



MY DOG DOESN'T PLAY FETCH. WHAT DO I DO?

Playing fetch is a great way for your dog to have fun and exercise too. But, what if you initiate a game of fetch, throw the fetch toy, and your dog simply doesn't 'go-fetch'? Not all dogs instinctively understand the concept of retrieving. There might not seem much logic behind this dog game, but it's important that you 'teach' your dog how to play fetch from a young age so they can enjoy the game when they're older.

Firstly, choosing the right toy can have a big influence on whether or not your dog will feel inclined to run after it. Some dogs prefer specific toys above others, and then again, some dogs would be perfectly happy with anything at all.

Step 1

If your dog doesn't fully understand the concept of chasing after something, start by teaching them to run after the object. You can do this by encouraging them to head towards the toy and praise them with affection or treats. Start by throwing the toy or object only a short distance and see if your dog instinctively starts to chase.

Step 2

After your dog has run to the toy and grabbed it, take it away and repeat the process. Your dog might not have picked up the toy yet, but they are running towards it, which is a good start.

Step 3

The next step to complete the fetch cycle is teaching your dog how to bring the object back to you.

Teaching your dog to retrieve involves trying to make your dog used to the idea of running back to you. For now, even if they do not bring the toy back, call them to come back to you or consider throwing the second toy in the opposite direction.

Step 4

While you are going through the steps, be sure to praise your dog for every milestone with either affection or treats.

You also want to make sure that the object you are throwing is something your dog would want to pick up. In the beginning, you could initiate or encourage your dog to pick up the object by scenting it with their favourite treat.

Step 5

Once your dog has brought the object back to you, it's important that they understand the 'release' command. For now, teach them to 'drop' even if your dog doesn't immediately run back to you. As soon as they pick it up, tell your dog to 'drop.' Only continue the game once they have done so.



Step 6

Lastly, teaching your dog to play fetch is all about repetition. Your dog will soon get the hang of it, as long as you remain patient and consistent with your training method.



Sources:

<https://www.cesarsway.com/dog-training/toys-and-play/6-steps-to-teaching-your-dog-to-fetch>

<https://www.thespruce.com/train-a-dog-to-fetch-1117283>