

The Role of “THE TREAT” Game

Puppies explore the world with their noses and mouths — and that curiosity often leads them to pick up things they shouldn’t. Whether it’s a sock, a rock, or something truly dangerous, what they grab can quickly become a choking hazard or worse.

That’s why we teach “The Treat Game” — a fun, practical, and potentially life-saving recall cue that helps you trade anything your puppy might have for something way more rewarding.

Week 1: Introduce the Word “Treat”

- Once a day, wait until your puppy is focused on something else.
 - Quietly walk over, hold a high-value treat near their nose, and say “Treat!”
 - Give the treat and offer praise.
- ✓ That’s it!

Week 2: Add Movement

- Say “Treat!” and let your puppy come to you from a short distance.
 - No barriers or distractions yet.
 - When they reach you, give the treat and praise.
- ✓ That’s it!

Week 3: Add Challenge

- Say “Treat!” and walk to the fridge.
 - Introduce small distractions (toys, barriers, background noise).
 - Wait until your puppy is busy, then call them and reward when they respond.
- ✓ That’s it!



Week 4 and Beyond: Maintain It

- Practice a few times a week.
- Wait until your puppy is really into something — playing with another dog, chewing a bone, or watching kids.
- Call “Treat!”, head to the fridge, and reward with something irresistible.

✓ That’s it!

? Why It Works (and Why It Matters)

Once this habit is built, you’ll have a powerful tool for safely interrupting risky behavior:

- Puppy grabs something dangerous? Say “Treat!” and walk to the fridge.
- They’ll learn to drop the item and come to you without panic or fuss.

Important Tips:

- Do not chase your puppy when they have something in their mouth. This turns it into a game or makes the object feel more valuable.
- Simply say “Treat,” walk calmly away, and cover the object with your foot if needed.
- Pick it up once the puppy has walked off — without drama.

This simple training builds trust, prevents gulping and guarding, and helps avoid emergency situations — all while keeping your puppy’s experience 100% positive.