

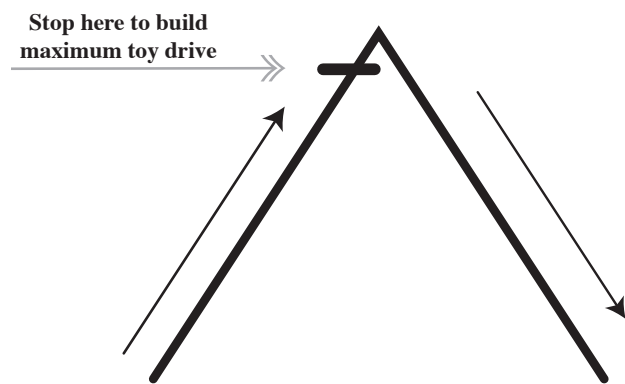
Building toy drive

If your dog doesn't naturally like toys, you can build a desire for them. After awhile, food may pale. To effectively train your dog and keep him from getting bored, you want as many different types of reinforcers at your disposal, so toy drive can be useful.

Get a tennis ball, slather it in peanut butter and stick in an old sock. Let the dog sniff it. If he becomes interested, let him continue to sniff for a few seconds and then take it away. Next session, repeat. Then, let him sniff it for a bit longer. Build on this until he goes wild when you bring it out. Gradually let him have it longer and allow him to chew on it. Trade for it WHILE he is still interested in it. Gradually decrease the amount of peanut butter on the ball and let him have it for longer and longer periods of time. Tease the dog with it when you are putting it away.

The Art

There is an art to building drive and the key is not to over do it. Picture a triangle with the top point as being the point of no return. You want to get your dog's energy level and desire for the game to build to almost the top, and then stop the game. If you reach the pinnacle of the triangle, the next instant he will already be on the downward slope.



While building drive, the height of that triangle will grow taller (or shorter if you go on too long). Observing your dog will help you with knowing exactly when to stop.

Start to toss it and race with him as he's going toward it. Heavily praise him when he gets it. You can also use "food toys" that look like regular toys but have pockets for treats. When he picks it up, you can then open it and let him eat the treats out of the pocket (or you can hand him the treats).

Make it fun and exciting and you'll have a whole host of additional reinforcers at your disposal!