

Pivot Platform step 2

<https://youtu.be/IMujEKKPbzk>

When the dog can move around the platform following you FLUENTLY, get independent movement:

1. Step back from the platform. Angle your hip and shoulder to the platform on a diagonal.
 1. Here is where food delivery can get tricky, and doing it correctly REALLY helps make progress fast, and believe me it's not easy! **So practice a few times without the dog.** You'll be reaching out with your closer hand to deliver the treat over your dog's head. To facilitate pivoting, you'll actually deliver the treat just to the side of the muzzle... almost as if you are going to drop it in his ear.
 2. Eventually, you'll be delivering the treat to your dog while he's facing completely away from you, so you'll be extending your arm.
 3. Reinforce one direction at a time now, but switching directions and sides frequently... every 30-60 seconds in the session. When you switch sides, you'll also switch treat hands:
 1. Clockwise – Right foot/hip towards platform, deliver treats with right hand.
 2. Counterclockwise – Left foot/hip towards platform, deliver treats with left hand.
2. Pick whichever direction you want to work first. It doesn't matter. Once you are set up, **DON'T MOVE!** The entire point of this step is to teach the dog to move when you are stationary. So be stationary!
3. Click ANY hind leg movement you see. Anything at all, even if it's in the wrong direction. Deliver the treat high above the dog's head, and into the ear on the farther side. That means you'll be delivering the treat just across the dog's muzzle. His head should lift and *twist* to take the treat, but his neck should stay fairly straight... his spine and body should not bend into a U. If you are getting a U-shaped bend, you are reaching too far. Deliver the treat higher, and **centered over the platform.**
4. As soon as your dog swallows that treat, be ready to click and deliver a second treat right away. **He'll have shifted his weight to take the treat, and will automatically adjust his feet to stay balanced.** CLICK THAT MOVEMENT. You want to be clicking and treating before the dog has a chance to move back to where he started.
 1. I was taught to pre-load my treat hand with 5-10 treats and hover it over my dog's head so that I can quickly deliver the treats one after another without having to pull my arm back. Note: Practice without the dog. I use palm up when the dog is moving and after I click I put my palm down to deliver the treat. The trick to doing the hover correctly is that the treat hand stays *STILL* and doesn't try to lure the dog in a circle. Hands often have minds of their own, so talk firmly to it.
5. After your hand is empty, toss a treat off to the side to get your dog off the platform. While he's chasing the treat, switch sides. You'll now have your clicker and treats in the other hands, and your other foot/hip facing the platform. Repeat the above step, now delivering the treats to the other ear (still the one farther away from you).
6. Gradually, increase your criteria, so that your dog must take a full step to earn the click and treat. Continue to deliver the treat as described above.
7. By now, the dog has been inching away from you around the platform. Depending on how large his steps are, you are likely getting quarter or even half turns with each handful of food. When you get that, raise your criteria to quarter turns for the click. Food delivery stays the same.
8. Now your dog is likely moving quarter turns around the platform, which gets him perilously close to **THE MOST IMPORTANT PART!**
****The Most Important Part of this exercise is being able to pivot PAST the handler's leg and turn the head up and around the other direction. This means the dog's tail will cross your foot. This is critical! When you get this, celebrate!**

9. Gradually raise your criteria to half turns, and then finally full turns. But again, it's not about how FAST the dog can go around....it's how thoughtfully he does it and if he can stay in balance.

Just a note: Your dog may try to 'cheat' just a little by rearing up for the treat. Many dogs would rather extend their legs and not their back. Ideally you want to see them keep their front paws on the platform, and then pick up each hind foot individually to step around. That will give you the cleanest, most powerful carry over into the heeling skills. That individual hind leg movement (rather than hopping or shuffling) and associated weight shift is what creates that prancing gait in heeling.