

Training Plan: Drive By Treat Tosses

Time: 5-10 minutes

Supplies: Bite-sized treats, Bait Bag, Wand toy

Goal: To teach animals to feel comfortable when people approach and enter their kennels.

Instructions:

Level 1

Assess the animal's kennel presence from a distance, as you approach the front of the kennel when you are at a distance of 10-15ft. If the animal is highly reactive to you (vocalizing, hard-staring, making contact with the kennel front) or appears uncomfortable (remains at back of kennel, shutdown, trembling, tense body), attempt to simply toss treats with the side of your body offered from the greatest distance you can allow, and walk away. If you cannot see the animal at the front of the kennel, assess from a safe distance where you can observe the animal. Simply toss treats from the greatest distance you can allow offering the side of your body, and walk away.

Level 2

Approach the kennel and assess the animal's kennel presence. If there are no apparent signs of reactivity or discomfort, drop treats through the bars. If the animal approaches calmly within 5 seconds, hand feed through the bars and move on to the next animal. If they do not approach, drop the treat inside the kennel or condo and move on to the next animal.

Level 3

If the animal is readily approaching the front of the kennel and will take treats from your hand through the bars, open the kennel door slightly and offer a treat from hand. If the animal approaches within 5 seconds, hand feed, close the door and move on to the next animal. If they do not approach, drop the treat inside the kennel and move on to the next animal.

Level 4

If the animal is readily approaching the front of the kennel and will take treats from your hand with the door slightly open, you may enter their kennel (or open their kennel and linger, for cats) and offer a treat. If the animal approaches within 5 seconds, hand feed, exit the kennel and move on to the next animal. If they do not approach, toss the treat inside the kennel and move on to the next animal.

Once the animal has moved through these levels comfortably you can move to the hand-feeding behavior plan.

Kennel front Play for Cats

For cats who do not appear to respond positively to food or who do not move through the above mentioned levels quickly, kennel front play may be a better alternative. Using a wand toy, simply linger near the front of the kennel and flick a wand toy around just outside the kennel, so that the cat can track, chase and grab it through the front of the kennel. Once the cat appears more comfortable or to respond positively to people approaching their kennel, the kennel may be opened and the wand toy can be flicked around inside of the kennel.

Reminders:

- Keep your body relaxed and turned to the side
- Facial expression should be soft and blink your eyes
- The tone of your voice should be quiet and friendly