
DEFINITIONS

Listed below are definitions of training words commonly used throughout this curriculum.

Use this as a reference guide.

Antecedent: an event that precedes another event and is a predictor of the second event (the phone rings, you answer the phone)

Aversive: an unpleasant or uncomfortable stimulus

Bribe: using a reward to get what you want from a dog

Capture: rewarding the dog for a desired behavior when they perform it on their own, without prompting

Classical Conditioning: associative learning; the dog learns a positive or negative response to a neutral stimulus. ("Yes" = a reward is coming)

Counter-Conditioning: works in conjunction with desensitization, typically used with dogs who are nervous or worried about a stimulus. Pairs positive experiences/rewards with the stimulus so it becomes a happy thing for the dog, not just neutral.

Criteria: the specific expectations of a behavior during a training session (Heel for 5 seconds, Heel for 7 seconds, etc.)

Desensitization: Taking a known aversive stimulus or a potentially aversive stimulus and pairing it with positive experiences/rewards over time to make it a neutral stimulus

Distance: one of the variables during training. How far is the handler from the dog, how far is the dog from the distraction.

Distraction: one of the variables during training. Anything that may break the dog's focus on the handler or cause the dog to behave inappropriately.

Duration: one of the variables during training. How long is the dog holding a sit, down, stay.

Fake Treat: handler holds their fingers together like they're holding a treat but there isn't anything there. No motion made to the treat pouch when this is used.

Lure: using a treat to get the dog into the correct position

Marker: "yes," "good dog," or *click*; should be consistent and used only when the dog performs the desired behavior.

Marker Training: using a marker to mark the correct behavior as soon as it occurs, and then rewarding.

Negative Punishment: removal of a rewarding stimulus to decrease the likelihood of a behavior

Negative Reinforcement: removal of an unpleasant stimulus to increase the likelihood of a behavior

Operant Conditioning: the correct behavior is performed, and the dog gets rewarded as a consequence

Positive Punishment: addition of an unpleasant stimulus to decrease the likelihood of a behavior

Positive Reinforcement: addition of a rewarding stimulus to increase the likelihood of a behavior

Proof/Proofing: making a behavior reliable in a variety of situations and environments

Punisher: anything that will decrease the likelihood of a behavior occurring again

Reinforcer: anything that will increase the likelihood of a behavior occurring again

Shaping: rewarding for small approximations of the desired behavior in order to build up to the final behavior (i.e. reward nose touching a target, moving that target to a push plate, removing the target so the dog only touches the push plate)

Stimulus: a thing or event that evokes a reaction (can be anything; a cat, another dog, a person, a child, a balloon, etc.)