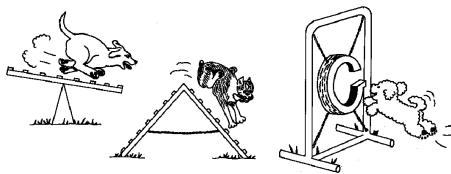


# TRAVIS AGILITY GROUP



www.austintag.org  
P.O. Box 27882 Austin, Texas 78755  
(512) 302-6712

## Welcome to TAG Agility Class!

Your registration packet includes the following information: the student questionnaire, class registration, member application, and indemnification, class information and field rules, the Y2 Click article and a class syllabus. Be sure to fill out and return the both sides of the student questionnaire, both sides of the member application and class registration along with your check made out for the full amount of the cost of the class. Please note that the member application is for informational purposes only and does not obligate you to TAG membership. Keep the other materials for review and future use in class..

Entry in TAG class is on a pre-registration basis only! Anyone who shows up the day of class without first pre-registering will not be admitted in class.

Return all registration and application forms to: TAG Training Coordinator, P.O. BOX .27882, Austin, Tx. 78755.

Information packets and checks must be received by the training coordinator before class begins! Your slot in this class is not reserved until the forms and your check have been returned to TAG!

### Class: Introduction to Agility –

This class will concentrate on building good basic skills needed to train and compete in agility. The “clicker” will be introduced as a training tool.

**Time:** The 6 week class begins **Thursday either at 7:00 p.m. to 8:15 p.m.**

**If this time does not fit your schedule, please continue to check back with our web page for upcoming classes . Remember, refunds are only given up to one week prior to class. Be sure this class fits your schedule!**

**(www.austintag.org).**

**Instructors: Desiree and Randy Pratt Price: \$65.00**

Make Checks Payable to “TAG”

Location: ALL TAG CLASSES WILL BE AT THE TAG FIELD!

Here are directions to our Agility Field:

Take Hwy. 183 North through Cedar Park. You will pass C.R. 1431. Continue down 183 until you reach Crystal Falls Parkway. Turn right (east) onto Crystal Falls Parkway. You will drive approximately 2 miles (you will cross the toll road and continue across Crystal Falls Pkwy) until you see the large “Humane Society of Williamson County” sign. There will be a closed (but not locked) cattle gate. You will need to open that cattle gate to get in.

OR

Take the 183A Toll Road to Crystal Falls Parkway. Take a right (east) onto Crystal Falls Parkway until you see the large “Humane Society of Williamson County sign. There will be a closed (but not locked) cattle gate. You will need to open that cattle gate to get in.

OR,

Take Parmer Lane North to 1431. Turn left (West) and take 1431 to 183. Turn North (right) onto 183. When you pass Blockhouse Creek subdivision (on your right), you will need to get into the right lane. When you get to the stop light next to the Diamond Shamrock, turn right onto C.R. 272. You will drive approximately 2 miles until you see the large “Williamson County Humane Society” sign at 3737 C.R. 272. There will be a closed (but not locked) cattle gate.

**PLEASE ALWAYS CLOSE THE GATE BEHIND YOU after you’ve driven through the gate.**

# WELCOME TO TAG AGILITY CLASSES!

**TO BRING:** For your first day of class you will need to bring:

1. **Toys and treats (whatever your dog likes best! Treats should be small and easy to feed.)**
2. **A flat buckle collar (no choke chains!)**
3. **A lead made out of nylon or leather (no chains)**
4. **A clicker (if you have one, otherwise, it will be provided)**
5. **A flat lid or coaster to be used as a target**
6. **A pouch for you to wear for treats or toys (must be easy to get into) unless you have pockets**
7. **Your dog**

Below is a list of guidelines for agility training. Please read this information thoroughly and feel free to ask questions.

