

## OPEN BAR, CLOSED BAR

### What is it?

A simple, effective training technique to change a dog's association with an object, animal, or person from negative (a bad feeling) to positive (a good feeling).

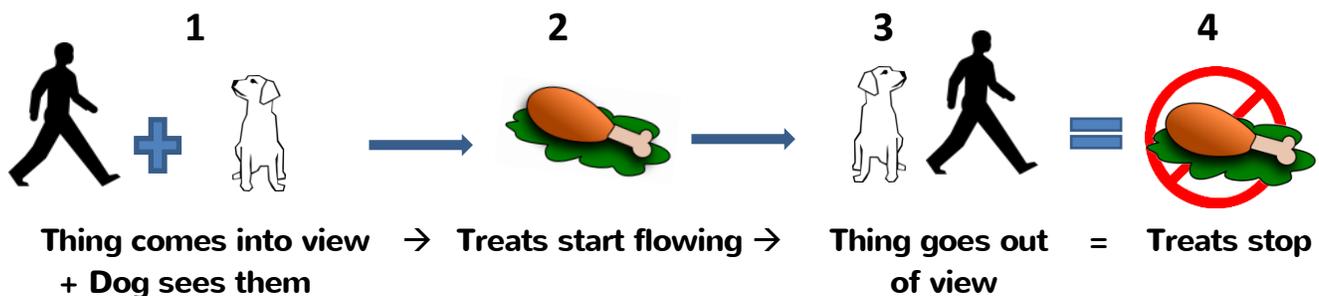
In this technique, we use carefully timed food treats to teach a dog that the thing she fears is nothing to be afraid of, and is in fact quite fabulous.

### Getting Ready

1. Choose a super high value treat. Go for meaty, softer, juicy and novel.
2. Load up your treat pouch or have a handy container next to you.
3. Have treat prep downtime. This is to ensure the treat prep is not getting in the way of training you are doing with the scary 'thing'. We want the 'thing' to become the predictor of treats!

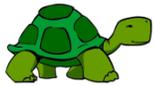
### How does it work?

1. Begin treating your dog as soon as the thing she fears or reacts comes into her sight. (Open Bar)
2. Continue treating your dog as long as the object is in view.
3. The moment the object disappears, abruptly stop the stream of treats. (Close Bar)
4. Repeat the process every time the scary thing she fears appears.



### Open Bar rules of thumb.

- Keep the special treats SPECIAL. Don't treat your dog with the special treat when the scary object is not in sight.
- Work at your dog's level. If your dog seems fearful, isn't taking treats, or doesn't become more relaxed after several Open Bar repetitions, make it easier for them I.E. make sure the scary thing doesn't stay in sight for too long or increase the distance between her and the scary thing.
- Treat *every time* your dog sees the scary object *no matter how your dog reacts.* Meaning, don't ask your dog to 'do' anything like sit or look at you.
- *These exercises only work if your dog is comfortable and relaxed enough to learn. "The Turtle wins the race!"*



**Training Tip:** Watch for your dog to start looking at the 'thing' then expectantly back at you for the treat. This means they are getting the game! Once they are doing this routinely, we can move on to the next level with the 'Look At That' game. [Contact us for next level guidance!](#)