

Clicker Training Introduction

Presented by
Dogs Gone Wild, LLC
September 4th, 2008



Introductions

- **About Us**

Sue and Rob Thompson are owners of a small business formed in January of 2008 to help dog owners get the most enjoyment out of their canine relationships. We teach and compete in many activities including agility, obedience, rally, and dock diving



- **About You**

- Your Name
- Dog's Name
- Dog's Breed
- Dog's Age
- What You Want Out Of This Seminar



Important References

- “Don’t Shoot the Dog; The New Art of Teaching and Training”, Revised Edition, 1999, Karen Pryor, ISBN 978-0-553380-39-2, www.randomhouse.com/bantamdell/
- **“Clicker Basics for Dogs and Puppies”, 2007, Carolyn Barney, ISBN 978-1-892694-16-4, www.cleanrun.com**
- “Getting Started: Clicker Training for Dogs”, 2005, Karen Pryor, ISBN 1-890948-21-7, www.clickertraining.com



Clicker Training Overview

- Historical aspects of clicker training
 - Based upon science developed in the late 19th century, Pavlov and his drooling dog
 - Applied to animal training around the mid 20th century
 - Popular in marine mammal training
- Key Ingredients for successful clicker training
 - Click **AND** Treat
 - Shaping plan
 - Proper introduction of signals for desirable behaviors
 - Lots of tips learned by folks who've made mistakes



Clicker Training Reward System

- Treat
 - *Positive* – the addition of something
 - *Primary* – appeals to dog's primary needs (food, drink)
 - *Reinforcement* – the dog likes it!
- Click
 - *Positive* – the addition of something
 - *Secondary* – appeals to the dog because paired with treat
 - *Reinforcement* – the dog likes it! (means a treat is coming!)
- A click is always accompanied with a treat



1st Exercise – Clicker Concept Intro

- Our understanding of clicker training is better than we give ourselves credit for
- Volunteer Required – need to hide an object
- Rob will act as trainee, his new behavior will be finding the hidden object
- Students will act as trainers, they will help Rob learn where the object has been hidden
- Rules of game
 - Rob's reinforcement will be clicks (feel free to give him treats if you want to)
 - Only click once when Rob takes a step in the right direction of the hidden object



Behavior Shaping

- Shaping – the act of reinforcing steps within a shaping plan
- Shaping Plan – step-wise progression of behaviors or criteria that bridges current behavior with more complex behavior
- Click AND Treat – during shaping, a click is used to mark desirable behaviors, a.k.a positive secondary reinforcement or marker signal



Shaping Plan Example - Down

Step	Behavior or Criteria
Starting Behavior	Attention
1	Sitting
2	Nose Points to Floor
3	Butt Shifts Backward
4	Front Paws Shifts Forward
5	Elbows Touch Floor
6	Chest Touches Floor
Ending Behavior	Down



Shaping Down – Before Session



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Starting Point – Getting Attention



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Step 1 – Sit



Step 2 – Nose Points Down



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Step 3 – Butt Shifts Backward



Step 4 – Left Paw Shifts Forward



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Ending Point – Laying Down



Session Video – Shaping the Down Behavior

<http://www.dogsgonewildllc.com/Training.html>



Shaping & Shaping Plan Benefits

- Dogs love shaping sessions – a shaping session is a big fat opportunity to earn lots of treats
- Removes reinforcement guesswork – small steps give trainers an idea of what behavior or criteria they are looking for
- Reinforcement efficiency – no guesswork therefore timely clicks and treats keep dogs interested in the game
- Dogs learn at their own pace and retain the muscle mechanics of the behavior better than if they were forced into behavior



2nd Exercise – Shaping Plan

- There is no such thing as a wrong shaping plan
 - “There are as many ways to train new behaviors as there are trainers to dream them up!”, -Karen Pryor
- Participants will break up into four equal teams
- Each team will spend approximately 15 minutes developing a shaping plan for one of the following behaviors
 - Roll Over
 - Single Paw Wave
 - Dance in Circles on Two Legs
 - Sit Inside a Box
- A representative from each team will present the results of their shaping plan



