

The 'leave' cue:

Teaching your dog obedience training can be simple and fun with the correct information and some patience. Dogs like to explore lots of different things with their mouths and despite being just fed, will quite often succumb to the temptation of half a biscuit dropped on the floor or some rabbit droppings! **Here are some Top Tips to quickly teach the “leave” cue, which could well prevent your dog from eating something harmful.**

- 1.** Use really tasty treats to get and keep your dog's attention – I find small pieces of mature cheese (the smell excites the dog), frankfurters or garlic sausage work very well. Feed him one treat to show him what you have.
- 2.** Now put another treat on the flat of your hand. Keep your hand flat and open and place it towards the dog's nose. As he goes to take it, quickly close your hand, pull it away and give the cue: “leave”. There's no need to shout the command, you're just teaching him a word.
- 3.** Straight away, offer the treat again and repeat the above.
- 4.** After a few times you will find that the dog doesn't make any attempt to take the treat. Keep your hand open and flat and praise verbally only (don't feed the treat!): “good, leave, good”.
- 5.** If the dog makes an attempt to take the treat, simply repeat the “leave” exercise until the dog leaves the treat for about 20 seconds or so, praise “good, leave, good” and tell him to “take it”, feeding him the treat.
- 6.** Only let the dog take the treat when you've told him he can: “take it”.
- 7.** Repeat plenty of times throughout a week, experimenting with different treats and toys and increasing the time before you cue “take it”.