



# Help your dog to Control The Meerkat Confidence Games Can't Get It Wrong



Plus printable check list to track  
your progress !



# Welcome



Hello there,

My name is Danielle and I'd like to welcome you to the **'Can't get it wrong game'**; part of the **'Control The Meerkat collection'**. We all know that life happens and it's not all fairies and puppy tails; despite our best effort! Therefore, I've created 'Control the Meerkat' to help **YOU** to understand **YOUR DOG**, and learn all about what you can do to help them to cope when life happens!

The **'Can't get it wrong game'** is a game designed by me and adapted from an exercise taught by my colleague Jayne Arden, and it incorporates an element of ACE Freework by Sarah Fisher too. Both of these trainers are worth checking out. This game is all about taking the pressure away from training and having some fun with your dog, allowing them to explore freely without pressure, or luring. This game is designed to boost confidence and exploration in our dogs to give them little wins that help build the foundations for resilience. It's one of the best starting exercises for nervous dogs and those impacted by trauma, plus great to expand the skillset of confident dogs too. That's what **Control The Meerkat** is all about. We show you how to help your dogs help themselves. It's not about obedience and telling them what to do; it's about teaching them the skills they need to manage themselves. By doing this our dogs learn how to regulate their own emotions, and calm themselves when they feel excited, frustrated, scared, or overwhelmed. This is where we begin.

Good luck with your training!

Danielle Beck, BSc (hons), PGDip, MSc  
Clinical Animal Behaviourists & Rehabilitation Trainer  
*Founder of Control the Meerkat*





# Can't Get It Wrong Game!



This game helps our dogs to learn that trying new things isn't scary, and can actually be quite rewarding. This can build up their confidence to try new things without fear of failure. It also really helps to boost your bond and connect with your dog too. You'll be amazed at what they can do once their confidence starts to grow. You get to sit back and watch their confidence grow with each game as they're just allowed to explore. Place items out and reward for interactions, trying new things, or adding duration to anything. You're basically marking and rewarding around every 5 seconds, nothing is bad. You'll start to get the idea of what your dog likes to do and how confident they are at exploring new things and stepping on things. Once they start to understand the game they'll try new things and you'll see their excitement at trying things and getting a reward.

## Let's get started!

You can then add new things, moving things, things to climb into and things to climb onto. These items are more challenging, especially for nervous dogs, so make sure it's a stable carpeted surface so nothing slips or makes too much noise. When combined with the 'Wreck It' game they really learn how to explore, and recover from small startle responses. This can eventually be taken outside and you can reward so many good things. It's a great confidence builder and helps build trust and connection with you. This can be utilised in the garden, car parks, woodland walks etc



An instructional video can be found in our learning empawrium





# Where do we begin?



For this game we need

- 5-10 different items – ensure the items at first are stationary and aren't going to move or make a noise,
- A pot of small treats,
- A marker word, or clicker.

Now we wait

We're aiming to treat around every 5 seconds to start. Fast rewards build confidence.

By doing this they get high levels of rewards, instant wins with no pressure, and a confidence boost to keep going!

Most will start with a sit or focus on the treat. That doesn't matter; mark, reward, repeat.

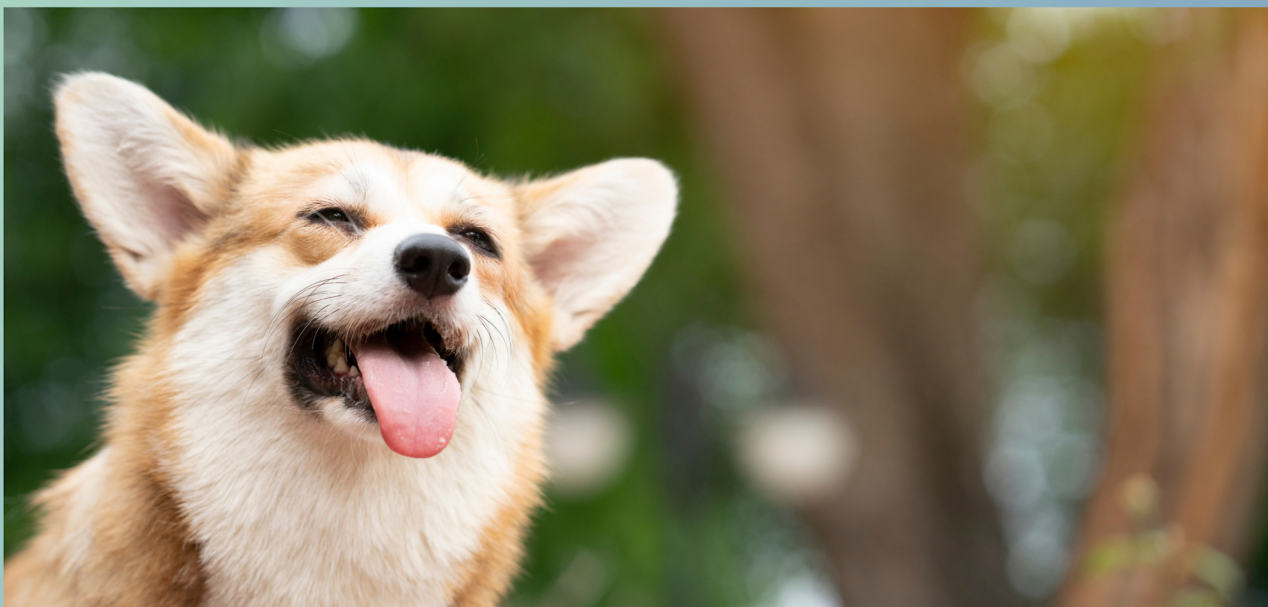
We're looking for duration (which helps build confidence, and frustration tolerance), or trying new things; which help build self confidence through exploration.

