

Forward facing Strut

Work on engagement/eyes/ready
Work on Stack Trainer (ST) and paw targets (PT)- pup should be able to walk onto them on his own
Work on teaching pup to trot at a correct pace (mark when he offers that while trotting around)
Work on zero leash pulling, especially toward a reward/distraction ahead of the dog
Make a target like this: (Or use a bowl on a platform that keeps dog's head in correct position)



Hold the collar and drop a treat in the bowl. When the dog is looking at the bowl but not pulling mark with the “dish” cue and let go of the collar so the dog can move forward to get the treat from the bowl. Also practice with a tossed toy instead of the bowl (It will come in handy later for longer distances).

1. Add ST: Stand with the dog facing the ST and have the bowl just out of the dog's reach beyond it. Hold the collar. Toss or drop a treat into the bowl and when the dog focuses on it without pulling, let the dog move forward onto the ST. When the dog is properly stacked on the ST and not pulling toward the bowl, mark with the “dish” cue and let go of the collar so the dog can move forward to get the treat from the bowl. Also practice with a tossed toy instead of the bowl.
2. Repeat step 3, but with the dog on a leash. Gradually add distance from the ST, and add a bit of distance between the ST and the reward. You'll give the “Strut” cue to let the dog know he can trot to the ST then the free stack cue when he reaches the ST. Use leash pressure if needed to control speed and stop the dog on the ST. When the dog is focused forward, and properly stacked, give the release marker to let the dog get the reward. It's fine for the dog to rush forward for the reward. But you want controlled movement up to the ST.
3. When you have the dog trotting at the speed you want up to the ST without pulling, and stopping on the ST on cue, you can shorten the distances and work off leash if desired. And gradually re-build the distances.

4. Then remove one bar of the ST, and then the other, then the frame and just use a verbal to stop the dog in a stack (or flat paw targets to transition off the ST).
5. Then remove the visible reward, cue the dog to “Strut” and toss the reward ahead of him as soon as he starts to move forward. Gradually delay the tossed reward to get the dog to move out farther.
6. Add verbal stops with free stack
7. Add cues for other known behaviors (turns, spins, side steps, etc. for freestyle)