

# Leave with Puppy Biting

**Step 1.** Begin by saying the cue “leave”, when the dog is not yet nipping or biting and is focused on you, then drop a few treats on the ground. Repeat multiple times a day over multiple days.

**Step 2.** Say “leave” when the dog is sniffing at something, playing with a low value toy, or interacting with a low value item. Drop a few scattered treats on the ground and away from the object after saying “leave”. Repeat multiple times a day over multiple days.

**Step 3.** Say “leave” when the dog is interested in a low value item (similar to step 2) and **wait until the dog steps away from the object**. Once the dog disengages, click and reward by scattering a few treats on the floor **away from the item**. Repeat multiple times a day over multiple days.

**Step 4.** Once the dog is fluent in the exercise, begin working with medium value items, such as toys and high valued objects like pigs ears or chewable treats.

**Step 5.** As soon as the dog is willing to leave object alone 8 out of 10 trials, try redirecting the behavior. I.e. say “leave” when the dog grabs a sock, wait for it to drop the sock, click, and play tug with an appropriate toy that belong to the dog as a reward. Redirecting allows you to curb the behavior while rewarding with appropriate alternatives just remember to tidy items up before the dog picks it up again.

## Hint:

- This exercise can be used to teach puppies not to bite feet, however make sure the pup is not aroused or overly playful when trying this exercise. Interrupting play before escalation in addition to teaching a “leave” can control the behaviour.
- Try to remember that yelling at your dog, playing chase games, or fighting over him snatching an undesired item is often reinforcing for the dog. Try to remain calm and don't make a “big deal” out of your dog having the item. If need be offer to “trade” with a treat. Do make a big deal and praise for giving up an item.
- In order to keep your dog and belongings safe, make sure to take preventative measures such as: tidying up socks, toilet paper and other fun objects, stowing your belongings out of dog's reach, and managing food items to prevent counter surfing or food stealing.

Video clips demonstrating the “leave” cue can be found on YouTube.