



A Powerful Way to Change Your Dog's Life: Gamify Meal Time

This game is can be great for all dogs, but one word of caution for those dogs who get a little anxious around food. If your dog has shown aggression (biting, growling, lunging, snarling, snapping) around food items, reach out to your pet's behavior doctor before playing this game.

What you need:

1. **Two or more different food or puzzle toys.**
2. **Small tasty treats**

How to do it:

1. If your dog knows how to sit and stay while you move about and put things on the floor, ask your dog to sit and stay. If your dog doesn't know how to sit and stay, no worries, put him behind a baby gate where he can see what you are doing or ask someone to hold the leash.
2. Start with two different food or puzzle toys.
3. Place each toy on the floor, each about 2-3 feet from your dog.
4. Don't put any food into the food toys. Don't make a big fuss.
5. Release your dog from the sit/stay. If he is behind a baby gate, open the gate. If someone is holding the leash, ask them to drop the leash so that your dog can move around.
6. Let your dog explore and approach the toys.
7. As your dog investigates the toys, don't talk to him or point the toys out. Let him figure it out on his own. It is his choice!
8. Your dog may decide on a toy immediately or it make take some time. Whichever he chooses first, will be the dinner toy that night.
9. When your pet chooses a toy by approaching or sniffing the toy, praise him and put a treat into the toy.
10. Let him eat the treat.
11. When he is done eating the treat, pick up all of the toys.

Pro Tip

This game is about fun and choice, NOT obedience. Only choose the sit/stay option if your dog has a great sit/stay. If you spend your time arguing with your dog to sit and stay, it is no fun for anyone!

Pro Tip

If your dog doesn't approach the toys at all after 1 minute, point the toys out to him again.

12. Immediately fill the toy that your pet chose with his dinner.
13. Put the toy back down and let them enjoy!