



Domesti-PUPS

**2021 Service Dog
Training Camp Manual**

2021 Domesti-PUPS Service Dog Training Camp

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What is a Smart service pup?

In order to have your Service-PUP perform and provide the very best service for you, we must teach you how your Service-PUP was trained, and how you can continue to build on the knowledge that your Service-PUP has at this point. By understanding our training techniques, you will be able to add or subtract skills that you desire to happen or wish to discontinue in your Service-PUP.

To help you remember our theory, we will use the word SMARTEST. You want to have the smartest Service-PUP assisting you when you leave our training camp, and we have worked very hard to ensure that you will graduate with the very SMARTEST Service-PUP possible. Your Service-PUP was trained by shaping, movement/luring, association, reflex, and targeting their errors and successes to ensure top performance skill in their required commands.

S – Shaping – Simply put, shaping is breaking down the desired behavior into easily-achievable steps. First have the final targeted behavior identified. Next, you positively reinforce each small step toward that goal.

M - Movement / Luring - is the use of sounds, motion or smell to lure your Service-PUP to complete a task. Much of what your Service-PUP has learned was taught through this method of training. We use treats as an incentive in training. Dogs can be very motivated by food rewards, and are often eager to do whatever is required to get to the next tasty morsel; however, caution must be used when using treats for targeting. When used appropriately, treat training can be an incredible motivator in training your Service-PUP new commands, or reinforcing the ones he already knows. If used inappropriately, treats and hand motion can become your Service-PUP's primary focus, making work secondary on his mind. This problem can become detrimental to your Service-PUP's ability to be effective..

A – Association training requires the trainer to wait for the dog to do a command on his own without having been told. If the dog sits down, the handler praises him enthusiastically with “GOOD-SIT!” Over time the dog learns that when he does a “SIT” he gets praise and sometimes a treat. He makes an association, and learns the command.

R – Reflex training requires a technique or touch that causes a reflex in the dog making him respond in a specific way while saying the command. This may not be the best method for individuals with disabilities but keep it in mind. One example of this type of

training is when teaching our dogs, the command “MOVE.” We began by bumping into them and saying “MOVE” as we did. When they moved out of the way, we praised them with “GOOD MOVE.”

T – Targeting - Targeting is the most common way of using visual prompts to train behaviors. Once your dog learns to target, you can teach him to touch other things, and use the command to train advanced commands. Target training is a method to accelerate how we elicit the behavior we want, instead of just waiting for it to happen. This is done by using a visual cue to prompt the dog in the right direction.

Errors & Successes – When training your Service-PUP he was given appropriate praise for his successes and no reaction for his errors. If your Service-PUP has obeyed the command, an immediate “YES! GOOD BOY!” in an enthusiastic voice should be given. This method of training when used consistently, allows your Service-PUP to understand exactly what you expect of him.

Timing is everything. You probably can remember something you made a mistake on last month. Your Service-PUP has already forgotten that he didn’t sit when you told him to two minutes ago. Dogs do not ponder over the complexities of all this training or what will happen if they get it right or wrong. If you praise your Service-PUP ten seconds after he followed a command for you, his thought is “I’m a good boy? What did I do?” Timing of praise or correction must be immediate in order to reinforce or to stop behaviors in your Service-PUP.

Summary

Having a smart Service-PUP means training by shaping, movement, association, reflex, targeting, errors and successes, and timing. Timing is the glue that holds the package together. A dog reacts in milliseconds, and moves on. Praise or correction must happen before he has moved from his reference of command.