## Guidelines for Agility Training

1. **Agility is supposed to be fun.** If you, or your dog, are not having fun, go home. Try again another day. A happy agility dog will work better and faster.
2. **Be SAFE with your dog.** Agility involves obstacles that are dangerous if not performed properly. Make sure your dog is ready for these obstacles before you try them (i.e. do not attempt an obstacle until you have learned it in class), and have a spotter when necessary.
3. **It is never your dog's fault.** Most mistakes in agility happen because of poor handling or failure to completely train a concept. Think about it, even humans make mistakes. Dogs are just dogs, and they do not speak our language, even secretly after midnight. So of course, it takes time for dogs to understand what we are communicating, and our handling is not perfect. Instead of blaming Fluffy, concentrate on what you can do next time to help him get it right. Blaming your dog will not fix the problem.
4. **If you think your dog is blowing you off, see rule 3.** There may be times when your dog is really not paying attention and should be. However, blaming your dog for a mistake in these situations is not going to improve anything. Instead, you should work on ways to keep your dog's attention or try again later when your dog is more focused.
5. **You do not need a harsh "NO!" command for agility.** Yelling at your dog can only make agility less fun. See rule 1. Also, see rule 3: it was your fault anyway. Your word for mistakes should be informational only, as if to say, "Oops, let's try that again."
6. **Do not let your dog make the same "mistake" more than once.** This rule is so very important, and yet so very ignored. If your dog does not make a correct choice, do not run him through the same pattern again in the same way. If it didn't work the first time, chances are it will not work the second, third, or fourth times you try it. The key is to back up and make the challenge easier. Go back as far as you need to, even if that means putting on a leash or holding the collar. So what if you do not reach your goal that day! If you continue to allow your dog to make the same mistake because you are unwilling to back up and "help," you may never reach your goal.
7. **Practicing exercises should be about training, not testing.** If you are not sure your dog can do something, help your dog succeed however possible. Then, you can work slowly up to your ultimate goal without making mistakes or establishing bad habits.
8. **Give constructive feedback to other handlers.** Anyone can make worthwhile comments about what they see happening with others in practice. You cannot see yourself, so any feedback is better than no feedback at all.
9. **Stop while you are ahead.** If your dog has performed an exercise correctly and completely, it may be time to make things different by altering it or moving on to something new. You do not want to bore or frustrate your dog. Individual dogs have different levels of toleration for repetition; you must learn what the right level of repetition is for your dog.

## CLASS POLICIES

TAG classes are designed with competitive agility as the final goal of training. The pace of the classes may seem slow to some handlers due to the time spent training the basic agility skills. Time spent acquiring good habits when the obstacles are learned will be repaid later when the dog does not have to be retrained the obstacles for faultless performance.

The Introduction to Agility class is a prerequisite for inclusion in any other agility class. Exceptions can be made only after evaluation through a private lesson provided by an approved TAG instructor.

Dogs must be 6 months old. NOTE: The TAG training facility is located on the grounds of Williamson County Humane Society, the animal shelter for Williamson County. Please keep this in mind as you get your vaccinations.

The agility fields are kept locked when not in use and we have a fenced potty area for TAG use only.

Class fees must be paid a week prior to the start of the class.

Class fees are non-refundable one week prior to the first class of a given session. A missed class will not be refunded. Please be sure that the session for which you are enrolling fits your schedule.

Bitches in season will not be allowed in class. There will be prorated credit for bitches who come into season.

Dog aggression towards other dogs or people will not be tolerated. If the instructor considers a dog aggressive or unsafe, the handler and dog may be asked to leave and not return to class. There will be no refunds in such a case.

Dogs must be under control for classes. If a dog is disruptive during classes, the instructor may request that the handler and dog leave and not return to class until the dog has had further obedience training. In such a situation a prorated credit will be given.

Minimum handler age is 12 years old. If the handler is under 16, a parent must remain at the field for the lesson.

Children accompanying students will not be allowed on the agility field.

There will be pro-rated credit given for extreme illness or injury (dog or handler) on a per occurrence basis, with a written doctor or veterinary excuse.

If a class is canceled due to weather or instructor unavailability, a make-up class will be offered. Instructors will call students at the number listed on their questionnaire 1½ hrs ahead of any class cancellation.

Classes will start and end promptly at the time designated. Please arrive early for sufficient time to potty your dog before class begins.

## FIELD RULES

1. Keep your dog under control at all times.
2. **Do not let your dog potty in the agility field. Potty your dog in the fenced potty area next to the fields. Please pick up your dog's poop! (Scoop and bags provided!)**
3. When parking, don't block other cars... Drive slowly!
4. Keep guests (including children) away from the agility equipment and other dogs.
5. Keep your dog on a leash or crated when you are not doing an agility exercise.
6. Do not let your dog visit without permission of the other handler. Please keep visiting to minimum during organized training activities.
7. If someone is already training on the field you wish to use when you arrive, you must ask permission to enter and share the field. The person who is already there has the option of using the field without sharing for a period of twenty minutes.
8. If you are practicing on the field together with other handlers and dogs, do short sequences to avoid collisions or take turns on longer sequences. Be aware of what obstacles are being used by others.
9. It advisable to carry a first aid kit with you – just in case.
10. If you are the last to leave the field, make sure the chute and tunnels are put up and make sure to turn off the lights.
11. Anyone who is not a member or student member of TAG **may not** bring a dog into the fenced area of the agility field without first signing a waiver and paying a field use fee. Members who bring a guest wishing to work with a dog are responsible for getting the guest to sign the waiver and pay the fee.
12. Always make sure you and your dog are having fun!

