# Absolute Dogs

# BOUNDARY
# GAMES

THE MOST REQUESTED LEARNING SUBJECT EVER

# BOUNDARY GAMES =
# AWESOMENESS!

**Okay, so this must be the most requested learning EVER – super cool Boundary Games!**

We teach the dogs the VERY important, in fact, vital, job of staying on a boundary until released and we want to share with you the top tips and super tricks that will supercharge the learning and ensure the end result is exactly as we want it. We couldn't live without them and we are pretty sure you won't be able to either once you get this journey started!

> "
> **A very important aspect of developing an arousal balance, an on/off switch, in training your dog is boundary games**
> "

### SO HOW DO YOU GET GET STARTED?

A very important aspect of developing an arousal balance, an on/off switch, in training your dog is boundary games.

These are **games where your dog has to stay in a designated area until released** – this may be a mat, a crate, a tent, a platform, your household steps or even from room to room – you name it, we call it a boundary!

Boundary games have numerous benefits. They promote and develop impulse control. They can help to balance and level out arousal as needed and can even boost motivation and enhance your overall relationship with your dog. They can also decrease arousal and help to promote calmness (yes boundaries can do both)! On a practical level they will help with dogs who counter surf, they can help to prevent jumping up, help to improve recall and generally help to improve all basic behaviour and manners in many different places and habitats.

Absolute Dogs.

# BOUNDARY GAMES
# WHY?

So what do we mean by boundary games, what do they look like and what criteria do they involve for you and your dog?

To your dog they mean this:

✔ You go in/on/to this area on cue

✔ You stay in this area and are calm

✔ You do not move from this until you hear your release cue (break, free, okay, go)

✔ Your release cue means leave the area and then come to interact with me

"Set a goal that makes you want to jump out of bed every morning"

# BOUNDARY GAMES
# HOW?

**So what you have all been waiting for - the step by step guidelines:**

### STEP 1

Reward any interaction with the bed or boundary (e.g. looking towards, stepping towards, putting a paw on, etc.) Basically SHAPING value to the bed!

### STEP 2

Reward choice to go on bed with no verbal cue. You want your dog to ♥ LOVE ♥ the bed! You can't have too much love for the bed!

### STEP 3

Feed lots, be generous for being on the bed – drip feed to bed and don't feed directly to the dog! You want to feed CALMNESS and you want to feed the BED! SLOW feeding. And then if you think you are feeding SLOW, get a little SLOWER again.

### STEP 4

Release off with a cue (e.g 'okay', 'break', 'free' you can decide the cue.) Throw food a second or two after the verbal release cue - whatever you have chosen.

### STEP 5

Wait for your dog to make the choice to go back towards, orient or even better hop onto the bed. Reward hugely, massively and in a big way when you dog is back on the bed to build the value – remember don't use the cue yet to get on the bed, hold fire on this one.

### STEP 6

Don't forget that release cue; the release cue is VITAL to maintain criteria, so that your dog knows when to get off again! Remember you get to choose the release cue!

> **"**
> WHILE BUILDING DURATION, FIDDLE ABOUT WITH FOOD IN YOUR HANDS. IT'S A SUPER COOL THING TO DO TO BASICALLY HELP TO TEACH YOUR DOG TO DO NOTHING
> **"**

> **"**
> **You want your dog to ♥ LOVE ♥ the bed! You can't have too much love for the bed!**
> **"**

# ONCE THE VALUE IS THERE, START ADDING DURATION:

### STEP 7

As they are on the bed they might change positions (e.g. into a sit, stand, down) – reward that with calm drip feed. They are okay to change between behaviours and move within the boundary just not off the boundary.

### STEP 8

With your dog on the bed, mix up the speed of your reward delivery – sometimes 5 seconds, 10 seconds, 3 seconds, etc. Try to push it on as you feel is appropriate to you and your dog.

### STEP 9

If they leave the bed, of their own accord, don't worry – hold their collar or harness for a split second or have a puppy line on them, and then let go close to the bed.

Whilst close to the bed wait for them to return to the bed ideally of their own accord but don't give them too much choice until you know they will make the best choice. You may need to adapt or increase the rate of reinforcement without being too exciting.

