



Wags to Wishes K9 Training

SMART 50

SMART x 50: SMART stands for **S**ee, **M**ark and **R**eward **T**raining, developed by Kathy Sdao.

The goal of SMART training is to catch your dog doing something good, then mark and reinforce that behaviour. (note that these are UNCUED behaviours.) The more we reinforce good behaviour that occurs randomly (i.e. when we are not in a training session), the more we strengthen those behaviours. X 50 refers to the goal of finding 50 good behaviours a day and reinforcing them.

SMART x 50 helps you become more proficient at **noticing** and reinforcing good behaviour – not just in a training session but through the day and in many different contexts. It is helpful to have conditioned a verbal marker as you may not have a clicker handy when you catch your dog doing something good. It is also helpful to have treat caches throughout the house so you have instant access to a reinforcer. SMART is a powerful way to influence your dog's behaviour - you may engage with him a few minutes a day in a formal training session; with SMART x 50, you are using many small opportunities throughout the day to 'train'.

A Verbal Marker is very useful, especially as it is always available. A verbal marker can be conditioned in exactly the same way as you conditioned the clicker with the Offered Focus and Name Game.

Choose a word or sound you will not use in conversation or when talking to your dog. 'Yessss' with the 's' sound being drawn out a very sibilant works well.

Don't think you can handle 50x per day? Start with 20 times. Keep track of your progress by counting out treats in the morning; set out a total of 30 treats divided into three or four different places around the house where your dog is most likely to be hanging out. At the end of the day, count the remaining treats and you will know how many times you have reinforced your dog. Over time, you should notice more and more opportunities to reinforce as you become more observant and your dog learns that you will reinforce certain behaviours (and offers those behaviours more and more).

What kind of behaviours will you reinforce? That depends on what you want, and the kind of things your dog does spontaneously, but here are some things you might consider

- Lying down calmly
- Going to his crate
- Sitting quietly while you prepare his food (or yours)
- Not barking when the doorbell rings (be sure to reinforce quickly before he has time to change his mind about not barking!)
- Bringing you a toy
- Eye contact
- Seeking you out
- Sitting at the door
- Being calm around active children

The more you reward – the more good behaviour you will have to reward. Keep raising your goal and see if you can get up to 50 times a day.