**FILL OUT & SEND IN!**  
**TRAVIS AGILITY GROUP**

www.austintag.org  
P.O. Box 27882 Austin, Texas 78755

**Class Application**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone **Home:** (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

**Office:** (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

**E-Mail:** \_\_\_\_\_

How did you hear about TAG Classes? Web Page Flier Dog Trainer

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

What do you hope to learn in this  
class? \_\_\_\_\_

Which class (level and day) are you signing up for? \_\_\_\_\_

Would you be willing to take the next available class if this fills up? \_\_\_\_\_

**FILL OUT & SEND IN BOTH PAGES!**

**STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE**

Handler's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Dog's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Breed \_\_\_\_\_

Age \_\_\_\_\_ Height \_\_\_\_\_ Weight \_\_\_\_\_ Sex \_\_\_\_\_

Has the dog been spayed or neutered? \_\_\_\_\_

Are you the primary owner of the dogs? If not, what is your relationship to this dog? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

How long have you owned the dog? \_\_\_\_\_

Where did you obtain the dog?

- |  |                                  |   |
|--|----------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ad in paper   | <input type="checkbox"/> Breeder | <input type="checkbox"/> Friend or Relative |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pet store     | <input type="checkbox"/> Stray   | <input type="checkbox"/> Shelter            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Rescue Agency | <input type="checkbox"/> Other   |   |

When was the dog last seen by a vet? \_\_\_\_\_

Is the dog on any medication? What and why? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Does the dog get groomed? How often? \_\_\_\_\_

Where is the dog kept?

- |   |  |   |
|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> In house loose | <input type="checkbox"/> In house crated | <input type="checkbox"/> In fenced yard |
| <input type="checkbox"/> In dog kennel  | <input type="checkbox"/> Tied outside    | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____    |

How does the dog react to riding in a car? \_\_\_\_\_

How does the dog react to being left alone? \_\_\_\_\_

What things upset this dog? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Has the dog ever bitten anyone? If so, please describe when this happened and the circumstances

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Has the dog ever been in a fight with another dog? If so, please describe how many times this has happened and the

circumstances \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

How does this dog react to:

Men? \_\_\_\_\_

Women? \_\_\_\_\_

Children? \_\_\_\_\_

Strangers? \_\_\_\_\_

Crowds? \_\_\_\_\_

Other adult dogs? \_\_\_\_\_

Puppies? \_\_\_\_\_

How would you describe the dog's personality? Check all that apply

- Shy
- Aggressive
- Hyperactive
- Jealous
- Indifferent
- Friendly
- Playful
- Loud
- Submissive
- Dominant
- Fearful
- Nervous
- Annoying
- Territorial
- Extroverted
- Happy
- Bored
- Calm
- Finicky
- Dependent

What bad habits does your dog have? Check all that apply

- Barks/Howls
- Runs away
- Bites/Nips
- Digs
- Jumps up
- Wets
- Chews
- Gets in trash
- Begg
- Growls
- Chases things
- Other? \_\_\_\_\_

What commands does your dog respond to? Check all that apply

- Come
- Enough
- Hup
- Move
- Stay
- Other (specify)
- Don't jump
- Fetch
- In
- Okay
- Stop it
- Down
- Give
- Leave it
- Sit
- Take it
- Drop it
- Heel
- Let's go
- Stand
- Wait

How often will the dog come when called?

- 100%
- 75%
- 50%
- 25%
- 0%

Has the dog had prior agility training? \_\_\_\_\_

List activities enjoyed by you and your dog \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

List titles earned by your dog \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

List future goals you have for yourself and your dog \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

---

**INDEMNIFICATION AND LIABILITY WAIVER**

**1. UNDERSTANDING OF RISK.** I understand that participation in any Travis Agility Group ("TAG") activity is not without inherent risks due to the physical nature of the sport of agility and because any dog has the ability to cause injury. "TAG activity" includes any agility event (e.g., trials, seminars, etc.) sponsored by TAG or any use of the TAG field with or without supervision, including, but not limited to, agility trials and matches, training classes and seminars, and individual and group practice.