Session Video – Sit Inside A Box

<http://www.dogsgonewildllc.com/Training.html>



“ABCs of Learned Behavior”

- Learned behavior progression, A then B then C
 - A = Cue or **A**ntecedent
 - B = **B**ehavior
 - C = **C**onsequence
- Example
 - A (Cue or **A**ntecedent): Trainer signals a verbal “down” cue
 - B (**B**ehavior): Dog lies down
 - C (**C**onsequence): Trainer rewards dog
- Reference – Carolyn Barney



Teaching A New Behavior Pattern

- Progression for teaching a new behavior, B then C then repeat, A is temporarily left out of the progression
 - A = Cue or **A**ntecedent
 - B = **B**ehavior
 - C = **C**onsequence
- Example
 - A (Cue or **A**ntecedent): Trainer signals a verbal “down” cue
 - B (**B**ehavior): Dog lies down
 - C (**C**onsequence): Trainer rewards dog



Applying Stimulus Control

- After multiple repetitions of teaching a new behavior trainers will apply stimulus control
 - Behavior is performed as required at least 80% of the time
 - Cue is easy for the dog to understand and unambiguous
 - Cue is applied as the dog is performing the behavior
 - Click AND treat is used to reinforce the association between the cue and the behavior
- Example – A dog's down behavior is said to be under stimulus control once the dog lays down every time he is asked to
 - Cue - Any signal that can be received by a dog via sight, sound, touch, taste, and smell that solicits a behavior from the dog
 - Stimulus Control – Describes when a cue consistently results in the dog performing the desired behavior



Session Video – Applying Stimulus Control for Down Behavior

<http://www.dogsgonewildllc.com/Training.html>



Rules for Clicker Training

- Always click AND treat to reinforce desirable behavior
- Always IGNORE deviations from shaping plans
- Use soft, enjoyable and small treats
 - pea-sized for medium to large dogs
 - Split pea-sized for small dogs
 - Ideal treats are ingested quickly
 - Dogs enjoy the treats and want to earn lots of them
- Rate of reinforcement is high, once every four seconds
- Treat delivery does not alter dog's behavior, body language is neutral
- Session duration is short, approximately 5 to 10 minutes
- Proof behavior by only reinforcing it when it is cued
- Practice in a variety of environments with varying degrees of distraction



Keep It Fun! - Use Play to Transition Between Sessions

<http://www.dogsgonewildllc.com/Training.html>

Playing with Mr. Crab - Part I

<http://www.dogsgonewildllc.com/Training.html>

Playing with Mr. Crab - Part II



Homework Assignment

- Charge the clicker
 - Definition: process of helping your dog associate the click sound with primary reinforcement (treat)
 - Process consists of two steps
 - Step 1 = click
 - Step 2 = treat
 - Repeat process multiple times over multiple sessions between tonight and Saturday morning
 - Productive sessions will result in immediate recognition of the click sound from your dog
 - Remember to treat every time you click
- Read the Clicker Training Introduction paper
 - Read pages 8 through 15 if time is limited
- Visit website at www.dogsgonewildllc.com to review videos or download lost documents



Session Video – Charging the Clicker

<http://www.dogsgonewildllc.com/Training.html>



Tools for Day 2 - Working Seminar

- Clicker
- Flat Buckle Collar
- Lots Of Treats – Soft, Enjoyable And Small
- Poop Bags To Clean Up After Your Dog
- Toy – Something Your Dog Likes, Like A Tug or Squeaky
- Water And Water Dish
- Big Fat Thank You To Bradford County Humane Society For Helping Us Facilitate The Delivery Of This Seminar



Thank You!

- We are happy to have had the opportunity to help you learn about a clicker training
 - Contact us with questions
 - Email – robnsuet@dogsgonewildllc.com
 - Phone – (570) 364-5454
 - World Wide Web – www.dogsgonewildllc.com
- Dogs Gone Wild appreciates all the wonderful things that the Bradford County Humane Society does for our community and we are very happy to work with them in promotion of responsible dog ownership

