provided daily.

2 ENVIRONMENT

- Safe shelter away from weather of all kinds
- Clean bedding, fresh air etc

3 HEALTH

- Animal is healthy or being treated for any health issues.
- Free of pain
- Comfort of good health and functional capacity

4 BEHAVIOUR

- Available engaging choices - Calm, in control
- Free movement - Engaged by activity
- Exploratory, foraging, species typical behaviours

5 MENTAL STATE

- Positive mental state
- Energy and breed typical needs are met
- Enriched life and able to self-soothe

Holistic Approach

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What is my Mission?

Bridge the communication gap between humans and dogs.

Through years of working closely with dogs and observing their behaviour, I always ask...

"WHY is the dog doing this behaviour?"

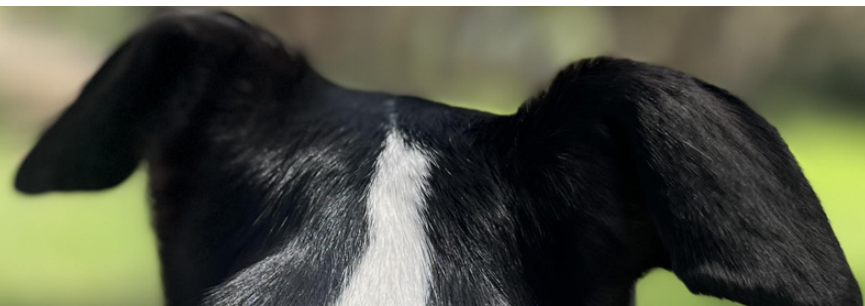
Understanding the root cause is the first step in a meaningful and long term behaviour change.

From desirable to undesirable behaviours, dogs have habits and they prefer routines, just like some humans do!

"Evidence has shown that dogs have the cognitive abilities of a toddler, meaning that they live in the moment."

"This quality means that they require a special understanding to ensure therapies are realistic and efficient."

– Dr Kate Lindsey Veterinary Behaviourist at KalmPets



Why Positive?



POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT TRAINING USES A REWARD FOR DESIRED BEHAVIOURS. BECAUSE THE REWARD MAKES THEM MORE LIKELY TO REPEAT THE BEHAVIOUR, POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT IS ONE OF YOUR MOST POWERFUL TOOLS FOR CHANGING YOUR DOG'S BEHAVIOUR.

STUDIES HAVE SHOWN THAT DOGS TRAINED WITH MORE REWARDS AND POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT DISPLAY HIGHER LEVELS OF OBEDIENCE AND WERE LESS LIKELY TO SHOW AGGRESSION.

Get Yourself...

TREAT POUCH



CONTACT ME TO
BUY ONE FROM ME!
\$15 EACH
AVAILABLE IN
BLACK OR RED

YUMMY TREATS



- Something to look out for is single ingredient treats (or minimal ingredients)
- Avoid cereal based treats etc
- Some examples shown above
- Find what YOUR dog find the most motivating, might be toys, might be roast chicken!

Marker Training



What is Marker Training?

Marker training refers to using a marker such as a word or a clicker displayed in the image on the right. This purpose is to use the marker word or clicker to capture the desired behaviour so the handler can then deliver treat without confusion of what the desired behaviour is. A foundation of associating the marker with a reward is necessary to begin using our marker in reactivity training.



How to Teach a Marker -

1. Decide what marker you will and use it consistently
 - For this example we will use a clicker 'click'
2. Hold 5 treats, 1 at a time 'click' give your dog the treat, repeat
3. Then start with a easy known behaviour like sit
 - Ask for a sit, as soon as their bum hits the grounds, 'click' and toss treat to the side
 - Practice
 - Keep session short, 5-10mins, end with calming enrichment like a licki mat
 - STOP HERE and PRACTICE 5 minutes a day

YES!

What is a Marker?

- A sound whether that is a word or a click of "clicker" (shown above)
- Common marker words are; "yes", "good", "nice" etc
- Ensure marker is said with enthusiasm, high pitched tone apposed to your normal tone of voice
- A marker word should be said ONCE and once only

Why are we Using a Marker?

