



Teaching a Dog: Take it/Drop it

Take it

1. Have the dog either stand or sit politely -no jumping or barking allowed!
2. Say “Take it!” then offer them the toy.
3. As soon as they grab it, say “Yes!” and play tug with them for a few seconds.

This teaches the dog that they can only grab something out of your hand when you tell them to - if you don't teach “take it” then they may think they can grab things from you whenever they want!

Drop it

4. While you and the dog are holding the toy, hold a treat up to their nose and say “Drop it!” You should still be holding onto the toy, but do not tug or pull it, as this will make the dog want to tug as well.



5. Once the dog smells the treat they should let go of the toy -say “Yes!” as soon as this happens.
6. Let the dog eat the treat while you take the toy away.
7. Repeat steps 1-6 until the dog is dropping the toy without you holding the treat up to their nose.

Once the dog understands this exercise for lower value items you can start practicing with more interesting items, gradually working up to something the dog really loves to grab or chew on. An example is:

- A. Start teaching this with an old toy that the dog kind of likes
- B. Then practice with a newer toy the dog is a bit more interested in
- C. Then practice with an item the dog isn't supposed to have, but tends to grab anyway (like socks or shoes)

If you practice enough, you may be able to work up to having your dog drop something really high value, like food! *But the reward you give them in return will have to be even better than what they've dropped!*