

A Quick and dirty  
clean guide on how to  
brush your dog's teeth

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# Good Dental hygiene can prevent

- halitosis (bad breath)
- pain and possible behavior issues as a result of that pain
- illnesses resulting from bacteria traveling to other areas of the body
- unexpected vet bills from emergency extraction or having to a deep clean

Tools you will need are:

- a tooth brush
- dog specific tooth paste
- high value treats (think the 'good stuff' vs their daily kibble)
- a clicker or a verbal marker, such as 'yes'

## Instructions and steps

- Load your clicker or verbal marker by pairing the sound with a treat multiple times while your dog presents good behaviors. "click or mark" then treat
- Hold your empty tooth brush still in front of your dog
- When your dog looks at touches or acknowledges the tooth brush in any way, mark the behavior then give a treat- remove the tooth brush

- It's very important to remain still and don't wiggle it or try to entice your dog to interact with it
- Present the tooth brush, mark and reward any interaction. This can be a glance, a sniff a nose touch etc...
- Once they figure out the tooth brush interaction is what earns them a treat, they will quickly present that behavior as soon as they get their treat. When they are successful 8/10 times its time to hold out for a bigger interaction
- For example if they look at it repeatedly then next time wait. Give them a little time and see if they move snout towards it.

- Start rewarding those new behaviors.
- Continue to reward successful approximations until your dog is willingly chomping on the tooth brush
- The sequence could look something like this: a look, sniff, lick, open mouth around, hold in mouth a second, single chomp, multiple chomps
- Don't rush through the sequence as you don't want to extinguish the behavior you currently have.
- If your dog cannot figure out what you want, back up to the previous successful behavior and reward that a few times and try again. If they still don't get it break that step down even more. For example a partial mouth opening vs open mouth around.

- Once your dog is reliably chomping on the tooth brush add a name like "brush" to the behaviors AS it happens. Mark and reward 3 repetitions. Then say "brush" just before you present the tooth brush. Mark and reward success.
- While your dog is chomping the brush you can start to maneuver it to hit the right spots
- Add toothpaste present toothbrush ask your dog to "brush" maneuver the brush as they chomp
- That was the easy way, if you are interested in a more advanced way to shape your dog to hold their mouth open while you brush call us!

Indian Trail dog training offers live 1:1  
video dog training

Call 980-269-4517 for more information

-check out our reviews on Google, Next-door and  
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