

5 ways to elicit a behavior

1 Luring

Encouraging the dog to follow a treat to get into the correct position.

2 Shaping

The process of building a new behavior by gradually rewarding approximations of the behavior, requiring the dog to come closer and closer to the goal behavior.

3 Molding

Not recommended. The process of physically guiding or manipulating your dog into position.

4 Capturing

The process of waiting for the dog to offer the behavior unprovoked, and then rewarding that behavior.

5 Mimicking

The tendency of a dog to do what another dog or the trainer is doing.

SCHEDULES of REINFORCEMENT

Continuous

A continuous rate of reinforcement is when the dog is rewarded every single time he performs the behavior correctly. This is commonly used in the acquisition phase of learning. It allows the dog to quickly learn a new behavior and associate it with a cue. Once the dog has a strong association the reinforcement schedule is usually changed to something variable.

Fixed

A fixed-ratio schedule of reinforcement is when a behavior is performed a certain amount of times before being reinforced. For example, your dog learned sit with a continuous rate of reinforcement, now you change it to a fixed rate of reinforcement and ask him to sit twice before he received a reward, or three times before a reward. Fixed-ratio can be a great way to teach your dog he might not be rewarded every time he sits for the rest of his life.

Variable

A variable-ratio schedule of reinforcement is when a behavior is only rewarded some of the time. The dog should not be able to predict when the reward is coming. A variable schedule is not advisable until your dog has a really firm grip of the behavior being asked. This is the same theory that keep gamblers gambling, they never know when they will hit a jackpot.