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## Teaching Your Dog to Say Please

**What does it mean to say please?** Saying please is when your dog offers a calm behavior like eye contact or a sit as a way of asking for something they want, like food or attention. The behavior offered is referred to as a default behavior because your dog defaults to it in a variety of situations.

**Why teach your dog to say please?** Teaching your dog a default behavior teaches them that offering behaviors we like gets them what they want. It also prevents your dog from developing nuisance behaviors, like jumping, pawing, or vocalizing.

**When should you expect your dog to use a say-please behavior in everyday life?** Real life examples of "Say Please" behaviors include: your dog giving you eye contact in anticipation of their food bowl or offering a sit while their leash is clipped.

## How to Teach Eye Contact to Say Please

Play the [Attention Game](#) with your dog to teach them that offering eye contact is rewarding!

**Getting Started:** Have your treat pouch filled with yummy treats and an established marker word such as "Yes" or your [clicker](#) at the ready!

**Step 1.** Mark your dog for looking in your general direction by saying your marker word or by clicking the clicker. Follow up your marker with a yummy treat.

**Step 2.** Next, mark and treat your dog for looking up at your body.

**Step 3.** Your dog will start to offer eye contact. Mark, then treat for this behavior.

**Step 4.** Pause to see if your dog will rock back into a sit position. Mark, then treat for this.

**Step 5.** In everyday situations, use life rewards like opening doors, giving them their food bowl, or playing with their favorite toy when they offer their say-please behavior.

## Training Tips

**Tip 1.** Do not give your dog any cues during this exercise. The idea is to get them offering you eye contact or sitting with eye contact as a way of pushing the treat button.

**Tip 2.** Toss a treat behind your dog to reset them if they keep staring at you.

**Tip 3.** Keep your hands behind your back or calmly at your sides until your dog looks at you.

**Tip 4.** Remember that consistency is everything in dog training. Your dog will learn faster if everyone in the household participates in teaching your dog to Say Please.