



## Teaching Your Dog to 'Drop'

Teaching your dog the 'Drop' cue is very important if they get a hold of something that they're not supposed to have, particularly if the item is harmful. This is not to be confused with the 'leave' cue, which should be used before they actually have the item. To learn how to teach your dog to 'leave' something, please see our 'Teaching Your Dog to 'Leave It' handout.

### What is fair trade and how can it help teach your dog to give items back?

If you have recently got a puppy, then you may have noticed that they use their teeth and nose a lot. Youngsters are curious and it helps them to explore, learn and understand the world around them.

You should allow them to do this, but you need to make sure they're doing it safely. This is where fair trade comes in. Instead of taking something from them that they shouldn't have, you trade it for something better.

This means your puppy will want to give you what is in their mouth, rather than keeping it for themselves. Most importantly, you know if they do get hold of anything harmful, you will be able to quickly and easily trade it for something safe.

### You want them to learn that it's fun, so start with a toy:

- 🐾 Pick a toy for your dog to play with. Make sure it isn't their favourite so that they are more likely to release it.
- 🐾 Encourage your dog to play with the toy for a few seconds.
- 🐾 Place a handful of super tasty treats on the floor next to them.
- 🐾 Let them make the choice to move from the toy to the food on their own. Make sure to let them know they have made a good choice by telling them they are good and rewarding them with another treat.
- 🐾 Once they have finished their treat, let them play with the toy again.
- 🐾 Repeat this a few times, making it a fun game that your dog enjoys.
- 🐾 Once your pup is letting go of the toy for the food you can start introducing your fair trade cue.
- 🐾 When your pup has hold of the toy, say your fair-trade cue (drop, out etc).
- 🐾 Place a handful of tasty treats to the side.
- 🐾 Once your pup releases the toy for the treats, tell them they are good and reward them.
- 🐾 Repeat this a few times to help your puppy learn their new word.

### Top Tip

Make sure you store away any items you don't want your pup to get hold of, as well as anything that would cause harm to your dog. It's surprising what they get their paws on!



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The advice contained in this handout is of a general nature and is no substitute for specific behavioural or veterinary advice.

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