NOSE TARGETING TO HAND

Teaching your dog to target your hand with their nose can be a fun and easy behavior to learn together. This can be useful in a stressful situation when you need to re-direct their attention or help move them along.

Begin by teaching your dog in the home where they feel safe, with minimal distractions.

To start, present a flat hand a few inches away from your dog's nose and wait for them to investigate.

Mark and reward any interest or interaction with your hand.

If your dog struggles initially, you can always rub a treat on your hand to get their interest.

Next, present your hand and wait for them to make contact with their nose before marking and rewarding.

Repeat until your dog is eagerly touching your hand with their nose as soon as you present it.

Next increase the distance away you hold your hand so that your dog has to move in order to make contact.

Practice in all directions and with both hands. You can add a cue such as ‘touch’ by saying just before you present your hand.

You can progress to having your dog follow a moving target. To do this, as your dog moves towards your hand, slowly move it so your dog follows. Mark and reward after a short distance.

When your dog has mastered the art of nose targeting, you will be able to use it in so many ways including moving your dog to a mat when visitors arrive, turning your dog’s head in the opposite direction to a trigger, or as a fun way to cue greetings with people. It will also come in handy as a great alternative for recall!

How many uses can you think of?