*2. MY LIABILITY/INDEMNIFICATION.* I agree that I will be personally liable and financially responsible for any loss, damage, or injury to any dog, person or property caused by myself, my children, my property or any dog in my custody while I am participating in any TAG activity, and I will indemnify and hold harmless TAG and its employees, agents and Board members and the owner(s) of the premises for any such loss, damage or injury.

*3. NO TAG/PREMISES OWNER LIABILITY.* I further agree that I bear all risk in participating in any TAG activity and that TAG and its employees, agents and Board members and the owner(s) of the premises upon which a TAG activity occurs shall have no liability whatsoever for any loss, damage, or injury to myself, my children, any dog in my custody or my property regardless of how caused, even if negligently caused, or by whom.

Signature (Parent or guardian if a minor): \_\_\_\_\_

Printed name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Application is not complete until Indemnification and Liability Waiver has been signed.**

# Y 2 CLICK

(An Introduction to Clicker Training)

© 2000 by Shari Heino

## What is Clicker Training?

Clicker training is a positive and creative method of training your dog. It is based on the principals developed for the training of marine mammals (i.e. if you cannot put a choke chain on a killer whale, what are you going to do?). Basically, a trainer uses the click sound to indicate to the dog that it just did something desirable.

## What a Clicker Is.

A clicker is a device used to create a unique sound. This sound must be associated with something really good such as food or other reward. The clicker sound is thus information to your dog that extremely good things will follow shortly. You will use that click to tell your dog that it just did something desirable to you.

## What a Clicker Is Not.

A click is not praise; it has no emotion. Therefore it is information only. This is useful because it allows the message to the dog to be extremely consistent. A clicker is also not a device to get a dog's attention. Your dog is not clicker trained just because it looks at you when you click.

## How Does Clicker Training Work?

First, an association must be built between the click sound and the reward. It is best to start with some sort of food that the dog likes a lot. You should simply click and then immediately hand your dog a treat. This process should be repeated a few times to start building an association. Although not as effective, you may also choose to establish a mark word by the same process (i.e. say the word, then treat) for times when you do not have a clicker handy. Initially, when building the association and even in training the first few behaviors, it is important that the treat immediately follow the click. In later stages of training, the treat/reward may be varied to include toys or other reinforcements and may be delayed somewhat. Once the dog starts to understand the association between clicks and treats, behaviors can be taught. Be aware that it will take longer for your dog to learn the first few behaviors that you decide to train as your dog will need time to build a strong association with the clicker sound and get used to the clicker training process. It may seem amazing, but a click once strongly associated with a reward becomes more effective than the reward itself (i.e. a Pavlovian-type response results),

## What Methods Can Be Used to Train With a Clicker?

**1. Freeshaping:** Freeshaping a behavior involves waiting for the dog to perform the behavior you want and then clicking (and treating) when the dog performs that behavior. Clicking and treating at the appropriate time is called "marking" the behavior. If the behavior is not something your dog normally does, you will have to use the technique of successive approximation. For this technique, you will start by marking a behavior that might eventually lead to the behavior you want. For example, if you want your dog to touch a certain object, you might mark when the dog moves toward that object. In successive approximations, you will raise your criteria slowly so that at each phase of training you are marking something that looks more and more like the ultimate behavior. If your dog gets confused, simply back up and relax your criteria to allow mostly success.

**2. Inductive training:** If there is a behavior you want to train that you never see your dog do, you may wish to use food to encourage your dog to perform that behavior. Your dog can follow the treat until it is in the appropriate position and then you can click and treat. Try to use this method as little as possible as dogs do not tend to figure out as quickly what it is that they are doing to earn the click, and this method does not encourage your dog to think and be creative.

**3. Targeting:** Your dog can be taught to touch a target such as a stick, lid, dish or your hand through free-shaping. The target, so trained, can then be used to teach your dog further behaviors.

## Why Use Clicker Training?

Clicker training creates a bond between you and your dog. Because much clicker training is done through a process known as free-shaping (see below), clicker training encourages a dog to be creative in the behaviors it offers to its trainer. The whole training process becomes an entertaining game to the dog and human as they attempt to communicate with each other and figure out what the other is thinking. Clicker trained dogs tend to be exuberant about training sessions, even more so that dogs who are just trained with food alone. I believe that this is because clicker training is the most mentally stimulating way to train your dog. Dogs are quite intelligent and creative and most seem to enjoy a chance to use these attributes.

