

TRAIN YOUR DOG:

SPEAK

This is usually a simple one to teach if your puppy/dog likes to bark at you. Trick is to get him/her to do it on command and from distances. First decide on a hand signal that is not similar to any other. You could use a motion of opening and closing your thumb and fingers (facing the puppy/dog). This looks like a mouth opening and closing. Or you could use a closed fist, twisting motion. Tell your puppy/dog to "speak" at the same time. When he/she does, reward with treat immediately and say "good speak". If your puppy/dog doesn't bark readily, continue to give command until he/she gets really fed up with you and barks. Then quickly reward. He/She won't know why but if done enough, will get the message. Gradually give the command verbally only and then hand signal only. Increase distance to the maximum comfort zone.

WAVE

Puppy/Dog in sit stay. Decide on a hand signal. It can be a circular movement of your hand like a wave or hold hand palm up and wave fingers in and out (as in making a fist). Don't use a real wave with palm facing down as it looks too much like the speak command and can confuse the puppy/dog. Sitting close to your puppy/dog give the command and hand signal. If puppy/dog doesn't do anything nudge him/her paw until he/she lifts it up. Reward. Eventually require him/her to lift their paw higher. Always reward every time he/she does it. Eventually start to give the command from farther back.

HIDE YOUR EYES

The puppy/dog can be in a sit or down position. The idea is to get him/her to cover his/her eyes with one paw on command. It will take some practice to find out the best method for your puppy/dog as they all respond to different signals. With treat in hand, tell your puppy/dog to "cover your eyes". Physically lift his/her paw over his/her muzzle and reward. If you blow gently on his/her nose, he/she may swipe at his/her face. When he/she does this, reward. You have to just repeat the command and movement until the puppy/dog realizes what is needed to get the treat.

SAY PRAYERS

The object is to have your puppy/dog put his/her head down between his/her paws on the command "say prayers" and to end the exercise on the command "amen". Start with handler seated on a chair, puppy/dog in sit/stay in front. Put a treat on chair between your legs. Tell puppy/dog "say prayers" and encourage or lift both front paws on to the chair (NOTE: puppy/dog must remain seated). The action is similar to a beg with the paws resting on the chair. Tell puppy/dog to "leave it" so he/she doesn't eat treat and repeat "say prayers". Puppy/Dog should stick nose down to the treat between paws. Then give release "amen" and reward with the treat. You may find this easier to do on a low table. While standing behind puppy/dog, guide paws on to table and encourage him/her to lower muzzle between paws towards the treat.

FIND IT

The idea is to have the puppy/dog use his/her nose to find a hidden object. This is good practice for tracking or utility work. First start with simple exercises. Show the puppy/dog a treat (strong smelling ones work best). Then let the puppy/dog see you place it under the edge of a towel about 6 feet away. Let the puppy/dog smell the scent of the treat on your hand. Send puppy/dog and say "find it". Reward with praise when he/she finds the treat. The reward is the treat. Start to move farther back from the hiding place and move the location of the treat - put it further under the towel so it is harder to get out. Then leaving towel in same place put the treat a few feet away from the towel and send the puppy/dog. The puppy/dog will have to sniff out the location. Eventually, you will place the puppy/dog with him/her back to the location and have someone make sure he/she can't see where you put the treat. Then when that level has been achieved, move the puppy/dog to another

room, hide the treat, let puppy/dog sniff your hand and send to "find it". Give lots of praise. You can eventually move from food to solid obstacles such as keys, toys, etc. This makes the exercise into retrieval.