



# WOMEN'S ANIMAL CENTER

America's First Animal Shelter™

## Click for Calm

### Dogs who are barking in the kennel:

1. If a dog is barking, approach the dog, wait until the barking stops even for a split second, click, and treat. Wait a few beats, watching the dog. Click and treat, again if they are quiet. Repeat for 5-10 times.
2. If a dog is barking persistently, don't look at it; instead, click and treat its quiet neighbors, just once, and move on.
3. If a barking dog stops when he sees you coming, click and toss treat. Wait a few beats, watching the dog. Click and treat, again. Here are some other things you can try if the dog is quiet when you approach their kennel:
  - Turn your back and walk away.
  - Walk away while still facing them and walk back
  - Add distance in your approach- you can start from other kennels or up and down the aisles. If they bark, you can turn around and approach again until they are quiet. OR you can toss treats into the kennel from a distance if they are quiet and before they start to bark.
  - Reach up and grab a treat from the treat basket- that movement can cause dogs to become excited and start barking. If this is the case, break it into steps. 1. Lift your arm straight up in the air, if they stay quiet click and treat. If that is too much, lower you reach in the air. 2. Lift your arm closer to the bucket, click and treat. 3. Touch the top of the bucket, click and treat. 4. Open the top of the bucket, click and treat. 5. Finally, reach into bucket and grab a treat, then click and give treat.
  - Use people walking by- possible adopters or volunteers. You will have to treat very quickly because that is a big distraction.
  - Use dogs walking by- You will have to treat very quickly because that is a big distraction.
  - Build duration while you are in front of the kennel. Click and treat, wait 1 second, click and treat if quiet. Repeat with only adding 1 second at a time. If they start to get frustrated, decrease duration.
4. Click persistent barkers for any of the following behaviors: looking away, lying down, backing away from gate.
5. Be patient. Habitual barkers may get worse, temporarily, before they give in and offer silence as the new way to get attention.
6. In traditionally noisy moments, such as mealtime, click quiet dogs before feeding. Feed barkers last, and only after a click.



### **Entering kennel:**

1. Start by speaking to the dogs from outside the cage. Click for eye contact. Toss a treat (or several treats) toward the back of the kennel.
2. Enter the kennel while the dog goes after the treat. Click and treat for front paws on the floor, for sits, for eye contact again, and for letting you clean, or letting you put the leash on. Toss treats rather than hand-feed, for safety and to keep the dog actively participating. Much can be accomplished here in just a few seconds, and the dog will remember well, the next time. This procedure can help both the fearful, shrinking dog and the door-rushing, unmanageable dog.

### **Some other behavior we can click for:**

These simple clicker tasks are usually enough to quiet the dogs and make them more manageable, greatly reducing daily stress levels for people and animals both.

- Eye contact
- Stop barking
- Feet on the floor
- Come forward to greet people (shy dogs) or step back from door to greet people (overfriendly dogs)
- Sit
- Sit to be fed
- Sit to be leashed
- Go out quietly

Communicate and Coordinate. When several people are beginning to click several behaviors with several dogs, it's time to put progress cards on the kennel doors. Ask the Clicker Champion to prepare cards listing each dog's name, the starting date, and clickable kennel behaviors in the order that they usually occur (see below). Clicker users can check off behaviors as they develop, so everyone can see what this particular dog should be clicked for, today. Adopters, too, can see what each dog has already learned, which they will find both impressive and reassuring.