

# Advanced training: Shake hands



Teaching your dog to give paw, wave or shake hands is a really useful task, it can be used to help children with their communication or increase their self esteem by suggesting they 'teach' their dog to give paw once you have taught it. Some parents also use 'high five' for children after they have completed a task they have found tricky or as a distraction tool. Teaching your dog fun tricks can also encourage children to pay more attention to their dog if you are concentrating on building their relationship.

This may be easier to teach without a clicker. Like every new task, it is best for the dog to learn step-by-step, by trial and error, again in short 3-minute maximum training sessions.



**Step 1:** Hold a treat in your hand and show your dog, close your fingers around the treat to make a fist.

**Step 2:** With your dog standing in front of you, hold your fist out, and encourage them to get the treat out. They will start by using their mouth, but keep your fist tight. They should soon give up using their mouth and try with their paw - reward this by opening your hand and giving them the treat.

**Step 3:** If you have a dog that chews too hard at your hand, move your fist to the floor and move it about to encourage them to pounce or paw at your fist instead.

**Step 4:** Each time your dog should give up using their mouth quicker and go straight to using their paw.

**Step 5:** Once your dog is consistently giving paw, start to have an empty fist and produce the treat after from your other hand.

**Step 6:** Start to open your hand out gradually each time until you have a flat hand. The dog should now be placing their paw onto your flat out-stretched hand.

**Step 7:** If you are teaching shake hands, when the dog places their paw on your hand, close your fingers around the paw and reward. Gradually build up to gently shaking their paw as long as the dog is comfortable with this.

**Step 8:** If you are teaching wave, gradually move your hand upwards when asking for their paw and reward the dog for lifting their paw without touching your hand. Building on this to waving and the dog lifting their paw.

**Step 9:** Once you have achieved the behaviour you want put it on a verbal cue, such as 'shake hands', 'wave' or 'high five'.

**Step 10:** When your dog is confident doing this in a range of places and in different situations, you can start to get the children involved.

