Teaching Your Dog to Look at the Camera Using ‘Look at That’



Want your pup to nail that perfect camera pose? The ‘Look at That’ (LAT) game from Leslie McDevitt’s Control Unleashed method is a fantastic way to teach your dog to focus on a specific object—in this case, your camera or phone! Here’s how to do it:

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Step 1: Teaching 'Look at That'

The LAT game teaches dogs to calmly acknowledge something (like a camera) and then check back in with you. This builds focus and engagement.

What You'll Need:

High-value treats (cheese, chicken, or your dog's favorite snack)
A clicker (optional, but helpful)
A quiet space to start training

How to Teach It:

Introduce the Cue: Hold a treat and wait for your dog to naturally glance at an object (start with something neutral like a water bottle or a toy). The moment they look, mark (click or say "yes!") and reward.

Repeat: Continue marking and rewarding when they look at the object. They'll quickly learn that looking at something = treats!

Name the Game: After a few reps, say "Look!" just before they glance. This helps pair the word with the behavior.

Add Variety: Try different objects to generalize the skill.
Once your dog understands LAT, it's time to make the camera the new focus!

Step 2: Using LAT for Camera Focus

Now, we'll shift LAT to help your pup look at your phone or camera lens.

How to Do It:

Hold Up Your Camera: Present your phone or camera a few feet away. When your dog glances at it, mark and treat!

Pair with 'Look': Say "Look!" just before they glance, then reward when they do.

Move the Camera Closer: Gradually bring the camera to your usual photo position while reinforcing every look.

Increase Duration: Wait half a second before marking, encouraging them to hold their gaze for a little longer. Or to capture multiple gazes!

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Bonus Tips for Paw-some Pics!

Use a Treat Near the Lens: Hold a treat right next to your camera to encourage eye contact. For a toy motivated dog, hold the toy near the camera or even behind it.

Make Fun Noises: Whistles, kisses, or silly sounds can grab their attention.

Use a Squeaky Toy App: Some apps play sounds to make dogs perk up!

Keep Sessions Short: Quick, fun training bursts work best.

Celebrate Success! Whether it's a perfect pose or a goofy blooper, every step forward is worth celebrating.

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With patience and practice, your pup will soon be vogueing like a pro for the camera! Happy training and happy snapping!

If you need help, we are always here for you just contact us:
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