Furthermore, the clicker noise offers a unique and consistent sound that the dog will always understand as marking the desired behavior. The click is also much quicker than speaking a single word. Most people speak to their dogs on a regular basis; therefore, the voice is not unique or as interesting to a dog. Even if you use a single word consistently as a marker, your voice will vary each time and your dog will have to process more information to determine whether or not you truly intended to mark a behavior.

## What if My Dog is Scared of the Click?

If your dog is scared of the clicker sound, you will need to desensitize your dog to the sound. You can do this by muffling the sound by clicking in your pocket or in another room. Most dogs adapt easily to the sound of the click because of the great things that become associated with the sound.

## Important Thing to Remember About Clicker Training:

- 1. One click equals one treat/reward always.** Even if you click for the wrong thing, you must give the reward each time you click; otherwise, the click will not mean as much to your dog. Furthermore, you need only click once to mark a particular behavior. If you are really excited about an accomplishment, just make the reward bigger.
- 2. The click ends the behavior.** Your dog will perceive the sound of the click as a release. Some dogs will learn to work through the click; however, you cannot fault a dog for breaking what it was doing when it hears the click.
- 3. Train only one behavior at a time.** Avoid confusing your dog by keeping training sessions short and focused on one behavior (or, if a behavior is more complex, one criteria for that behavior) at a time.
- 4. Timing is everything.** If you do not click at the right time, your information to your dog is inaccurate and you will not be marking the desired behavior. You must pay attention and be quick when you are clicker training.
- 5. Set your dog up to succeed.** You must set reasonable goals for your training sessions. If your dog is just "not getting it," try another approach or back track to a point where your dog is successful. A successful dog is a happy learning dog.
- 6. There are no bad dogs in clicker training.** A dog's failure to perform is simply due to incomplete training on your part. There is no "NO!" or "Wrong!" or "Ah-ah!" in clicker training. You may have a word to let your dog know that it is not performing correctly, but this word should be devoid of emotion or negative tone as it is for information only.

# **SYLLABUS FOR TAG'S INTRO. TO AGILITY.**

## **Description:**

Welcome to training for agility! This class will provide you and your dog with the tools for successful agility training. Obedience for agility (sits, downs, heeling and recalls) and some agility obstacles (jumps, tunnels, and tables) will be covered. Clicker training will be introduced and practiced as a training tool for both obedience and agility.

## **Week 1**

- A. Discuss field & safety rules
- B. Warmup Activity: Let the dogs get used to everything!
- C. Intro to clicker (including attention and target training, sit and down)
- D. Recall instruction and practice

Homework: Build a strong association with click and food. Feed your dog a couple meals (or parts of meals) using click. Practice: (1) Attention and (2) Targeting. ALSO, teach one new trick using the clicker – your choice.

## **Week 2**

- A. Warmup Activity: Stretching
- B. Review attention and targeting with clicker
- C. Introduce Watch Command (for attention)
- D. Review fast downs and sits
- E. Intro. to controlled leash walking
- F. Practice recalls
- G. Learn/Practice sit and/or down stays near jumps with bars down
- H. Introduce wingless bar jump

Homework: Continue clicker training (attention, targeting and other behaviors).

## **Week 3**

- A. Warmup Activity: Poles
- B. Review attention training and targeting
- C. Work sits & downs (stays)
- D. Introduce Table
- E. Review Wingless jump
- F. Practice heeling (both sides) around the field
- G. Practice recalls

Homework: Continue clicker training (attention, targeting and other behaviors).

## **Week 4**

- A. Warmup Activity: Sit pretty/dance (stretching)
- B. Review attention training, targeting (increase distance to target)
- C. Review wingless jump
- D. Practice Sit & Down on Table
- E. Introduce Tire
- F. Introduce Chute barrel
- G. Practice recalls
- H. Practice Stays
- I. Teach placement/control handling

Homework: Continue clicker training (attention, targeting and other behaviors).

## **Week 5**

- A. Warmup Activity: Bow (stretching)
- B. Review attention training, targeting
- C. Practice Heeling & recalls
- D. Practice stays on Table (sits and downs)
- E. Review wingless jump, tire, chute barrel
- F. Introduce tunnel & work to full length (straight)
- G. Discuss hand signals and commands
- H. Review placement/control handling

Homework: Continue clicker training (attention, targeting and other behaviors).

## **Week 6**

- A. Warmup activity: Cavellettis.
- B. Review attention training, targeting.
- C. Review table, wingless jump, tunnel and chute barrel.
- D. Practice recalls and stays.
- E. Introduce Chute and work to full length closed
- F. Graduation game.

Homework: Continue clicker training (attention, targeting and other behaviors).