

TOUCH

Clicker training games build confidence by creating a new routine and environment with rules and language they understand and have control over.

Training video – <https://youtu.be/u5uLtUB3XYY>



Control = Confidence.

Teaching cats to TARGET with clicker games can lead to more clicker games such as come, PLACES, fetch, moving around the room, and getting into a carrier.

Good options for targets are your hand, finger, a pencil, a stick or a pointer wooden spoon.

STEP BY STEP



1. **Place the target within one to two inches of your cat's nose.**

Cats are normally curious; they typically will smell or rub their nose on an object.

2. **CLICK the instant your cat's nose moves towards or touches the target, then deliver reward.**

3. **Remove the target from view.**

It is important to "reset" the target once you have clicked and rewarded.

4. **Once the reward has been eaten, immediately present the target again and repeat the process of CLICK and reward.**

After your cat has consistently touched the target, add the cue "TOUCH" as you present the target.

5. **Once you and your cat feel confident with TOUCH, move the target a few inches at a time.**

Move it up, down, and add distance based on your cat's comfort.

If the distance becomes too great, go back to the last distance they touched, get a successful touch, and end on a positive note.

How to End the Session:

- Sessions should last only 2 to 3 minutes at a time.
- End on a positive note.

Be sure to go at your cat's speed—after all, they are a cat. By following their lead both of you will be relaxed, enjoying each other's company, and having fun! Be prepared to be impressed.

BEST PRACTICES

PREPARE FOR SUCCESS

-  Have the tools needed: high value rewards (generally treats, but can be play or petting), a clicker, and a target.
-  If using treats, break into pea-sized pieces. Keep treats safe and out of sight during training; use a container, pocket or pouch that enables you to easily grab the treats.
-  Prepare a quiet place with no distractions or other cats around.
-  Practice holding the items all at once in your hands. How do you plan to present the target, click, and then give the treat in a fluid motion for the cat to understand? Practice by yourself until you feel comfortable.
-  Play clicker games at the same time each day.



WHAT TO DO IF CAT DOES NOT "TOUCH" TARGET

-  Be sure to click the instant the cat does the behavior you are looking for. Think of it as taking a picture and capturing that moment.
-  You can rub food/treats on the target to make it more appealing.
-  Click for small movements in the right direction toward what you are asking for. For example; if they are moving their head toward the target, click and reward. We want their job to be easy and for them to get rewarded.
-  Be sure your cat is hungry and has not eaten 2 to 3 hours before your session.
-  Cats learn more quickly when they realize their actions are causing the click, so you can offer the target while the cat is in motion. You can move your cat by tossing a treat.