

VBSPCA

POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT REWARDING GOOD BEHAVIORS



Choose a Reward. Treats, toys, praise, or affection such as petting are all great rewards. You can use one type of reward every time, or you can mix it up. The most important part is that your pet enjoys and responds to the reward you have chosen.



Timing is Everything. It is critical to reward your pet as soon as the desired behavior occurs. For example, if you are working on the command “sit,” reward your pet as soon as he sits to reinforce the wanted action. If you wait until your pet is starting to stand up again, the reward will be associated with standing up instead of sitting.



Consistency is Key. It is very important that everyone in the family uses the same verbal cues and timing, otherwise your dog or cat could become confused by what you want from them. For verbal cues, be sure to use short words such as “sit” or “down”. Use a calm voice and do not repeat the word.



Sometimes pets do not learn as quickly as we would like. It is important to keep your frustration in check. For additional support visit vbspca.com/pet-care-resources.