



“Find It” Game for Dogs

Dogs need an outlet for exploratory or searching behavior. If a human-approved outlet for this behavior is not provided, they will likely find one that is less acceptable (digging in the garden, stealing items off the counters, or out of the laundry, etc.) The “find it” game is a great way to provide physical activity and mental stimulation.

Items needed

Numerous small treats (dry dog kibble works well)

A hungry and eager dog

An area free of distractions such as other dogs or cats

The game

1. When first teaching this game, let the dog see the treats being placed about the room.
2. “Hide” the treats in dog-allowed locations (on or near the floor in clear sight initially). Potential locations are on the ledge or the foot of a chair leg or table (not on the table). Avoid locations where human food is placed or any location where the dog is not allowed to explore.
3. Place 10 treats about the room while someone holds the dog or he is behind a barrier watching.
4. Give the cue, “Find it”, just before letting the dog go explore and enjoy the treats.

Repeat this game daily in the house or even in a fenced in backyard. Once the dog understands this game, increase the difficulty level by hiding the treats with him out of sight. Always start the game with the same cue word or phrase.

If the dog knows a stay cue, have him perform a sit or down stay while the treats are placed around the room. Reinforce and release him to find and eat the treats.