



Step

Step is a great way to get your dog to use their brains, learn about placement of their paws and can be a super useful management skill.

Teaching our dogs to 'step' means we're teaching them to put their front two paws up onto an object. Sometimes people call this a 'two paw target'.

To play:

1. Find an sturdy object for your dog to step on; this could be the bottom step of the stairs, a small stool, a low wall or a sturdy upturned box.
2. To start with, you're going to need to lure your dog to try this new behaviour; use your treat like a magnet on their nose and move it up and over the object so they try to follow it.
3. They may just put one paw on the object to start with, if they do still mark and reward them for the attempt.
4. When they put both front paws on the object mark and give them a 'jack pot' reward. (Multiple treats one after the other)
5. Your dog might automatically jump off again, but if they don't just roll a treat away to 'reset' them.

6. Repeat, repeat, repeat! When you're sure they're going to step onto the object every time you lure them over it, try the same process with an empty hand. Hold your hand exactly as you did when you were luring with a treat.

7. Once you're willing to bet me £20 they'll do it without a treat in your hand, you can add your cue work. Say 'Step' just before giving your hand signal, when they pop their front paws on the object, mark and reward.

To make it harder;

1. Slowly increase how long they have their paws on the object before they get their treat
2. Try walking away from them while they're on the object. (Build up slowly, taking one small step at a time and going back to them to reward them)
3. Increase how far away you stand from the step when you cue them.