



The ABC's of Learning

Antecedent, Behavior, Consequences

"What happened before" (antecedent)	Behaviour	"What happens after" (consequence)	End result
"sit"	Dog sits	Good things happen (Positive reinforcement)	Dog sits more often
Sees dog	Barking	Feels good to dog (positive reinforcement)	Dog barks more often ☹️
Sees child	Child hugs dog	Doesn't feel good to dog ('punishment')	Dog avoids child
Desire for attention	Dog jumps on owner	Owner yells at dog (positive reinforcement)	Dog jumps more ☹️ (got attention for jumping)
Desire for attention	Dog jumps on owner	Owner ignores dog (extinction)	Dog jumps less often 😊

EVERY animal species can be and is being trained with this method: lobsters, fish, elephants, cats, bears, whales, spiders, snakes, chickens, husbands, children, etc
BECAUSE it follows the scientific principles of HOW ANIMALS LEARN

The Science of Animal Learning / Training in a NUTSHELL

Behavior is built through reinforcement

Behavior is maintained through reinforcement

Better to reward Fido 20 times for an easy behavior than to try 20 times to get a bigger behavior and only reinforce 1 time.

Behavior that is not reinforced will go away (or change)

If you don't pay me, I may well stop working or at least be less enthusiastic about it. If the pop machine stops delivering pop, I might try a few more times, then kick it a few times to see if that makes it deliver, then bang it a few times but eventually I will walk away and not try again.

The ANIMAL chooses WHAT is reinforcing and what is NOT reinforcing.

YOU may like steak, but I much prefer chicken; please don't give me semi-sweet chocolate but I LOVE milk or white chocolate, or dark, especially if its orange flavored. The first time I get potato chips, I may love them but eating them 3 days in a row I find is a bit much.



All animals have a hierarchy of their preferred reinforcements.

Simplistically: preference for ball over Frisbee; preference for play over any food; people: preference for chocolate over hard candy; and same as above—although I like MOST chocolate, I prefer white or milk chocolate and semi-sweet chocolate is OK, but it means little to me—except if I'm tired, then I'll eat even semi-sweet chocolate.

The animal will always perform the behavior that is the most reinforcing at the time.

I need to get home fast so I will speed even though it might cost me \$140; but if I have a baby in the car, I will just get home later. I know I should do my homework, but my friend is playing a computer game so I'm going to do that with her.

People / trainers can become valuable to the animal by controlling access to things the animal finds reinforcing: food/play/habitat/freedom/other animals.

If you controlled my access to all the chocolate in my life and all the music and movies, I would keep trying to make sure we stayed on good terms.

Some behaviors feel good to an animal and are therefore self-reinforcing You would need to pay me \$100 to get me to jog but some people do it just because it feels good.

A behavior can become self-reinforcing through a long history of constant reinforcement.

Give me \$10,000 for bungee jumping and after 25 jumps I might find that I LOVE the adrenaline rush of bungee jumping and now I'll do it for free.

Remember: all behavior in all species is built and maintained thru reinforcement, and the subject decides what is reinforcing!

