



Golden Rule Dog Training

Come. Learn. Play

Teach Your Dog to Play Fetch

Teaching your dog to “fetch” a ball is fun for both of you and a good way to exercise your dog. The success of training of your dog hinges on rewarding the desired behavioral; in this case we use the ball to start the game of fetch.

Basic Steps:

First, find your dog’s favorite toy to start the game; you may need two toys (tennis ball, stuffed toy, see list below).

1. Throw the first ball and let your dog go after it. If he doesn’t, then try again, but don’t throw it too far and encourage him to go get it.
2. When your dog comes back towards you, encourage him to come close to you. If your dog does not drop the ball automatically, stop paying any attention to your dog and take out the second ball and start to play with it so your dog is interested.

For example, toss it up in the air and show him the ball and in a happy tone say, “do you want this one?” Continue to play with the ball; he should become interested in what you’re doing. Keep doing this until your dog looks at you. Your dog should show interest and will drop the ball that he/she has and look up at the one you have.

3. As soon as your dog drops his/her ball, show the ball you are holding to your dog. As soon as your dog focuses on the ball that you are holding, throw it.

Your objective is to have two balls throwing one, and when your dog comes back, you throw the other one. Back and forth so your dog sees the pattern of the game.

4. Once you have a rhythm going, then teach “Drop it.” You can do this is one of two ways: Try repeating “Drop it” as your dog drops the first ball to chase the second one. Or put a yummy treat right in front of his nose and when he drops the ball say, “Drop it.” Few dogs can resist the second technique. See instructions below.
5. Repeat the process when your dog comes back to you. Within a short period, you will have your dog retrieving for you.
6. At this point, add the cue “Fetch” and you should be able to just throw one ball.

The key to success is patience, praise and consistency. Every time your dog makes a step in the right direction, (even if they do not complete the cue) they receive a reward. Make this time you spend teaching tricks fun for both you and your dog!

Teach Your Dog to Drop It!

Does your dog run away from you with something in his mouth you don’t want him to have? Don’t chase him! Instead, start with “Trading”!

1. Start with a toy, one your dog likes, but not his favorite to start with; something he will grab and want to hold onto.
2. Hold a few his favorite treats in your hand (such as, small pieces of cooked meat or cheese).
 - a. You can also trade a toy for another toy instead of treats, but food is usually a better motivator.
 - b. Encourage him to take the toy you're holding; you can add a cue such as "take it!"
3. Once he takes the toy, try to keep him focused by letting him see the treat.
4. **Say, "drop it" as he drops the toy for the treat (trade);** you may have to be quick, so be ready.

Hints:

- a. *Do not say "drop it" before your dog drops the toy, you have to say it as he drops the toy; you're teaching him what drop- it means.*
 - b. *He will have to let go of the toy in his mouth in order to take the treat.*
 - c. *You may have to hold the treat to his nose.*
 - d. *If he is not giving the toy up, you may need a better treat or less attractive toy.*
 - e. *If he runs away with the toy, try a "sit-stay" first, or try this when he's hungry.*
5. Then give him the treat and praise him, "good boy!"
 6. Repeat this several times over the course of a few days until he is reliably dropping the item for you.
 7. Next, raise the criteria (better toy and/or treats). The goal is for him to drop anything, even a nice juicy steak or the neighbor's cat.

Eventually you will be able to phase out the treats and just give him lots of praise.

Toys for Fetch

Retriever plastic or rubber bumper
 Air KONG[®] squeaker tennis ball
 KONG Flyer[®]
 Chuck-it![®]
 Planet Dog Orbee-Tuff[®] Orbee Ball[®]
 And of course, the tennis ball

The Reluctant Retriever

For dogs who do not see the point of chasing after toys, start with the basics. For instance, if your dog likes to play tug-of-war, play a short game of tug with a soft toy that your dog likes. Then ask your dog to "Drop it" and toss it just a few inches away.

If your dog runs to the toy, immediately grab it up and start another fun game of tug. If he just stands there and looks at the toy, wiggle it around on the floor again until he finds it interesting. As soon as he goes for it, toss it another few inches away. Continue doing this until your dog chases after the toy. When he does, you can reward him with another quick tug game. Once he gets the idea, he should start to chase the toy when you toss it; you can add a cue, such as "get it" or "ready?" With a game of tug make sure you start and end the game; when the game is over take the toy and put it away. Next you can start increasing the distance.

If your dog is food motivated, teach him to fetch a toy for a treat. Show him the toy and toss it a few inches away. Even if he only watches the toy at first, praise him and give him a treat. This will help encourage him to play.

The Bait-and-Switch Game

If your dog loves to chase and pick up the fetch toy but is not keen on bringing it back to you, try the bait-and-switch game with two identical toys.

1. Show your dog one of the toys and throw it, and encourage him to fetch it. When he picks it up, call him to you and then show him the other toy.
2. Pretend to throw the toy in the opposite direction. He will probably drop the first toy and run after the second one.
3. While he is chasing the second toy, pick up the first toy and repeat the process. This exercise will get your dog used to picking up a toy and turning to run back to you.

Second phase:

1. Call your dog to you as he picks up the first toy; hide the second toy behind your back.
2. He should turn and run back to you while still holding the first toy in his mouth. When he gets close to you, say, "Drop it."
3. Next, show him the second toy. He will drop the first toy in order to chase after the second one. The idea is he starts to drop the toy near you so he can continue the game.

This game will be easy to play, fun for both of you and it can make him tired! The more you play, the better he will get at dropping the toy. Be consistent so he can learn what you want him to do and the game will be a regular release of energy! Eventually, you will eliminate the need for a second ball.

Teach Your Dog to "Give it"

If you want your dog to put the toy in your hand teach him to "Give it". Before your dog has a chance to drop the toy, quickly place your hand (palm up), underneath his jaw and say, "Give it." When he drops the ball or toy, catch it in your hand; it will probably be slobbery!

If your dog "drops it" on the ground, say, "Eh-eh, Give it," and keep your hand in place. Try wiggling your fingers while you say, "Give it" to encourage him. Since this is a new cue, he needs practice and your body language as you hold your hand out will help him understand what you want.

Sources:

Eric Letendre, eHow.com
Teaching Your Dog to "Fetch" By: Dr. Amy Wolff
ASPCA.com