

## Clicker Training for Ferrets



## Today's Presentation

- Why train a ferret?
- What is clicker training?
- Clicker training rules
- Considerations in training a ferret
- Easy behaviours to train
- How to get behaviour
- Adding a cue



## Why Train Your Ferret?

- Husbandry
- Management
- Bonding
- Eating when ill
- Enrichment and fun
- Solve behavior problems



[Oliver beach](#)

## What is Clicker Training?

- Click = treat
- Conditioned reinforcer
- No scolding
- No force
- Hands off
- Hot and cold game with no cold



[Clicker Puppy hi five](#)



## The Rules Always Work

- Rules apply to all species
- Click once
- Click on time
- Associate click with reinforcement
- Ignore undesirable behavior
- Strengthen desirable behavior

[Ferret target](#)



## Considerations

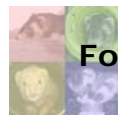
- Reinforcers
- Nutrition
- Training environment
- Physical capabilities
- Natural behaviors
- Safety and comfort



## Reinforcers

Considerations

- Food
- Play
- Freedom
- Access to preferred area
- Attention or petting



## Food and Nutrition

Considerations

- Food is powerful motivator
- Always consider nutrition
- Food preference experiment



Considerations

## Other Reinforcers

- Use others when pet is clicker-wise
- Conditioned reinforcers



[Ferret play](#)



Considerations

## Training Environment

- Keeps pet from escaping
- Comfortable; low stress
- Limits options
- Safe from other pets
- Safe for trainer



[Jimmy Paige](#)



Considerations

## Control the Environment

- Box
- Bathroom
- Bath tub
- Portable
- Use props




[Angel Bunny Tricks](#)




Considerations

## Physical Capabilities

- Run
- Jump
- Climb
- Make sounds
- Work with paws
- Drive a truck



[Clip from Take a Bow Wow DVD](#)



Considerations

## Natural Behaviors

- Sit up on hind legs
- Grasp with forepaws
- Grooming
- Go into openings
- Dig
- Play with toys



[Super bunnies](#)



Considerations

## Safety and Comfort

- Put dogs and cats out
- Condition in cage at first
- Learn how to handle
- Learn body language
- Protected contact




[Displacement video](#)




Considerations

## Easy Behaviors to Train

- Touch target
- Come when called
- Go into cage
- Sit up on hind legs
- Natural behaviors



[Cat hi five](#)  
[Bunny target and hoop](#)




Considerations

## Getting the Behavior

- Luring with food
- Shaping
- Targeting
- Offer preferred environment
- Limit options

[Cat target – 1<sup>st</sup> session](#)  
[Rabbit target – 1<sup>st</sup> session](#)  
[Rabbit luring](#)  
[Cat shaping to basket Part 2](#)

[Puppy with ball](#)





## Adding a Cue

- Get behaviour first
- Pair with cue
- Switching cues
- Discriminations



[Cat switch cues](#)

[Cat discrimination](#)

[Sam tricks](#)



## Summary

- Click = treat every time
- Click exactly as behavior happens
- Get behaviour, then add the cue
- Ignore errors

[Happy Ferret dance](#)

