**What is SMART x 50?**

The concept comes from Kathy Sdao’s book: Plenty in life is free

<https://www.amazon.com/gp/product/1617810649/ref=as_li_ss_tl?ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creative=390957&creativeASIN=1617810649&linkCode=as2&tag=dogandbableat-20>

Kathy’s Get SMART protocol refers to:

* See
* Mark
* And
* Reward
* Training

**Excerpted from**[**Plenty in Life is Free**](http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/1617810649/ref=as_li_ss_tl?ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creative=390957&creativeASIN=1617810649&linkCode=as2&tag=dogandbableat-20):

*“…Capitalize on the numerous desirable behaviors and animal performs over the course of an average day by:*

*noticing them pointing them out to the animal (“mark” with a click or “yes”) then giving the animal a reward in order to increase the strength of those behaviors”*

Practically speaking, SMART x 50 is a simple way to get started on noticing the behaviors your dog already does  that you’d like to see more of.

Kathy says, *“We could envision that a significant portion of the good behaviors we want to develop are already in our dogs.  By saying ‘yes’ to these, over and over, we encourage our dogs’ cooperative, calm, controlled actions.  Our frequent, precisely timed, meaningful reinforcements — our ‘yeses,’ each followed by an event the dogs considers rewarding — will etch desirable behavioral grooves into our dogs’ repertoires.”*

**How to Do SMART x 50**

Count out 50 small, healthy treats each day

Set them out on the counter in a bag or container for easy access and a good visual reminder

When see your dog doing something cute or useful, mark the behavior (with clicker or just use a word like “Yes” or “Yep;” the precision of the clicker isn’t necessary)

Give your dog a treat

Use up 50 treats per day

The beauty of SMART x 50 is that you can do it anyway you want.  Just do it!  You can choose one or two particular behaviors over the course of a week and see for yourself that your dog ends up doing MORE of those specific behaviors or you can look more generally for various behaviors you like.  In my Dogs and Babies class, I tell expectant parents to even start with any behavior that is simply not annoying.  If it’s 2:00 PM and your dog’s behavior is not annoying you, go see what he’s doing and mark and reward.  This is the behavior you will want more of when you are busy with the baby!

I love how Kathy says (paraphrased*): Look, you don’t even have to do fifty treats if that seems overwhelming.  You can do SMART x 25 or SMART x 10!*

“Whatever the accommodation, it’s crucial that the objective remain ambitious (or ‘aspirational’ as one colleague put it).  It should be challenging enough to foster continuing behavioral development for the dogs, but not so discouraging that the humans give up trying.”

SMART x 50 will always be helpful, but it needs to be in conjunction with meeting the dog’s needs and setting him up for success.  Give it a try!