

# Kid-Friendly Training: Fun Tricks for a Stronger Bond

This **Child-Safe Training Guide** is designed to build a bond of trust and cooperation between your child and your dog. By focusing on simple, low-arousal tricks, children can learn to communicate clearly with their pets without the risk of over-excitement or nipping.

Training should be a game for both the child and the dog. These activities focus on "hands-off" rewards to keep fingers safe and arousal levels low.

## 1. The Three Rules for 'Junior' Trainers

Before starting, teach your child these safety guidelines:

- **The "Treat Toss":** Never hold food in your fingers. Instead, say "Yes!" and toss the treat on the floor between the dog's paws. This prevents accidental nips.
  - **Keep it Short:** Dogs (and kids!) have short attention spans. 2–3 minutes is plenty for one session.
  - **The "Stop" Rule:** If the dog walks away, the "game" is over. Do not follow the dog.
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## 2. Beginner-Friendly Tricks

### "Find It" (Sniffing for Success)

This is the easiest game to start with because it encourages the dog to look away from the child and use their nose.

- **How to do it:** Say "Find it!" and toss a high-value treat a few feet away.
- **Why it works:** Sniffing naturally lowers a dog's heart rate and keeps the interaction low-pressure.

### "Touch" (Hand Targeting)

This teaches the dog to gently boop the child's palm with their nose.

- **How to do it:** The child holds their palm flat out. When the dog's nose touches the palm, the child says "Yes!" and tosses a treat.
- **Why it works:** It's a great way for the dog to choose to approach the child and interact politely.

### "Spin" (Follow the Treat)

- **How to do it:** The child holds a treat near the dog's nose and slowly draws a circle in the air. When the dog follows the circle, say "Yes!" and reward.
  - **Why it works:** It's a fun, non-physical way to move the dog around without touching them.
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## 3. Understanding "Marking" Behavior

Teach your child the power of the word "Yes!".

- Explain that "Yes!" is like a camera shutter—it takes a picture of the exact moment the dog did something right.
  - **The Game:** Have the child practice "marking" you. When you sit down, they say "Yes!" and give you a high-five. This helps them understand the timing needed for dog training.
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## 4. Safety First: The "No-Petting" Zone

Remind your child that training time is **not** petting time.

- Focusing on a task (like sitting or spinning) requires concentration.
- If the child tries to hug or pet the dog *during* training, the dog may get confused or frustrated. Keep "Training Time" and "Snuggle Time" as separate activities.

## 5. Parental Supervision

**Never leave a child and dog alone during training.** An adult should always be the "referee," watching for any signs of stress in the dog (like lip licking or yawning) and ending the session before the dog becomes overwhelmed.