- Allows the handler some buffer time to get the reward to the dog
- Ensures we are intentionally rewarding the right behaviours
- Marker training is transferable to all behaviours and tricks
- Good foundations for you and your dog



Dog Equipment



ETHICAL EQUIPMENT



- Flat Collar
 - Contains identity tag and registration tag
 - Used for:
 - Puppies
 - Dogs that don't pull on lead
- Body Harness
 - Preferred y-shaped harness for free shoulder movement
 - 3 point harnesses available
 - Including front clip for more control when needed
- Leads, long lines, hands-free



EQUIPMENT TO AVOID



- Slip lead
 - Used for:
 - Boarding facilities, Rescues, Vet Clinics
 - Rangers, safety back up lead for escape risk
- Martingale collar
 - Used for:
 - Rescue facilities, safety backup
 - Hound breeds with small heads
 - For escape risk dogs on walks
- Choke chain
- Throw chains
- Head halti's
- Prong collars
- Shock collars
- Body Harness that tightens when pulled "no pull harness"
- Citronella collars or frequency devices
- Flexi leads



New Behaviours..

AUTOMATIC CHECK IN



Purpose → Teaches your dog to check in with you when seeing a stressful trigger rather than reacting and teaching engagement.

Step 1: Have your dog close to you on a lead, have your treat pouch ready. Find a neutral environment.

Step 2: Have 4 treats ready in your hand, drop 1 on the floor wait for your dog to finish it and drop the second treat and so on.

Step 3: For the fourth treat, wait for your dog to look up at you and mark and reward by placing the last treat on the ground

Step 4: Practice this 3 times and give your dog and yourself a break when needed

Step 5: Practice this in different environments

Step 6: Introduce cue - when we stop the dog stops! We want the cue to be you stopping.

EMERGENCY U-TURN

Purpose → Teaches your dog a U-turn which can be used which we inevitably run into a trigger out in the world. Whilst we do our training avoiding triggers is key to start.

Step 1: Have your dog close to you on a lead, have your treat pouch ready. Find a neutral environment.

Step 2: Start walking and suddenly stop and change direction

- The side your dog is on, turn that direction and use your body to guide them with you
- Get down low if needed to encourage your dog to follow you
- As soon as your dog turns to face you or come to you, mark and reward
-

Step 3: Practice this randomly on walks and at home

- Practice 3x times and use different directions
- Idea is to keep your dog engaged

Step 4: Choose your cue! "Let's go" or "This way" or "Turn"

Step 5: Introduce cue - for this example we will use "turn"

- Now each time we stop and change direction, we say "turn!"
- mark and reward as soon as their body turns to focus on you - Practice and repeat!



Nose Touch



What? → Teaches your dog to bring their nose to your palm.

Purpose → This is useful for engagement, recall, foundation skills, loose lead walking and more!

Prerequisites - Clicker/Marker Trained

Step 1: Present your hand in front of your dog, your dog may sniff your hand or approach your hand, mark and reward any movement towards your palm. Practice at home! Avoid pushing your hand towards the dog.



Step 2: Have your hand behind your back and present your palm, if your dog touches your palm with their nose, mark and reward.

- Some dogs may find this tricky - introduce a lure - place a small treat in between your fingers
- Present your palm, your dog should sniff the treat, mark and reward
- Important! Do not reward with the treat in your palm, take your hand away and pay with a different treat

Step 3: Practice and repeat this 5-10x and stop here!

- Practice these steps for a few days until you feel your dog is confident
- Your dog may regress, if you present your hand and your dog does nothing
- Take your hand away and present again or go back to step 2

Step 4: Introduce the cue "Touch"

- Each time you present your hand, say "touch" at the same time
- Important to say the cue ONCE and once only
- If your dog does nothing, take your hand away and try again
- Practice and repeat 5-10x

Step 5: Introduce Movement

- Move your hand further away to encourage your dog to run towards to you
- Make yourself exciting!

Step 6: Introduce Distractions - Practice on walks and outside



Any questions please email
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WEBSITE:

www.positivecanines.com.au

Facebook - Positive Canines Dog Training

Instagram - PositiveCanines

Educational Resources

Podcast - Pick of the Litter

Book - Easy Peasy Doggy Squeezy by Steve Mann

Book - Don't Shoot the Dog by Karen Pryor

Youtube - IMDT Australia