Trade/Drop & Your Safe

Trade or Drop Teaching Drop with 2 Balls Video

The goal of this exercise is to teach your dog to drop something or to bring you an object they have taken. Trade or Drop is for when they have something in their mouth.

Start by using a favorite toy for this activity. If their favorite toy is too rewarding and exciting for them use a toy of lesser value.

Base the trade reward based upon what they are giving up. High value should be the trade reward in the beginning.

Steps
Using a favorite toy:

- Hold out the toy in front of the dog and say “Take-it” and reinforce you dog by tugging a little bit with the toy to engage them in play.
- With multiple higher value treats in your other hand or a valuable toy, while still holding onto the toy, place a treat under their nose and entice them to take the treat or entice with the toy.
- As your dog takes the treat and releases the toy, say “Drop or Trade" and give them the treat or toy. Give them a couple of treats so the act of letting go of the toy becomes more valuable than holding onto the toy or toss the other toy to make it more fun.
- Repeat steps 1 - 3.
- *Caution*: Do not pull the toy out of their mouth. Hang on to it and let them let go of it on their own. Encourage them letting go by waving yummy treats in front of them. The act of “letting go,” getting rewarded and then getting the toy back increases their likelihood of learning to drop it on cue.
- Add releasing the toy with a take-it and showing them the valuable item and saying "drop or trade" as it falls out of their mouth.
- Add releasing the toy with a take-it and showing them the valuable and saying "drop" pausing for the drop and rewarding by tossing the treats or toy.
- Add releasing the toy with a take-it, with a toy or treats behind your back say "drop" and when they drop toss the treats or toy.

*Tip: Use excitement to entice your dog to drop. Do not chase.

After your dog understands the word with one item generalize it to another item. This exercise needs to be generalized with different values and in new environments, while sitting, laying down, standing and moving.

Teach You Are Safe Near Valuables
Dogs need to learn you will not take everything from them and you can be near them with value. Remember don’t’ overdo it so it becomes annoying to your dog.

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- Give your dog something (less value in the beginning).
- As you do sit down with them and give a pet as you are handing it over.
- Then ignore and pet again.
- Then ignore and pet again.
- Have something of value in your pocket and place it near your dog.
- Let you dog see you are going to give them something else.
- Go in steps based upon your dog's comfort.
- If your dog moves away from you; it is a sign that they need to be alone and the exercise might have gone on too long. After all, everyone needs their space at times.

If your dog shows signs of discomfort or guarding behavior talk to your trainer.

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