



# The WoofGang Wag Rag



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Free

## Trick and Treat

The Hoboken Police Department loves my dog Trista. That's because she plays dead with the flourish and drama of an opera diva. Trista is probably the first dog my sister-in-law Lisa has ever touched; her heart was melted by a big meaty paw offered in a companionable shake. Kids tend to be scared of her, too, especially when her panting reveals a full display of teeth but, when she becomes a furry acrobat, launching to jump over my leg, little legs pop up everywhere in invitation!

Tricks are more than just gimmicks – they are avenues of endearment, especially for large breed dogs. They also offer your pooch mental challenge and build confidence.

### “Touch” and Its Variations:

“Touch” (hand targeting): Start by putting your flat hand (palm forward) casually to the side of your dog's nose. Remember to mark the very moment his nose touches your hand with a “yes!”. Gradually you will notice him touching your hand purposefully. Then start holding it farther from him, making him move to the hand. Make this a *fun* game! When he's consistently touching his nose to the flat hand, say the verbal



Koko learning “touch”

command “touch” first, then hold out your hand. This can make for a great recall as well as a trick.

“Jump”: Hold your leg out in front of you (at a height appropriate for your dog) and hold your open palm above your leg. As he moves toward it, arc your hand over your leg and away from him. This will lead him spatially over your leg. If you'd like, you can precede the hand prompt with the verbal cue “jump!” once the behavior is coming fairly fluently. At some point, the sight of your leg will become your dog's cue for jumping and you will no longer need to lead with the hand signal.

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## About the Trainer

Dog trainer **Laura Garber**, CPDT, is a professional member of the Association of Pet Dog Trainers (APDT) and is certified by the Certification Council for Professional Dog Trainers (CCPDT), the first national certification for dog trainers.

Laura has authored articles about dogs and dog behavior in dog-centric magazines and on-line resources.

Laura believes strongly in strengthening the bond between human and companion animal. For this reason, she regards training as an exercise in building relationship rather than obedience. Such an approach promises greater understanding and symbiosis within our family packs. Log on to [www.myWoofGang.com](http://www.myWoofGang.com) for more information.



## \$25 Intro Training Offer

Get a 30-minute introductory basic training session for \$25 or apply it towards a 4-session package and get the 30-minute session FREE! (Offer details based on location.) Call **WoofGang** at 646.345.5116 to make an appointment.

## Separation Distress

Even when you're at home, it's important that your dog spends some time away from you. Otherwise she can develop separation distress when she's left alone. The crate is a great place for her to get some quality alone-time. **WoofGang** can guide you in helping your dog get more comfortable when she's without you.

## Pretty Please!

Consider a “sit” to be your dog's way of saying “please.” Before you give her a tasty treat, cross an intersection or open the door – before virtually any activity she considers wonderful – wait until she's sitting pretty!

## Relationship-Building

Is your pup rude and pushy? Does she jump when greeting people? Does she counter-surf? Well, apologize no more!

**WoofGang** can help you teach your dog to be polite, attentive and well-mannered, while developing and deepening your relationship. Call **646.345.5116** today!

### **Trick and Treat (cont.)**

**“Tippy Toes”:** Hold your open palm steadily above your pup’s head, at a height that he can touch by standing on his hind legs. If you’d like, you can precede the hand prompt with the verbal cue “tippy toes!” once the behavior is coming fairly fluently.

**“Spin”:** With your dog in front of you, hold your open palm at his nose height. Lead him around in a tight circle. If you’d like, you can precede the hand prompt with the verbal cue “spin!” once the behavior is coming fairly fluently.

#### **“Shake” and Its Variations**

*Shake* is more than just a trick. It helps your dog get more comfortable with people touching his paws.

**“Shake”:** With your pup in a sit, have a treat in your hand just in front of his nose, either in your closed fist or pinched in your fingers so that he can’t get to it. The hope is that, in his frustration, he will bat at the treat hand. If this happens, mark it with a happy “yes!”, grab the paw with the other hand, and open the treat hand to reveal the treat. If the frustration method isn’t working, try holding the pinched treat above your dog’s head and off to one side. By rocking him to the side, often he will pick up the opposite paw to reach. Mark it with a happy “yes!”, grab the paw with your other hand, and open the treat hand to reveal the treat. After he is consistently offering a paw, say the verbal command “shake” or “give paw” in front of it. *Additional note:* By using the rocking method, you can train a “left paw” and “right paw” behavior.

**“Wave”:** Now give the hand signal for “shake” but instead of keeping your hand stationary to receive your pup’s paw, move it horizontally in front of him. This will cause him to lift his paw a little longer and perhaps even make another swipe to meet your hand. Especially reinforce any extra jabs in the air.

**“High 5”:** Just change the position of your hand so that it’s ready to receive a “high 5” when your dog does the “shake” behavior.

Some tricks are particularly good for burning your dog’s mental energy. Especially for scent-driven breeds, here’s a great trick and game in one:

**“Go Find It!”:** This is a game of sniffing out a fragrant piece of food. To install the command, we want “Go find it!” to indicate that there is food somewhere out there for the hunting. Start easy by saying “Go find it!” and tossing a piece of kibble. Make it easy to find. When this is comfortable, take a fragrant piece of food, put your pup in a sit- or down-stay (or have someone hold him) and plant the food somewhere in plain sight. Release him and instruct him to start hunting by saying “OK, go find it!” As your dog gains fluency, make the treat increasingly well hidden – in another room, under furniture, in his crate, inside a toy on the floor, wherever... be creative. And you can hide a couple of treats at one time; when he’s found the first, repeat the command “go find it” to indicate that there’s still another out there somewhere. Just a note, though: Don’t hide the tidbits in places where you don’t want him hunting, like on a table top, which would encourage counter surfing. Also, if your pup breaks the stay, put him back in it. What he’ll learn is that breaking the stay delays his favorite game!

For this article in its entirety, log on to [www.myWoofGang.com](http://www.myWoofGang.com).



### **Ask Woofie...**

**Woofie**, my little yorkie has a seemingly unsolvable flea problem. Can you help??

**Hiya, Annabelle!** Sorry for the difficulties your pup’s had with fleas. Try these holistic alternatives:

Use a natural pet shampoo containing flea- and insect-repellent herbs, like d-limonene, a natural extract from citrus fruits that will kill fleas with minimal side effects OR make your own insect-repellent shampoo by adding a few drops of essential oil of pennyroyal or eucalyptus to a bottle of natural shampoo or castile soap.

After shampooing, rinse thoroughly with vinegar-water rinse (1 Tbsp. white vinegar to 1 pint warm water) to remove soap residue and prevent dandruff.

Use a conditioner to promote a glossy coat and repel fleas: 1 tsp dried rosemary (or 1 Tbsp. fresh) & 1 pint boiling water. Combine and steep for 10 minutes, covered. Strain and cool to body temperature. Pour it over your pup after the final rinse. Rub in and towel dry without further rinsing.

Hope it helps! Happy training!

#### **Woofie**



**Tippy** craves human attention and would love a home with older children who can give her plenty of exercise. She’d prefer to be the only pet in the household. She’s at the Liberty Humane Society waiting for her forever family to find her. Might yours be the one?