

Pay Attention, Watch Me, Redirection

Wouldn't it be great if our dog's looked to us for direction! It is possible! But, you have to do your homework. Some dogs need more incentive than others.

This command is really the stepping stone to all others. It should communicate to your dog: "Pay attention and be ready for further instructions."

1. Keep treats on you. Watch for your dog to look to you, then praise. Add the word "Watch Me" or "Look"
2. You may lure your dog's attention with a treat. Time the reward correctly though.
3. Try not to bend over your dog. Stand straight.
4. Reinforce eye contact by holding a treat in your hand behind your back or by your side. Your dog will probably stare at your hand, but be patient and don't say a word. Eventually, she'll look up at you. The second she makes eye contact, give her the treat.
5. Initially work toward a quick response to your cue "watch me." When she looks at you immediately, then begin to increase the length of time she looks at you before you give the reward. Start to vary the amount of time and the reward involved. You are building attention span, so be patient.
6. Never say your pet's name in association with negative consequences. Always positive.

You can reward your pet for looking at you when you say their name in the same way that you reward the "Watch me" command.

7. Less confident dogs may look away as a gesture of submission to you. If necessary, look at the top of her head or her ear rather than directly into her eyes. As your relationship grows, she should become more comfortable with sustained eye contact with you.
8. Use treats initially, but wean away over time.
9. Don't forget to "jackpot" from time to time and VARY your reward.
10. Initially, you may have to use a LOT of treats to keep your dog's attention. But, as long as you are consistent with your commands, you should be able to wean down/off of treats at some point.
11. Focus on your dog, not on what those around you are thinking.
12. Know the difference between bribery and reward.
13. Practice at home first. Remember that you will have to start over at step one when you add distractions.