

RECOMMENDED SUPPLIES:

1.) Variety of treat options to reinforce desirable behavior (both inside the house and outside on walks)

You want the treats in the treat station jars in your home and yard to be ***small, palatable, and easy to eat quickly*** so it is practical to dole many out throughout the day to reinforce desirable behavior (think each treat should be the size of a single kibble or the size of a pencil eraser). If your dog will eat their normal kibble doled out one at a time in the house, you can use that for the "treat station jars" throughout the house.

Bringing out the really high value food (think tiny pieces of real meat!) when working on a new skill or when working in a distracting environment (including neighborhood walks for reactive dogs) can be necessary and helpful! Make it easy to carry treats by investing in an easy to use treat pouch or fanny pack to bring on your dog's walks.

Here are some tips to maximize the effectiveness of using food while training without dealing with unintentional consequences of feeding high calorie/ rich treats daily:

Don't overdo it! The goal is to achieve a trained dog – not a trained, but very overweight companion! Pieces you use for treats should be *tiny* - think the size of a pink eraser on the tip of

a pencil. Consider cutting back a bit on what goes into your dog's food bowl on days you are using more treats to work through training exercises, and/or set aside a portion of their kibble each day and use that for training. Keep track of roughly how much your dog is eating in treats and adjust the remaining food you provide accordingly, within reason. If you need higher value treats that have more nutritional value (but still are extremely palatable and highly motivating to the dogs), I have the following recommendations:

And here is a list of some high value soft treats I like that are easily broken into smaller pieces, which is helpful for training exercises:

Tiny pieces of meat - chicken, hotdogs, etc

Happy Howie's (roll you cut up)

Bare Bites

Real Meat

Ziwi

Pure Bites

If you use a "special" higher-value treat, you can experiment with mixing the higher value food item in with some of the dogs' regular kibble. Mixed up in a treat pouch, the kibble will take on some of the taste and smell of the higher value food, it will last longer, and it will be more nutritionally sound for your dog if you are using a lot of food during training.

2.) Several small jars or containers

Use these to stash treats around the house (and in the yard) in high up but easily accessible (to humans!) spots. Strategically place these in the rooms where you spend the most time so you and others will have easy access to mark and reward ("Yes!" followed by a treat) when working on reinforcing desirable behavior throughout the day.