



## Target Training – How to teach targetting

What is “targeting”? Targeting is teaching your K9 teammate to touch a part of their body, usually a nose or paw, to a desired object or location

To start your K9 teammate on targetting, you can elect to do one of two methods:

1. K9 nose touches your hand
2. K9 paw touches an object (like a small plastic lid)

Both of these will become very useful in training, but make sure you work only one method first. Once the method is learned (can be done in a number of places with distraction consistently, etc), then proceed with training the other method. When you add the verbal command, remember to call them different names. You can use words like touch, nose, target, spot, etc.

This example will instruct your K9 teammate to touch the palm of your hand with their nose. Start with your K9 teammate, a quiet room, a clicker, and small, highly exciting training treats. Place the clicker in the hand you are not asking your K9 teammate to target. Also, make sure you deliver the reward from the clicker hand and not the target hand.

1. Hold your palm out, fingers down at your K9 teammate’s nose level. At the exact time when your K9 teammate actually touches your hand with their nose - click and reward. This touch can be a bump, lick, or sniff. Your K9 teammate will initially do this out of curiosity; If they don’t, try wiping some moist food on your palm to make it more interesting.
2. Take your target hand away.

Repeat steps 1 and 2 and continue until your K9 teammate purposely touches your hand with their nose.

After your K9 teammate has associated the motion to the reward, add the word cue of your choice to the motion (“touch, nose, target, spot, etc.).

As your K9 teammate’s skill level increases, you can start moving your hand to different locations (higher, lower, etc). When they’ve caught on to this motion, you can then move your body to another location and call your K9 teammate with your word cue to respond.

To touch a paw to an object, place the object on the ground close to your K9 teammate. When your K9 teammate is curious and touches it with their paw, click and reward. Plastic lids work well as targets - your K9 teammate will want to paw at it naturally to make it move. Again, when the motion is learned, add the verbal cue of your choice, work distance, and location. You can even hold the object in the air or on a chair.