**WHILE BUILDING DURATION, FIDDLE ABOUT WITH FOOD IN YOUR HANDS. BASICALLY THIS HELPS TO TEACH YOUR DOG TO DO NOTHING**
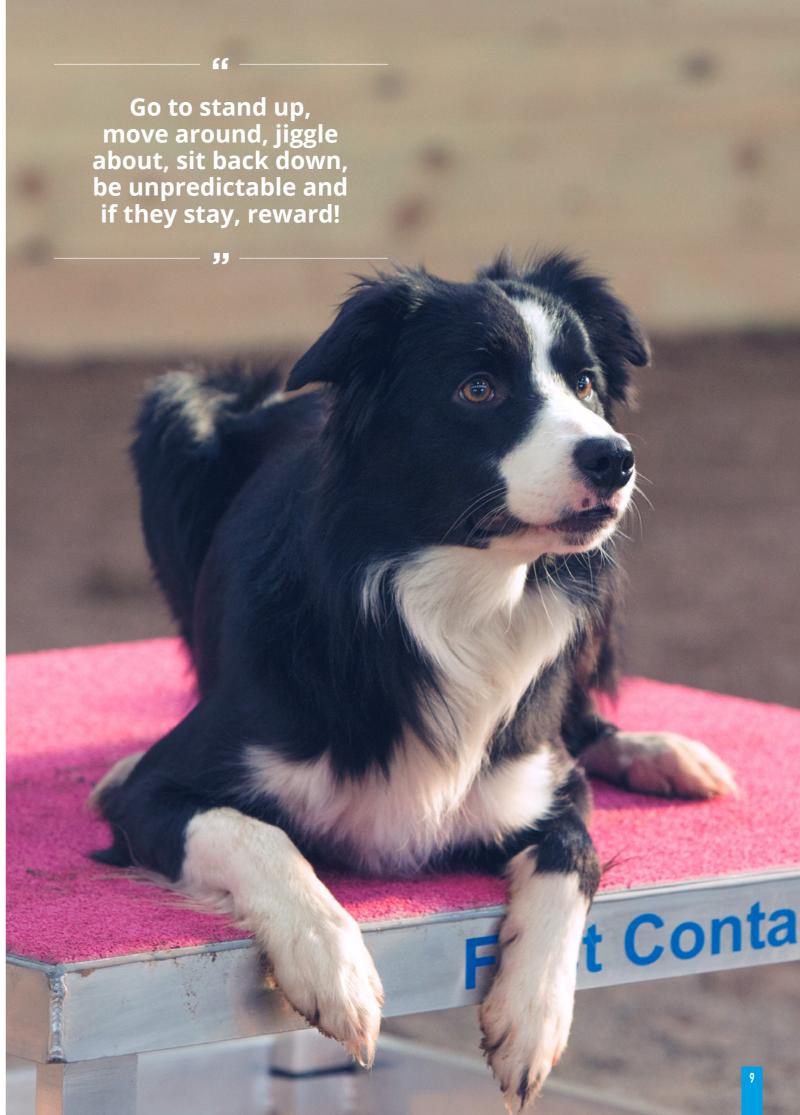
### STEP 10

While building duration, fiddle about with food in your hands, I know that sounds odd but it's a super cool thing to do to basically help to teach your dog to do NOTHING – if they stay put, or at least more still then for sure reward that and catch them doing it right super fast.

You can even try to drop some food on the ground – if they stay put then reward the choice! Go to stand up, move around, jiggle about, sit back down, be unpredictable and if they stay, reward!

### STEP 11

Again, don't forget that release cue for getting off! This is so super key for consistency!

# BONUS
# THE MOUSE GAME!

**Grab some high value food and, with your dog on the boundary, place the food on the floor. You are wanting to tempt them off in a way. Now here are the super fun options:**

**1.** If your dog is on the bed -> Your hand is off the food and you can slowly deliver bits of food to your dog while ever they stay put

**2.** If your dog self-releases from the bed -> Your hand covers the food to stop them from taking it. You remain calm, unexciting and deliberate in covering

the food. Do not re-cue them back onto the bed. As soon as they get on the bed, uncover the food again and start to slowly deliver to them.

**3.** Periodically (and as frequently as needed to keep the excitement, the PULSE, the desire for the food), release them directly onto the food off the bed with your release cue!

> "
> **AS SOON AS THEY GET ON THE BED, UNCOVER THE FOOD AGAIN AND START TO SLOWLY DELIVER TO THEM**
> "

# BOUNDARY GAMES
# LET'S PARTY!

**Now comes the super exciting part - let's start the party -
let's add some distractions! Let the FUN begin!**

## STEP 12

Can you or someone else calmly walk past
your dog in a boundary? Reinforce CALMNESS and
for your dog being still. No interaction and no
response is a good thing.

## STEP 13

Walk past the boundary, drop a toy or some food,
start with lower value and gradually increase the
challenges – reinforce no reaction, no reaction and
CALMNESS is your GOAL. MAYBE even try another
dog as a distraction. Now there is a challenging and
exciting thought! Doggy distractions!

## STEP 14

Now is likely to be the time to increase the arousal.
When we say arousal, we mean excitement, and letting
your dog get a little on the fizzier side! This can be
done with some exciting words, e.g. "READY!".

When you do this you really need to reinforce the self-
control, you have to make sure you put as much value
in as possible, you need to find the JOY!

## STEP 15

Once your dog is ready, crank up the level of distraction
even further – so why don't you have two dogs on two
separate beds – try something low key to start, maybe
call one dog off whilst rewarding the other, now how cool
is that? Prepping for SELF CONTROL with multi dogs!

As you build up the skills, there really are no rules -
maybe you can start playing with one, whilst the other
remains on the bed. If so, remember to reinforce the
dog for impulse control and remaining on the bed!
The dog on the bed has the toughest job of all so
100% make sure you show the value!
Tell them how amazingly
awesome they are!

**So there
you have it.
Boundaries are SUPER
COOL! They are SUPER FUN
and they are one of the most
crucial parts of our dogs
day-to-day life.**

# BOUNDARY
# TOP TIPS!

✔ Ditch the bowl and use your dogs day-to-day food for all of the games you play!

✔ Practice regularly, and not always in training mode, sometimes just being around as normal in every day life, this is 24/7 dog training!

✔ Use varying boundaries, try to mix it up ALOT!

✔ Always clearly use a release cue when you need one to allow your dog off a bed. Super duper important!

✔ Vary the habitat once you have the game on, this is key for everyday life! AWESOME!



" Use varying boundaries, try to mix it up ALOT! "