

BACK UP

Backing up on cue is a useful household management tool for any pet dog to know. It's pretty easy to teach, too.

The basic steps are the same as for all Lure Reward Training:

1. Request: Say "Back Up"
2. Lure: shuffle forward into your dog and move your hand in the signal (see below)
3. Response: your dog steps or hops back to create space
4. Reward: say "YES!" and move into reward

Let's break this down a bit:

REQUEST

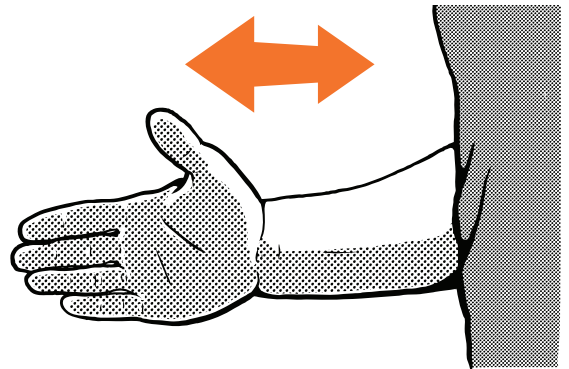
You'll say "Back Up" a split second before you move. This is important so that your dog learns that the words are important. If you do it at the same time as your movement, they'll ignore the words and only pay attention to what you do.

LURE

Lures are just things we use to induce a behavior, since your dog won't know what the words or signals mean, yet. In this case, shuffle forward until you crowd your dog's space a bit. This minor spatial pressure will cause them to move back.

We shuffle so that we don't step on any toes.

Your signal is, essentially, literally "back up" here. We like the ASL sign for "Walk Back," a flat hand pointing away and moving back and forth. A "shoo!" motion works, too.



RESPONSE

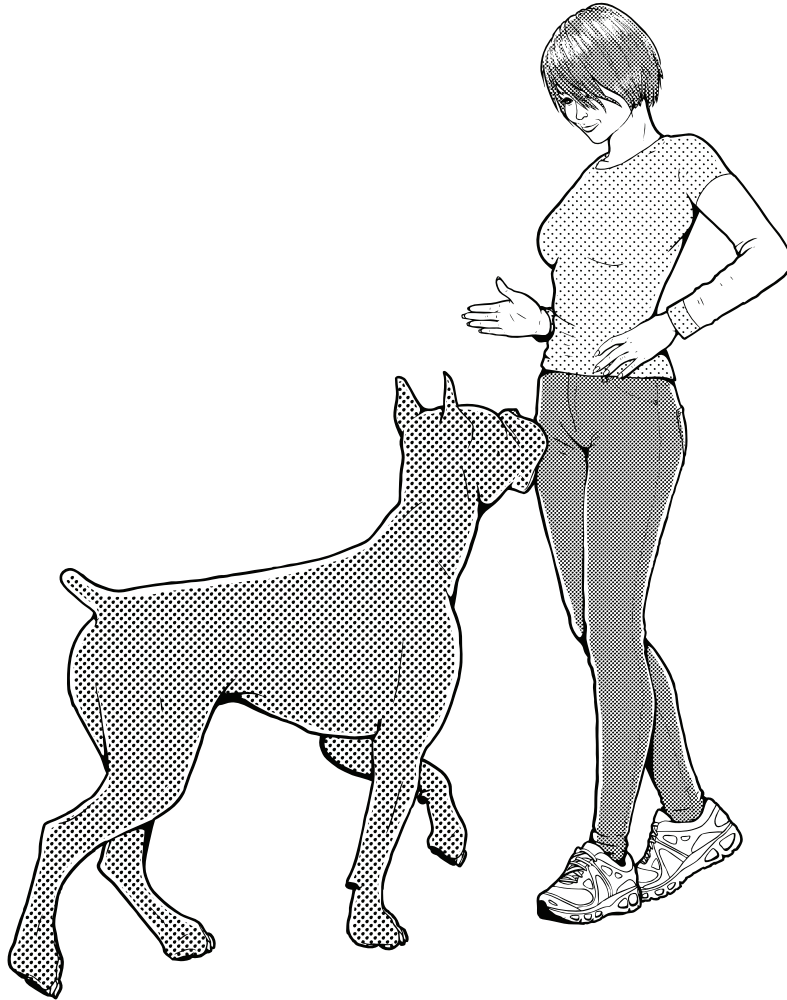
Your dog will step or hop backwards to create a little space. Only one step is necessary in the beginning.

REWARD

At the exact moment your dog moves back, mark it with "Yes!" And move into reward. As usual, make it fun and dynamic. Food rewards work great, but if you follow our work you can use your Modular Rewards here. Check out our video post on Modular Reward Events to learn how to make it super impactful: <https://www.simpawtico-training.com/motivate-a-dog-modular-reward-events/>

PRO TIPS FOR SUCCESS

- You can do this in a hallway if your dog sidesteps or goes crooked
- Some dogs may jump on you when you shuffle. Don't worry about this and don't get too worked up over it. The criteria right now is moving backwards. Work until you get that, only reward when four feet are on the floor, and deal with jumping elsewhere. Right now, this is a Back Up session!



SHAPING IT UP FOR REAL WORLD USE

- Start with only one step back. When this is looking pretty good, go for two steps, then three.
- Then, fade the lure. Say "Back Up" and make your signal, but don't shuffle. If your dog backs up on their own, HUGE PRAISE AND REWARD. If, however, they just look at you, they're still confused. Use your shuffle to induce the behavior, but it's only for follow up now if the verbal command and hand signal go unheeded.
- With practice, you should be able to get your dog to back up without having to shuffle. NOW this is ready for practical use.
- Even though you will eventually not need food rewards either, always praise your dog for doing what you ask. Good feedback is a cheap, low-cal reward that you always have with you!

GOOD LUCK!

