



## TOUCH

A simple and fun game that can be built into so many different things! A foundation for teaching your dog to distinguish between items, turn on/off light switches, pick up items, be gentle, move their body in an area, touch is a very useful thing.

Target sticks (available at class) are useful tools to guide your dog when walking, and to touching other objects, such as turning on/off light switches, retrieving the TV Remote, etc.

Hold a treat in a closed fist; hold your fist out towards the dog. When the dog's nose comes toward the fist, click, open your fist and feed the dog the treat. Close your fist without a treat in it this time and see if your dog noses it again. As soon as he does, click then treat! He just learned that food does not have to be present to win! This time, hold your fist in a different position, maybe out to the side so your dog has to walk a step or two to get to it. Click then treat.

You can have your dog touch any item. When they are reliably touching, think of a cue that is appropriate. Do you want to just call it "touch"? Perhaps you want to name the object he's touching, to teach item discrimination? For more on item discrimination, ask your instructor.

Do you want a nose touch or a paw touch? If you want a paw touch and are only getting a nose touch, try withholding the click, the dog will likely paw the item in frustration, "Maybe she didn't see me touch it?!!" and escalate his behavior.