## HUNTING GAMES – THE FOUNDATIONS

# 🎾 Game 11 - Pivot & Spins

Advance the value for Reinforcement Zone!

### 🎾 Why This Game Matters

This game puts more value into your dog's Reinforcement Zone by your side. Using props to provide your dog with clarity will help them to make the right choice.

Pivot & Spins is a prerequisite to Moving RZ, later in this course.

### 🎾 What You'll Need

- Foldable blanket
- Foot target (rubber bowl, thick book or wooden block wrapped with non-slip material – the prop should not exceed the point of your dog's hock)
- Low to high value treats
- Bowl
- Nose target (wooden spoon, target stick, fly squatter)
- Clicker
- Phone on tripod
- Toy

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## 🎾 Step-by-Step-Guide

### 1. Set Up

Have all your supplies for this game readily available. Put the treats into the bowl for easy access. Play on a non-slippery floor. You can use a marker word instead of a clicker.

### 2. Build the Behaviour

- Present the nose target close to your dog's nose.
    - mark/click any movement forward
    - reward
- Repeat above steps until your dog is touching the stick with their nose.
- Hold the target in a different position → Wait for a response
- Repeat the above step in different positions around your body.
- Move the target stick while your dog has their nose on it → let them follow the stick.
- Repeat the above step 3 – 4 times.
- Have a nice game of tug

### 3. Add a Layer

- Place the blanket on the floor
- When your dog is coming onto the blanket, quietly give them a high value treat
- Say "search", throw a lower value treat away
- Repeat
- Fold the blanket in half.
- Repeat above steps twice.
- Fold the blanket again until it has the size of a foot target.
- Break up the session with a game of tug.

## ➡️ Next

- Place the foot target on the floor and kneel in front.

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- When your dog approaches the target, mark, throw the cookie away.
- Increase criteria until both front paws are on the target.
- Eventually stand up while your dog is searching for their treat.
- Mark and reward for front paws on the target. Give them 2/3 treats in position before resetting.
- Repeat and have a balance break.
- Remove the foot target.

Place the perch back on the floor and take a step away. When your dog comes towards the perch, mark and reward. Repeat until both feet are up the perch.

Take a few steps around while your dog has their paws on the perch. They should remain in position until you release with a cookie throw.

### 4. Raise Criteria

- Place your perch back on the floor.
- Have your dog in front of you.
- Without marking this time, just feed your dog a cookie when they put both front paws on the perch.
- Keep one foot grounded and step with the other foot into your dog, slightly leaning over. They will naturally move away from that pressure. Mark and reward any movement with their back feet.
- Repeat this in both directions.
- Every other repetition, throw a “search” cookie to reset them.

### 🎾 Troubleshooting

*My dog wants to sit on the perch.*

Take ½ step towards them, reward for taking back paws off. Throw a “search” cookie and repeat. Put more value into front paws on the target.

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## Add Spins

**Option A:** use the pivot method and just press a little more into them, then mark and reward when their butt is facing you, and their head is facing away from you. Feed in position away from you.

**Option B:** Use a target stick.

- Stand behind the perch, dog in front.
- Offer the target stick, move it slowly in a circle. Mark and reward any movement.
- Repeat
- Work in small increments
- Continue with this until your dog is in RZ

## Put a cue on it

When your dog is confident with pivots, spins & RZ, you can name the positions. I.e. for coming into my left I use the cue "close" for coming into my right, I use the cue "side".

- Stand on one side of the platform
- With your dog's front feet on the perch, ask for a HT (or use target stick)
- Use your cue, turn into your dog and guide them into your side.
    - some dogs like to sit on the perch if big enough
- Repeat the above steps, working on one side until fluency.
- Have a break before working on the other side.
- When you have fluency and your dog comes into position on verbal cue AND your dog has a strong HZ:
    - send them to HZ
    - stand next to the platform, facing away from your dog
    - slightly turn your shoulder down to the platform
    - say your position cue (this now becomes your release for a specific behaviour)
        - use Old Cue/New Cue when needed

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## HUNTING GAMES – THE FOUNDATIONS

### 🎾 Daily Use

Pivot & Spins will enhance your Reinforcement Zone game and make it much easier for your dog to stay by your side.
A fun game to play, mentally exhausting and teaches great proprioception of where their hind legs are.

It is great for enhancing your close sit in RZ and lose leash walking skills.

### 🎾 Checklist

1. Did you review your session?
2. How was your dog's T.E.M.P (Tails, Ears/Eyes, Mouth, Posture)?
3. Have you worked on both sides?

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