Throwing the treat reward in different places and varying delivery, will encourage exploration. This provides an opportunity to walk past, sniff, look at, or touch something.

If they do mark, treat, repeat !







The more you play, the more confident your dog will become. The association of good things with you helps to boost your bond and feelings of safety !

## **It's predictable, highly rewarding, and safe !**

What happens if my dog won't take food?

That's ok. Sometimes the pressure of training or life in a new environment can be too much for some dogs. They don't feel safe or able to eat, especially around people (please ensure medical reasons are ruled out if your dog is fussy about food). In this case scatter the food among the items for your dog to explore, sniff and search freely and safely with you. Encourage them with happy voices; if they like that kinda thing, if not stay quiet and read a book in one corner and enjoy their company. This is a great way to help dogs impacted by trauma to feel safe with you. No pressure, no rules, just freedom to explore and make their own choices. It's incredibly powerful and so simple.

**You get the idea! Now give it a go with your dog !! Want to learn more? Join our community !**





# Checklist

Make a note of the items you use and how your dog responded for each session and watch their confidence grow!

Notes





## MOVING FORWARD

### **Sooo, what should I do next ?**

Well now you're starting to understand there's more to helping your dog than training alone, are you curious what else you can try with your dog? Would you like them to be more responsive? Are you still struggling and finding your dog can settle inside, but struggles outside, as they are reactive on their lead? Do you just want to be able to take them out for a walk without them barking and lunging? Or be able to actually leave the house, as they struggle when left? or even take objects off them without conflict? Then the 'Control The Meerkat' series is for you!

### **I love it! Who is this for exactly?**

Control The Meerkat is for all people who want to understand and help the reactive dogs that share their lives. It's a community built to help owners to meet others in the same boat, and learn how to help their reactive dogs, help themselves. There are private forums, learning resources like this, instructional videos and webinars too

### **Sounds AMAZING! How does it work?**

Simply visit the website and choose the course or membership subscription that's best for you! You can even book a consultation with A Registered Clinical Animal Behaviourist; and join our 6 or 12 month rehabilitation program.

***Click here to get started: [controlthemeerkat.com](http://controlthemeerkat.com)***





# CONTROL THE MEERKAT



# collection



IF IN DOUBT; CHILL OUT

CONTROL THE MEERKAT  
FOUNDATIONS

AUTO CHECK IN

Instructional videos can  
be found in our learning  
empawrium

BRAIN & BEHAVIOUR

TAKE A DEEP BREATH

FOUNDATION EXERCISES

The management strategies and games within Control The Meerkat are to help you and your dog to learn new coping strategies, and remain as calm as possible. These techniques will not fix the problem, but they will make it easier to manage your dog, whilst you are working through the program to have more long term results. As we go through the rehabilitation journey your dog will learn new ways to 'Control The Meerkat', which will help change their behaviour into something more manageable to make your life with your dog easier.

**After-all, it's often the underlying emotions that drive their unwanted behaviours.**

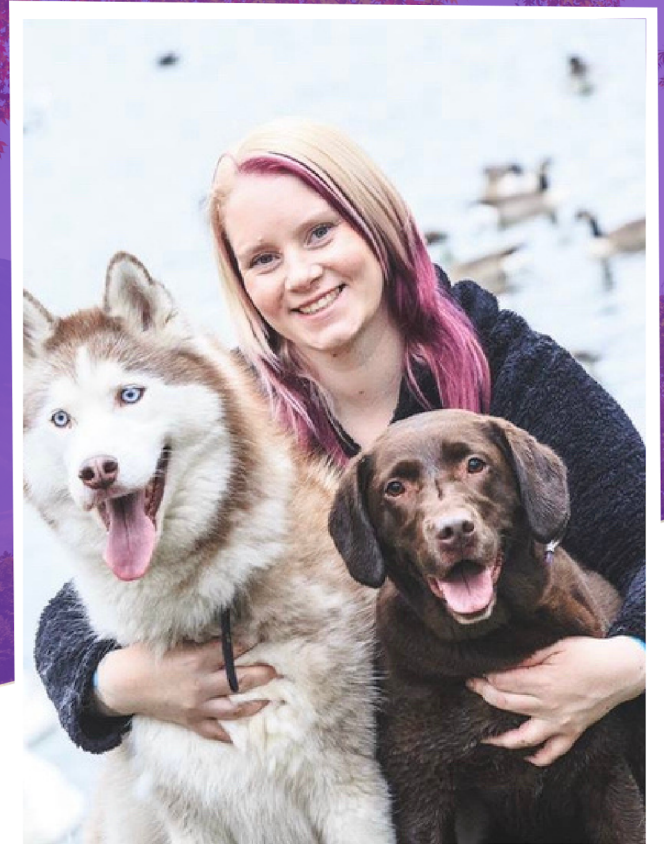
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*"Sometimes the smallest step in the right direction  
ends up being the biggest step of your life."*



# MEET THE *Author*



Danielle is an enthusiastic and passionate clinical animal behaviourist, dog trainer, and mum of one. Her mission is to help and inspire dog owners to create an easier life with their dogs. She aims to help owners to understand their dogs and enable them to manage themselves by sharing her knowledge and wisdom with the world. She currently lives in Manchester, UK, with her partner, 7 year old son, and their 3 dogs.

*"Define success on your own terms, achieve it by your own rules, and build a life you're proud to live."*

-Anne Sweeney

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next step?*

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owners**



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without all the jargon**

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