

DROP IT!

Use this cue whenever your dog has anything in their mouth — a sock, a ball to fetch, a bone that's become so small that it's a potential hazard — that you want them to release.

Training

Stage 1

Give your dog a beloved chew or toy.

- **Wait:** Allow the dog to lick and play with their chew/toy for several seconds.
- **Command:** Say "Drop it!" Toss a few treats a foot or two away from the dog.
- **Mark:** Once your dog drops the chew/toy, give them permission to eat the treats. Leave the chew/toy on the floor until the dog returns to it. Then repeat the process.

Stage 2

Only proceed to this stage when your dog always drops their chew/toy at your command.

- **Repeat:** Do all three steps in Stage 1, but now pick up the dropped chew/toy and hide it behind your back while the dog eats their treats.
- **Reward:** Give the chew/toy back to the dog when they finish their treats. Then repeat the process.

Tips

- Only pick up the chew/toy if your dog has moved away from it — don't race to grab it. The goal is for your dog to drop their chew/toy and then move away when you say "drop it!"
- Give the chew/toy back when they successfully respond. You may not always be able to do this in real life — getting back a slipper or a sock may be a bit more difficult — but you can praise them heartily when they drop the chew/toy to ensure success in a real-life scenario.