SMART x 50

The **SMART x 50** method—created by positive-reinforcement trainer Kathy Sdao—stands for **See, Mark, and Reward Training**. You count out 50 small treats or pieces of kibble each morning, and throughout the day, you catch your dog unprompted doing something good, mark it, and reward it to build better behavior habits

Excerpted from Plenty in Life is Free:
Capitalize on the numerous desirable behaviors an animal performs over the course of an average day by:

- noticing them
- pointing them out to the animal ("mark" with a click or "yes")
- then giving the dog a reward in order to increase the strength of those behaviors

Practically speaking, SMART x 50 is a simple way to get started on ***noticing the behaviors your dog already does*** that you'd like to see more of.

Kathy says, *"We could envision that a significant portion of the good behaviors we want to develop are already in our dogs. By saying 'yes' to these, over and over, we encourage our dogs' cooperative, calm, controlled actions. Our frequent, precisely timed, meaningful reinforcements — our 'yeses,' each followed by an event the dog considers rewarding — **will etch desirable behavioral grooves into our dogs' repertoires**."*

How to Do SMART x 50
Count out 50 small, healthy treats each day
Set them out on the counter in a bag or container for easy access and a good visual reminder
When see your dog doing something cute or useful, mark the behavior (with clicker or just use a word like "Yes" or "Yep;" the precision of the clicker isn't necessary)
Give your dog a treat
Use up 50 treats per day

The beauty of SMART x 50 is that you can do it anyway you want. Just do it! You can choose one or two particular behaviors over the course of a week and see for yourself that your dog ends up doing MORE of those specific behaviors or you can look more generally for various behaviors you like.

You don't even have to do fifty treats if that seems overwhelming. You can do SMART x 25 or SMART x 10!

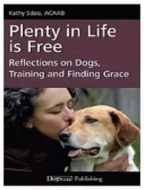
"Whatever the accommodation, it's crucial that the objective remain ambitious (or 'aspirational' as one colleague put it). It should be challenging enough to foster continuing behavioral development for the dogs, but not so discouraging that the humans give up trying."

SMART X50

- FROM KATHY SDAO'S PLENTY IN LIFE IS FREE -

SEE MARK AND REINFORCE TRAINING

SMART helps humans and dogs learn to communicate. As you begin your training journey together, you will want your dog to learn the rules of the house while also building a bond with you. You'll learn to notice when your dog does behaviors you like, and your dog will begin to repeat these behaviors more often.



This training was introduced in the book, "Plenty in Life is Free," by Kathy Sdao

image from dogwise.com

PREPARE



Set aside a predetermined amount of kibble, treats, or a mix of kibble and treats each morning. 50 is the default, but find what works for you. Try 1/3 of your dog's breakfast, for example. You can place all the rewards in one easy to access location (for you, not the dog!), or divide it into a couple small containers strategically placed around the house. Shelves, desk drawers and counters are a few spots that usually work well.

SEE

Notice when your dog does something you like. Ex:

- **Approach a person without jumping**
- **Quiet when there is a noise outside**
- **Lie down during dinner**

You might also have goals specific to your training plan.

MARK

You might not want to carry food on your person all the time (though feel free to!), but your voice is always available.

Your marker word (i.e. "yes") will create a bridge between the moment your dog does what you like, and your walk to the treat container.

REINFORCE

Woo Hoo! Treat time for puppy!

Initially, treats will be your main reinforcement tool.

Over time, you'll come up with other rewards, such as play time or walks.

Please share with credit to Shane Stanis