
Elementary Clicker Training Class Syllabus

6-Week Class

(Class time: 1-1/2 hour people-only orientation + 1 hour per week for 5 weeks)

Class 1 – People-Only Orientation (1-1/2 hrs.)

- Introductions (brief introductions from clients & staff)
- Class information (location of restrooms, lending library, potty cleanup, etc.)
- Basics of Clicker Training
 - Why use a clicker?
 - Clicker Guidelines
 - Motivation
 - How to get a behavior (shaping, capturing, targeting, luring)
 - Adding the cue
 - Reinforcement (continuous versus variable)
 - Catch them doing something right
- People Games
 - Play the Training Game
 - Practice click timing (toss tennis ball, etc.)
 - Practice mechanical skills of clicking and treating (bean game)
- Discuss Leadership
- Discuss Exercise
- Discuss Self-Control
- Generalization & Distraction Training
- Brief introduction helpful equipment – head collars/no-pull harnesses – recommend checking out DVD/video
- What to bring to class (buckle collar, 6' leash, treats, dog, chewy)
- Demonstrate “Charging the Clicker”
- Demonstrate “Attention” (shape and capture)
- Demonstrate “Sit” (capture)
- Demonstrate Calming Ovals

Class 2 – Dogs' 1st Week (1 hour)

- Click and treat as many times as possible in one minute
- Review “Attention” (If you want to put on cue, are you ready?)
- Review “Sit” (Add verbal cue or hand signal?)
- Teach: Self-Control Exercises:
 - “Calming Ovals”
 - “Park”
 - “Getting From Point A to Point B”
- Discuss Head Collars & No-pull harnesses briefly & fit for interested clients
 - Discuss how to fit them, how to put them on and take them off
 - General rules of using a head collar for “maintenance” walk to prevent pulling
 - Suggest clients check-out Gentle Leader DVD/video
- Review basics (don't move hands, watch timing, reinforce often)
- Teach “Down”
- Teach “Leave-It/Take-It” (Step 1 – closed hand)
- Introduce Hand Signals
- Demonstrate Redirecting Jumping behavior by tethering and teaching “sit” for greeting people
- Discuss teaching an incompatible behavior (what to do, instead of what not to do)
- Teach trick: “Shake”

Class 3 (1 hour)

- Review “Down”
- Teach “Stand”
- Teach “Come”
- Discuss the concepts to teaching a reliable recall
 - Relay Game
 - Hide and Seek
 - Tactics for getting dog back before they know their recall
- Teach “Off”
- Teach “Touch” (hand)
- Discuss management as a tool for problem behaviors
- Discuss how to minimize Digging/Chewing/Barking
- Demonstrate Self-Control Game “Tug and Calm”

Class 4 (1 hour)

- Teach “Take Hold of Collar”
- Discuss “Long Distance Recall”
 - Use of long-line
 - Working towards off-leash recall
- Review “Leave-It/Take-It” Step 2 (open hand)
- Introduce “Puppy Push-ups” (all 6 position changes)
 - Sit – from stand and from down
 - Down – from sit and from stand
 - Stand – from sit and from down
- Review “Touch” – progress to step 2 using a target stick
- Demonstrate how to shape “Go to Bed”
- Teach “Stay”
 - Discuss strengthening behavior with additional duration, distance, distractions over time
- Discuss withdrawing attention (time out) as a way to deal with problem behaviors
- Teach trick: “Bow” or “Spin”

Class 5 (1 hour)

- Review “Leave-It/Take-It” – add Step 3 – treat on floor
- Teach “Let’s Walk”
 - Stop-Redirect, Goal Method, Luring, Catch Me
- Teach “Heel”
 - Targeting method
 - Shaping a “Heel”
 - Discuss “Heel” covered more in-depth in Clicker High
- Discuss body blocking techniques
- Demonstrate “Wait” – momentarily pause and do not move forward
- Demonstrate how to prevent “Door Rushing” – teaching stay/wait at the door
- Demonstrate handling (mouth, ears, paws, tail, etc.)
- Discuss how to use an interrupt and redirect
- Discuss why harsh punishment is not advisable

Class 6 – Graduation (1 hour)

- Introduce Emergency Recall – distribute handout from Leslie Nelson, TAILS-U-WIN CANINE CENTER© (Discussed more in-depth training in Clicker High and “Come” mini-seminars.)
- Introduce a Shaping Exercise – (example: ring bell or sneeze and take tissue)
- Discuss exercises around the food bowl to work with or prevent food possession
- Fading the clicker and treats
- Mastering a few important cues (come, stay, attention, sit, walk on leash)
- Taking the training on the road (generalization & distractions)
- Socialization & Desensitization
- Additional training opportunities
 - Next Level Class: Clicker High, Musical Freestyle, Agility, Rally-O, or Mini-Seminars
 - Other Activities: See Appendix 3 in Book (CGC, Therapy Dog, Tracking, Herding, etc.)
- Games & prizes
- Graduation Ceremony; certificates, photos, prizes, refreshments
- Sign-up for next class