



Pattern Game

1 2 3 Drop

Here is a version of one of Leslie McDevitt's "Pattern Games" that we use for start-of-class attention, and to introduce leash walking. For more great resources, look for McDevitt's "Pattern Games" DVD on Tawzer Dog's website, and get her "Control Unleashed" training books.

Polite walking is probably the hardest thing you'll ever teach your dog — you are asking him to ignore all of the smelly and exciting things in his environment and, instead, hang by your side. Make his efforts worth it!!

With the 1 2 3 Drop! game, you're creating a predictable pattern and rhythm with your movement, the behavior you're asking your dog to do, and the timing of the reinforcement:

- Begin by not walking at all — remind your dog of the game and how valuable being near you is by placing 5 or more treats, one at a time, on the ground to the side of your foot.
- Once your dog is engaged with you, take three steps and count each one out loud — "one, two, three!"
- Immediately place a treat on the ground after your third step, at the side of your foot.
- Continue by counting out three more steps and placing the food on the floor by your foot after the third step.
- It's okay to place the piece of food on the ground even if your dog is not immediately by your side — he'll figure quickly what the game is, and that your side is where the good stuff is.
- If your dog is having trouble with three steps, start with by counting out one or two steps and reinforcing.

Practice inside!

Practice this off leash in your house or in an enclosed, very low distraction area — that way you and your dog don't need to worry about the leash, which helps get your mechanics down pat.

Practice on a walk!

When you practice this on a walk, start by feeding at your side the 5 treats, and only play the game a short distance — to the next crack in the sidewalk, or telephone poll, etc. I let my dog know we're playing the game by saying a short phrase when we start, such as "with me!" and another short phrase, such as "all done!" or "be a dog!" when we're finished and he can now go sniff.