



Help your dog to Control The Meerkat Stop The Dog Teach Your Dog To STOP!



Plus printable check list to track
your progress !



Hello there,

Welcome



My name is Danielle and I'd like to welcome you to the '**Stop The Dog**'; 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 '**Stop The Dog**' game is a way to connect with your dog while teaching a valuable life skill in a really fun way. This game teaching dogs to pause then get a reward. it's a simple concept that can be built upon to be able to ask your dog to stop in any situation, even chasing those squirrels or jumping on visitors. It's a fast and easy way to get your dog to stop and look at your for guidance. For them to do this effectively they have to know how to **Control The Meerkat**, and this exercise is another building block in helping them get there.

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!

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Clinical Animal Behaviourists & Rehabilitation Trainer

Founder of Control the Meerkat





Stop The Dog



Welcome to the 'Stop The Dog', which is a really fun exercise for dogs that need to learn how to pause and wait for further information. The stop cue can be used to tell your dog you need them to stop what they're doing and pause.

This is a quick and easy way to teach your dog to stop when they're moving. This is great for stopping your dog from running and jumping up on your visitors, interrupting behaviours, or linking to a send to a recall or send to bed. It's really useful for stopping them and redirecting them to a different task. You can use it in emergency situations where they're running towards danger or away from danger. You can even use it just for fun, to see how accurate you can really make it.

It's a really versatile cue that easy to teach but difficult to master. It takes consistency and creativity to transform the stop to a stop mid chase; but if you get the foundations right it's far less daunting. Let us show your how!





How do we begin?



Step one, linking the hand signal to the stopping behaviour

For this game we need

- A good aim,
- A pot of small treats,
- A marker word, or clicker.

We're going to teach our dogs how to stop, the 'stop' at this stage is a pause. To do this, you want to act as though you're throwing a dart with the treats.

Hold your treat between your thumb and finger, raise it up as though you're going to throw a dart, and when you lift it up and move it, you're going to throw it towards your dog.



You want your aim to go a little bit behind them or direct to the mouth. So they're either going to catch it or it'll land behind them and they'll have to go searching for it.

Steps

Hand up and treat release should take 2-3 seconds, this is so the dog learns to pay attention or they miss it :)

The hand goes up - the treat is released.

The hand goes up - the treat is released.

You'll start to notice that every time your hand goes up, your dog starts to pause, as they prepare for the treat to be thrown. This is what we're going to try and capture with our stop!

Really build this up, hand comes up, treats released. If you've got a dog that's good at catching, they'll really enjoy this. If not, then they'll enjoy the hunting part. It's difficult for dogs to move, mark, and eat at the same time. We're going to build on this in part 2.

Next Steps

Step two - Capturing Stillness



What we're looking for is to see if our dogs start to pause as we raise our hands to see if they have made that link yet. To do this we need the dogs to move away then as they come back, we're going to raise our hand. We're going to pause for a second and release. If the dogs don't stop, that's fine. we just need more practise. At this stage, we want them to learn that if they are paying attention and they stop, they get to see where the treat goes or they catch it. If they don't stop, they miss it.

So it's a learning opportunity for them. They'll still get to forage and find the treat eventually.

If they do stop wonderful they understand the game!!

We want to really capture that pause and focus on me if the arm raises as you're going to get something then we can capture that stillness.

To help create some distance and test their ability to 'stop' we're going to take a treat and throw the next treat with an underarm roll to encourage our dogs to move away from us.

Then as they come back raise your hand up and as they come back, you should get a nice little stop. It might not be straight away but you should be seeing that pause now.

Repeat the underarm throw to move them away. Let them come towards you, Raise your hand, and throw.

At this stage we don't want to worry about a 'sit' or 'down' lets really strengthen that stop!





Next Steps

Step three - Adding The Cue



So far, we've been using a visual cue by raising our hands in the air, which is a predictor for releasing the treat and encouraging our dogs to stop. This is a very effective hand signal, for when our dog is looking at us, but what about when they're not? When they're nose down searching or running away from us? That's why a verbal or audio cue really comes in handy. The new cue could be the word Stop, a Whistle blow, or any word you like that you will remember in the situations you want your dog to stop in :).

When transferring cues, we need to do this in a certain order so the new cue, predicts the old known cue.

So we do it in this order.

**We give our new cue, -
then immediately do the old cue,
they do the behaviour
they get their treat,**

The old cue will be our hand raised. We want to pair the old and new cues pretty closely together. So old cue, raise your hand, release the treat.

