

It's Yer Choice

Level 1: Ignore Food

Purpose:

The goal of this exercise is to teach the dog to ignore food that it has not been formally offered, in response to the cue 'mine' and to take food in response to the cue 'take it'. These two cues are taught together.

Dog Skills

- Self control
- Offer behaviour
- Respond to a cue
- Give attention

People Skills

- Shaping
- Reinforcement
- Cueing

Steps:

1. Offer food in a closed fist. The dog will likely lick, sniff or paw your hand. When the dog's nose moves away from your fist, click and give the dog the food from that hand (using the OTHER hand to feed).
2. Repeat this until the dog is ignoring the closed fist.
3. Now repeat with the hand open, just close your fist if the dog comes forward, always feeding from an open hand when the dog has moved back.
4. Repeat this until the dog is ignoring the food even in the open hand. Then you begin to give the cue 'mine' as the dog moves away when you offer your hand.
5. Continue to shape until you can offer your hand and the dog makes eye contact. Replace the click with the cue 'take it' just before giving the treat.

Click Points

- Head movement away from food hand
- Eye contact (not looking at hand)

Good for developing these other behaviours:

It's Yer Choice Levels 2 – 4. Ignore inappropriate food or objects that are dropped on the ground or floor, or encountered outside the home; take treats nicely; redirect from distraction. It's Yer Choice can be played in many ways, please speak to your instructor about how to use it even more to increase self control.

At home fun:

Practice with an item the dog should not have (child's toy, sock, etc). Say 'mine' and place the item on the floor in front of you. If the dog looks away from the item and/or at you, click and give a VERY HIGH VALUE treat.