



## Hand Targeting (Touch)

Teaching your dog to target your hand is a skill that is fun and ridiculously easy to teach your dog. Hand targeting is simply teaching your dog to touch his nose to the palm of your hand (you can also use the tip of two fingers, or a fist). Imagine there is a magnet in the palm of your hand and when you present it, your dog's nose is immediately attracted to it. "Touch" is a valuable skill for redirection, recall, loose leash walking, appropriate interactions with strangers, and lots more!

1. Place your open palm ½ an inch in front of your dog's nose and cue your dog to "touch!"
2. Your dog will probably lean in to smell your hand (maybe he thinks you have a treat, or thinks, what is this?!). Say "yes" or click, the instant you feel the touch of his nose on your hand. If he is uninterested, try rubbing food on your hand to make it smell delicious!
3. Repeat several times, reinforcing your dog by giving him a pea-sized treat from your opposite hand after every click or verbal "yes" marker.
  - Vary the location of your hand around their face.
4. Continue steps 1-3 until your dog is touching your hand deliberately and immediately upon presentation. Try the following variations:
  - Place your hand to the left of his head
  - Place your hand to the right of his head
  - Place your hand two inches from his nose
  - Place your hand three inches from his nose
  - Place your hand below his nose, toward the floor
  - Place your hand above his head
5. If your dog is ever uninterested in making contact with your hand, just pull your hand away, wait a few seconds and try again.
6. Gradually increase the distance between your dog and your hand so that your dog has to travel farther to make contact.
7. Once your dog is responding reliably indoors, take this exercise outside where there are more distractions.
8. Pay close attention to your timing and when you are marking the moment. (The moment you are marking is the instant your dog touches your hand.)