Most dogs respond well to whistle cues rather than verbal cues, as they're a unique sound. However, think about the context you want your dog to stop in. If it's for close proximity where your voice can travel that should be ok. if your dog likes distance and you walk in windy places, a whistle sound will travel further.

After several repetitions, you'll notice that they start to get that the new cue predicts the old one and they stop with their new cue :D

Stops are incredibly effective at interrupting behaviour and I highly recommend them, for all dogs.





Next Steps

Step Four - Practise, practise, practise



we want to start off in the home, then move into the garden, during play, and out on walks.

Don't worry too much at this stage about how far away they stop or the duration that they stop. It's the 'stop' being reliable that we want first.

The key at this stage is that they understand the pause means that we're going to throw something for you, and we can build up their responsiveness to being able to be stationary when we ask them to.

We can start to add the duration a little bit second by second. So 2 seconds, 3 seconds, 5 seconds, building up to a really good duration stop at about 30 seconds.

Once we've got that, we can then start to add in the duration parts. And this is always a fun one to do.

Lets make it into a challenge by having particular targets set up along a path or when you're out on a walk, see if you can get them to stop on the target area, by a certain tree or by a certain marker on the ground. It's a really fun thing to do!

At first the easiest way is as the dogs are coming towards you. Once they understand what stop means, we can then see if they can start to do it as they move away from us, which is a little bit harder, but it's really achievable.

Then we start to ensure that they can do it in different states of arousal. So can they pause and stop while you're asking them to play?

We can then bring that into self control and frustration tolerance exercises by utilising things like flirt poles and tug toys and see if we can get them to stop mid chase and really help them to control that meerkat!



Checklist

Make a note of the distances and duration that your dog can stop and start to make a list of distraction, like toys, play, visitors, squirrels! 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

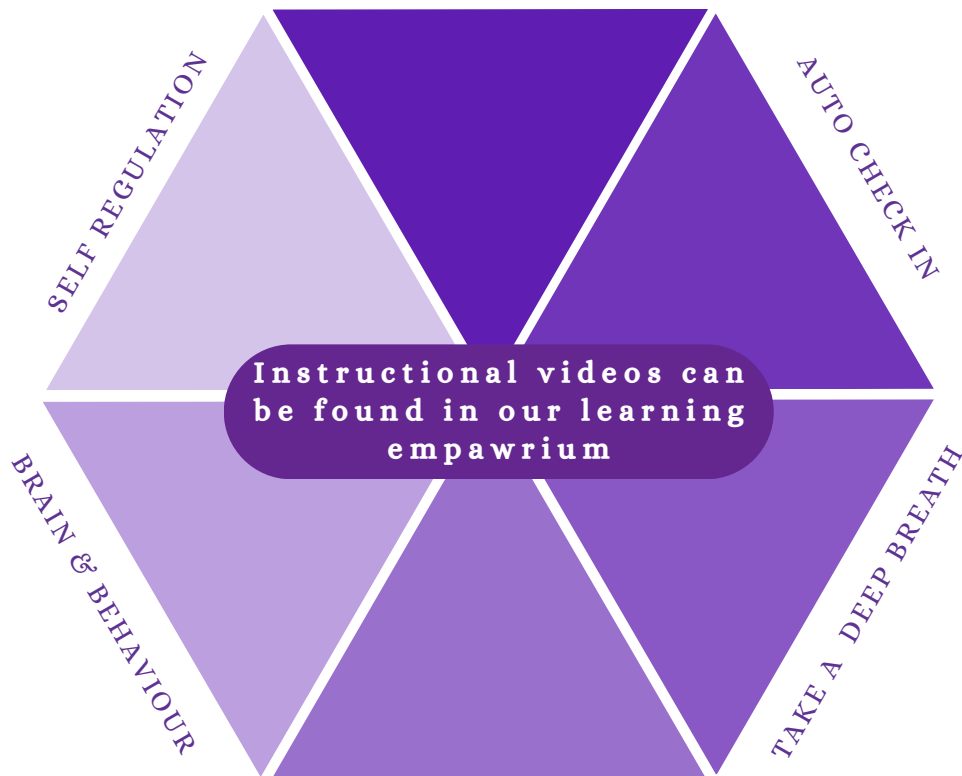
CONTROL THE MEERKAT



collection



IF IN DOUBT; CHILL OUT



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."

Notes



MEET THE *Author*



Danielle is an enthusiastic and passionate clinical animal behaviourist, rehabilitation 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 caregivers to understand their dog and enable them to manage themselves; by sharing her knowledge and experience with you. She currently lives in Greater Manchester, UK, with her partner, 9 year old son, 2 dogs, and a cat.



"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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