

## Hand Touch

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FS6cVEhxE10>

**We will use this a lot in heeling and also a secondary reinforcer.**

We want High energy and will be a tool to encourage the head position we want for heeling AND build energy into the behavior immediately preceding it.

For example, the “halt” in heeling is usually pretty boring. We can encourage the dog to stay engaged and keep his energy up by pairing halt-sit with JUMP AND TOUCH! We will also use the touch as a motivational game to keep the dog’s head in position as we start building duration in heeling. So we really want a powerful, enthusiastic touch.

**The general steps are:**

1. Touch the hand for click and treat
2. Touch the hand overhead for a click and treat
3. Touch the hand overhead from the handler’s side (eventually heel position)

**To train this behavior:**

1. Hold your clicker in one hand, and have some treats where you can get them easily.
2. When you have your dog’s attention, hold out your other hand a few inches from his/her nose.
3. When your dog leans forward to sniff, Click and Treat.
4. Take your hand/target back and repeat again.
5. When your dog reliably touches the target, you can start adding a cue. Say “Touch” as you present the target.
6. When he is enthusiastically and reliably touching your hand in front of you, start moving the target up higher so the pup has to jump up slightly to touch it.
7. Separately, you can start adding distance, tossing the treat away to reset, so that the dog is coming from farther away to touch your hand.
8. When the dog is racing back from the treat to punch your hand, happily lifting up to punch it over his head, start to turn your body so that you are sideways to the dog when you present your hand.

This can be weird for some dogs, so split that turning into chunks instead of going all at once from facing the dog to beside the dog. If you are starting with the dog at 12 o’clock, turn so that he is at 11 o’clock. If that goes well, turn a few more degrees so that he’s at 10 o’clock, and then eventually 9 o’clock.

9. Keep “loading” this behavior by reinforcing it every time you cue it. That strong reinforcement history will be money in the bank!