

# IYC (IT'S YOUR CHOICE)

LEVEL ONE

## WHY AM I TRAINING THIS?

This is a fun game you can play with your dog that will teach them a “Leave It”, without having to constantly tell them to “Leave It”. By teaching them impulse control, we are also teaching them that everything in the world is not theirs for the taking, and that they need to wait for an “Ok” from us first. We can apply this concept to many things, such as crates, toys, food, etc.

## GET READY:

- ✓ Yummy treats

## GET SET:

- ✓ Have your treats easily accessible (pocket, pouch, etc.)
- ✓ Start with your dog in front of you
- ✓ You can do this standing, but I find that the easiest way is to be sitting or kneeling on the floor with your dog.

## GO:

- ✓ Begin by placing a few treats in your hand and opening your hand flat in front of the dog, presenting them to the dog. Allow the dog to make a choice, either attempt to grab the treats from your hand or back off and wait for you to tell them whether it is ok.
  - If the dog attempts to grab the treats, immediately close your hand. **DO NOT LET THE DOG STEAL THE TREATS!**
    - The dog will likely try everything they can to get the treats out of your hand: pawing, mouthing, nipping, licking, etc. Endure the dog's efforts, while not pulling your hand away or reacting to the attempts. Let them pass. This may take a while initially.
  - The second you see the dog start to pause in their attempts open your hand. If they come back, close your hand again.
    - If your dog doesn't pause or back up enough for you to safely open your hand, then:
      - Wait for a moment when your dog pauses, even for a second, mark and reward with your other hand.
      - Keep doing this until your dog is backing off/pausing long enough for you to open your hand.



- **The idea is to get the dog to realize that your hand only opens when they back off. Once the dog lets you open your hand, and doesn't immediately come back at your hand, mark and treat with your other hand.**
- **Reward the dog for not attempting to steal the treats and waiting for you to tell them it's ok.**
  - **Make sure you are rewarding with your other hand and deliberately taking a treat and giving it to them.**
  - **Start increasing and varying the time and distance your hand is open in front of them before you give them permission to have one. This will build impulse control.**
- ✓ **Once you are able to present the cookies to your dog and they don't make any movement forward (or better yet move back!), you can move on to Level Two.**

