



WOMEN'S ANIMAL CENTER

America's First Animal Shelter™

Making a Trade

There are times when the dogs we're interacting with get a hold of something that they shouldn't have, or need to drop before we bring them back into their kennels. This could be a toy or it could be something like a piece of paper or plastic bag. And there are times when those same dogs have no interest in dropping whatever it is they should be dropping. Rather than trying to pull the item out of the dog's mouth (which could be dangerous!), volunteers should offer to trade for the item. You can hold the food right up to the dog's nose so he can smell it and as soon as he drops the item, give him the food.

Though this is a different situation from a dog who wants you take a toy from him as part of play, you can use the same method to get the toy away from a dog engaged in play. In this circumstance, the goal is to build the dog up to dropping the toy without using the food so that continuing the play becomes the reward.

To paint a picture of that example, it would look like:

- Dog brings you a toy to continue a game but doesn't drop the toy. You can show him some food and then give it to him as soon as he drops the toy.
- You can also entice the dog to drop the toy in exchange for another toy. Throwing the toy, in this circumstance, is the reward, so be sure not to throw the new toy until he has dropped the one he's holding.
- Once the dog is reliably dropping the toy for you, you can add the word "drop" before the exchange.

If a dog will not drop an item that you are not using as part of play, use food as a distraction to get him to drop it. Be sure to pick the item he has dropped quickly. If a dog is guarding an item or has ingested an item or parts of an item, please alert staff.



Thank you!