



## COLLAR GRAB GAME

### Why do it?

The foundation of this is critical for your dog's confidence for you and for the other games. The whole point of CGG (collar grab game) is to classically condition your dog to think great things happen when you touch/grabs the collar and the secondary bonus is this reinforcement is happening very close to your body, so the dog is building value for being right next to you.

### How to do it.

Remember the focus of the Collar Grab is Classical Conditioning...it is touch the collar and feed.

With your dog's favorite treats, simply start by touching the collar; as you do, deliver a treat. Work up to grabbing the collar and, while still holding the collar, deliver the treat. This is a great way to give your dog her or his dinner (if you feed raw you may need to get plastic gloves). Your hand must be on the collar or holding the collar as you deliver. You can also use a tug toy to play this game if your dog LOVES the tug toy.

For three sessions throughout the day, grab the collar and feed. Choose three different locations within the house or your yard to conduct these sessions. Use 10-15 rewards per session. Mix in games of running to chase you and tug. Try to do no more than 3-5 collar grabs at once without breaking it up with another "action" game like running or tugging. Tug is the easiest game to use but running to a new location works just as well at raising your dog's arousal level. Ideally your dog will canter or gallop, and when he catches up, you can start the *Collar Grab Game* again.

When your dog has no issue with the game, try grabbing and walking several steps before you give the cookie.

Once reinforcement history is built up, you have now earned the right to occasionally, and when appropriate, take the collar when giving a time out for unwanted behaviors. This helps for you to have a way to "stop" the reinforcement your dog may be seeking. It is used also if during training you need to have a discussion with your instructor; hold the collar during the conversation and then re-engage the dog into working mode after this delay by letting go and having a run and chase game or tug game with you!

**Troubleshooting:** If your dog shies away when you reach out, back off the intensity of the grab until the dog shows no reaction. The ultimate success of the game is when you offer your outreached hand and the dog offers his neck to you. Some dogs may not like to be moved with their collars — additional training will be to take one or two steps while holding the collar.