HUNTING GAMES – THE FOUNDATIONS

🎾 Game 2 - The Collar Grab Game

Confidence and comfort when we reach for their collar.

🎾Why This Game Matters

Hands near your dog's collar predict good things. With consistency, you'll soon have a dog who happily offers their collar when you reach for it.

🎾What You'll Need

- Your dog on a flat collar
- High-value treats
- Your dog's leash
- Phone on tripod

🎾Step-by-Step Guide

1. Set Up

Quiet environment.

2. Build the Behaviour

With your dog on leash.

a. Gently take hold of the leash about 50cm away from your dog's face. Observe their body language closely.
    i. If your dog pulls back or shows hesitation, simply pause and let go.
    ii. Start with your hand further away.
b. When your hand is on the leash, feed your dog a treat.
c. Gradually work your way up the leash, closer toward your dog's collar.
d. Only progress when your dog remains relaxed and comfortable.

Your dog's body language will guide your speed.

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3. Add a Layer

a. Gently reach beneath your dog's chin toward their collar.
b. If they hesitate, pause and produce a treat from your other hand.
c. Repeat this step, pairing the reaching gesture with reinforcement, until your dog remains relaxed and confident.

Now we begin adding clarity.

a. Gently grasp the collar under your dog's chin.
b. Say your Location Specific Marker (e.g., "cook").
c. Reach into your pouch and deliver the treat while maintaining your hand on the collar.

Keep your hand on the collar until your dog has finished the treat.

Gradually increase the pressure of your grip, always marking ("cook") before delivering reinforcement. We are building positive association with both touch and gentle restraint.

When your dog is comfortable with a firmer hold:

- Reach for the collar
- Say your marker
- Deliver the treat (while holding the collar)
- Clip the leash on
- Release

Repeat with unclipping the leash as well.

Alternate between:

- Holding the collar
- Clipping the leash on
- Removing the leash

  Reach for the collar from different positions and angles. Dogs notice these changes.

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4. Raise Criteria

- Grab the collar
- Take a few steps
- Say “cook”
- Deliver the treat

You can now clip and unclip the leash while in motion.

Practice reaching for the collar:

- When calling your dog toward you
- While they are walking beside you

We want collar handling to feel normal and safe in everyday movement.

🎾Advancing The Game

Willingly offering their collar = skill mastered!

🎾 Daily use

A dog who feels safe with collar handling is easier to manage in real-life situations.

Imagine:

- You need to quickly secure your dog
- You’re recalling them and clipping on the leash
- You’re holding them while speaking to someone

Afterwards, re-engage them with a short game of tug or chase. This keeps collar handling positive and connected to fun.

🎾 Checklist

- Did you video and review your session?
- Is your dog confident when you reach for their collar?
- How does their T.E.M.P look?
- Did you balance with a short play session?

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