

U-Turn (Let's Go)

Why this is useful for your dog to know

The U-Turn is an excellent foundation behavior that can help your dog avoid triggers that may scare your dog or cause him to react. The U-Turn is often used when a dog is on leash, but it can be trained to simply mean “Hey there! Check in and follow me” even in the house.

Goal behavior

When you say “Let's Go” and turn in the opposite direction, your dog will move with you.

Before you start (documents available in Training Library):

- Read **Clicker/Marker Word** – get up-and-running with your marker
- Read **Thresholds** – become familiar with the variables that contribute to Thresholds

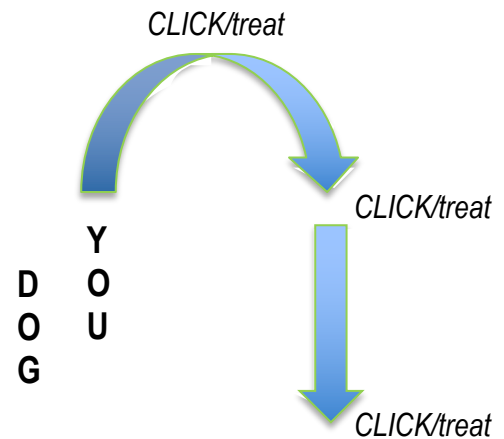
Training the U-Turn

1. Walk forward at a brisk pace with your dog on your left.
2. Stop your forward movement.
3. Click/mark as you stop, offering your dog a treat while he is positioned at your side.
4. Start to turn to your right and say “Let's Go”. As you do, click/mark, and give your dog a treat as you get to the 90-degree position.

Treating at the 90-degree position is especially important to do. Typically your dog will walk with you in a straight line, but may fly to the end of the leash as you begin the process of turning, which offers him an opportunity to vocalize, lunge, or fixate on the trigger. You will want to control your dog's movement throughout the turning process, encouraging your dog to hug your side throughout the turn.

Later, when you are proofing this behavior, repeat the exercises while turning to the left.

5. Once the 180-degree turn is complete, click/mark the dog and deliver reinforcement at your side.





6. Practice, practice, practice!
7. As the behavior becomes more reliable, you can begin to fade using treats in the beginning and middle of the turn, starting to click and treat the dog only as he completes the 180-degree turn.

Tips

- Practice this exercise in a distraction-free environment so your dog can learn this behavior while remaining under threshold.
- In the early stages of teaching this exercise, you will want to use a high rate of reinforcement, i.e. practice the drill with only a few steps or a short pause in between each “Let’s Go”.
- You will want to train this behavior in many environments and situations – **NOT JUST IN THE PRESENCE OF A TRIGGER**. You don’t want your dog to learn that you only say “Let’s Go” when something scary is on the horizon.