

HANDLING

LEVEL ONE

WHY AM I TRAINING THIS?

Introducing your dog to different types of handling, and building positive value for those interactions, is incredibly important. At some point, your dog is going to go to a groomer or veterinarian for checkups, nail trims, bathing, blood draws, x-rays, etc. These procedures all require your dog to be handled by a stranger in ways that are not generally the most comfortable or fun. By building value for this type of handling and getting them accustomed to it in an environment they feel safe in initially, will increase the chances that it will be less stressful or difficult when performed by the professional.

GET READY:

- ✓ Yummy treats
- ✓ This is best practiced when your dog is calm and relaxed in an environment that is relatively free of distractions (living room, bedroom, etc.)

GET SET:

- ✓ Have your treats easily accessible (pocket, pouch, etc.)
- ✓ Dog should be relaxed and at ease

GO:

- ✓ This is a great exercise to do in an informal manner, while you are sitting with your dog in the evening, when they are relaxed and laying down (Not Asleep Though!)
 - Approach your dog, making sure they know that you are there and pet them in the usual way
 - As you are petting them, begin to move your hand toward their shoulder. Rub their shoulder and slowly slide your hand from their shoulder down their leg, toward their paw.
 - Gently rub their leg/paw. Every time you touch/stroke them, and they remain in their current position, or look at you and not your hand, stop touching them and mark and reward them.
- ✓ As you progress with this, apply the previous steps to all four legs, and these different levels of touching:
 - Lift leg



- Hold and rub whole leg
- Gently touch and move toes and toenails
- Rub pads
- ✓ If at any point your dog growls, moves away or stiffens up stop and give them their space. **DO NOT CORRECT YOUR DOG FOR GROWLING!!** This is their way of telling you that they don't like what's happening and want you to stop. Continuing despite these warnings, could lead to a more dangerous display from your dog, such as a snap or bite.
- ✓ If you have a new rescue dog, **BE VERY CAUTIOUS**, if attempting this. I would encourage you to not try this without professional help/evaluation.

