

Targeting

Targeting can be done with any part of the body. Commonly it is the nose or feet. But it can also be the whole body, or shoulder, or hips.

Target Stick	
	Present the stick and mark a nose touch. If dog wants to bite, put an interesting non-food scent on the end of the stick to encourage sniffing. Pull stick away if mouth opens.
	Present the end of the stick high, low, left, right to get head movement
	Present the stick to encourage one step to make nose contact
	Get a step in different directions
	Gradually build the number of steps the dog has to take to touch the stick moving away
	Dog should learn to follow the stick tip in any direction (spin, onto a higher surface, under)
	Build duration of following, use it to get heel and side, spins, back up, etc.
	Fade the stick by holding it higher and higher and hiding more of the stick with your arm
	Work the tip of the stick into your elbow so the elbow becomes the new target for heeling. Drop treats from under the bend in your elbow.
Front Foot target	
	Start with a large, obvious target like a folded bath towel. Set it in front of you and mark any foot contact, then toss the treat away to reset the dog.
	When the dog is reliably coming to put both front feet on the towel in front of you, move it slightly sideways while the dog is eating a tossed treat. Mark/reward any foot on the towel.
	When the dog is back to putting both front feet on the towel, move it slightly more off center and repeat.
	Then move it back to center and work it off to your other side as you did above.
	Repeat the above process with a smaller target (folded dish towel)
	Repeat the above with a smaller target (washcloth)
	When you have the desired size and substance target, start placing it farther away from you, or move a step away from it. Gradually build distance.
	Now you can deliver the rewards from your hand and send the dog to the target.
	Add an additional target and with them close to you & off to either side of you, send the dog from one to another.
	Now you're ready for directional control (separate check sheet)
Rear foot target- usually used for tricks and agility so an angled target works well	
	Lure, target stick, or shape the dog to get his rear feet onto a plank that has one end sitting on something low to put the plank at a low angle. Front feet should be on the floor.
	You can try walking past the plank and see if the dog will hop on it and walk the front feet off, while stopping with the rear feet on. Your movement/stopping can help.
	You want the dog to be getting into the proper position on his own
	When the dog is getting in position without you helping, move the board to a new spot and repeat the above steps.
	Vary the target and include backing up to the target
	If you gradually raise the end of a plank with it near a wall, you can shape the dog into doing a handstand on the wall (or any vertical surface).
	You can also teach the dog to lift one rear foot to the side (like a male dog peeing) to put it on a greatly angled board or high target for fitness & working the leg muscles. Work both sides.

One front paw targeting Precise foot use (press a button, turn on a light, lift one paw, etc.)	
	Start with a target large enough for both paws and mark/reward the dog for stepping on it.
	Gradually reduce the size of the target until it is only big enough for 1 paw
	Generalize the behavior to several objects.
	Put your hand under the target (if it will be a higher target in the final form) and mark when the dog steps on it.
	Gradually raise the target as the dog learns to reach higher and higher to get the mark/reward
	Name each paw so the dog can use the paw you ask for
Body target (shoulder/hip/side of the head/etc.)	
	Start with the dog standing and you touching the body part (BP), mark when you make contact and reward. Do this multiple times in a row.
	When you are in a rhythm try stopping your hand just shy of contact and see if the dog will shift his weight to make the contact so you will mark it. Cookie party when he does.
	When the dog understands he should shift his weight to touch you with the BP you can start holding your hand slightly farther away so the dog has to take a small step.
	Gradually build distance between the dog and your hand (or whatever target you want to use)
Body target alternate method	
	Teach the dog to pivot (see that check off sheet) and have the dog pivot into you or the desired target.
Sit target	
	You can teach the dog to sit on a target in a similar way to the front foot target training above. Start by marking the front feet on the target, but then cue or wait for a sit each time.
Whole body target	
	Go to your mat is a whole-body targeting exercise. See the check-off sheet for 'go to your mat' for those steps.