



Atlas Assistance Dogs®
Atlas Trainer Academy Course Syllabi
Service Dog Foundations

Last updated October 17, 2023

Training Methods: Creating & Implementing a Training Plan 1
Disability Skills – Foundational Skills 4



D8 – Training Methods for Enthusiasm and Precision

Course Description

This course is text and video based. It covers training methods, advanced training concepts, management and methods for behavior adjustment.

Course Objectives

This course will:

- Teach about the different markers
- Teach how to refine mechanical skills
- Teach principles of rate of reinforcement
- Teach different training methods
- Teach how to use the different training methods to train basic obedience and advanced behaviors
- Teach proofing and fluency

Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Describe examples of good mechanics
- Identify rates of reinforcement and how they are used
- Describe how to refine a behavior with proofing and fluency
- Identify and describe different training approaches

Outline

- Markers, Mechanics, and Reinforcement
 - Markers
 - No Reward Marker
 - Mechanics
 - Reinforcement
 - Setting and raising criteria



- About Cues
 - Command vs Cue
 - Verbal Cue
 - Visual Cue
 - Physical Cue
 - Environmental Cue
 - Transferring Cues
 - Poisoned Cue
- Different Training Methods
 - Loopy Training
 - Luring
 - Targeting
 - Capturing
 - Modeling
 - Shaping
 - Free shaping
 - Chaining behaviors
- Proofing and Fluency
 - Proofing and fluency
 - Precision
 - Latency
 - Speed
 - Distraction, Duration, Distance, Delivery
 - Stimulus control
- Advanced Training Methods
 - Premack Principle
 - Mimicry and social facilitation
 - Concept training
- Behavior Management
 - Behavior management approaches
 - Counter conditioning and desensitization



- Systematic desensitization and counter conditioning
- +CER
- Look At That
- BAT 2.0
- Trigger stacking

Course Expectations

Please allow multiple sessions of a couple of hours at a time to go through the course and review the references that will be provided. There are many details in the course materials so please take time to digest them. If the topic is less familiar to you, you may need more time to view references or research the area in further depth.

For all trainers and Team Facilitators you will have one assignment that requires you to submit a video showing you working with a dog using the different training methods to teach a skill. All trainers will have one additional assignment that shows a finished behavior chain. More details are provided in the course.

At the end of this course all will be asked to complete a survey and an assessment. A grade of 80% or above is required to pass the test. Students have the opportunity to discuss their answers with Atlas faculty as well as retake tests as needed.



S4A – Disability Skills – Foundational Skills

Course Description

This course is text and video based. It covers detailed information on concepts that are critical building blocks for successful service dog training. It goes into detail regarding a variety of cues which are used as a foundation/building block skill for disability tasks. The course is accompanied by our Disability Skills Manual-Foundation which provides details on how to introduce and refine each skill as well as tips, tricks, and important notes.

In some cases, concepts stand on their own, which in other cases, they encompass skills that help the dog and person understand the concept. We also provide details on a number of skills that are foundational and taught independent of the concepts. In all cases, we present each skill with a definition, purpose, prerequisite. It is then followed by a video demonstration of use and/or teaching of skills. We follow it up with a discussion of possible use with clients.

Course Objectives

This course will:

- Teach the foundation concepts and skills assistance dogs need to mitigate a wide range of disabilities
- Help trainers understand that many skills are interconnected and can be used in different ways depending on the client's needs
- Teach trainers how to train assistance dogs for common foundation concepts and skills
- Teach trainers how to help clients train their assistance dogs for common foundation concepts and skills

Learning Outcomes

- Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:
- Identify, describe, and demonstrate how to train the foundation concepts and skills needed for training an assistance dog
- Describe applications for the foundation skills needed for disability tasks
- Describe and demonstrate how to support and instruct clients in training their dogs for specific disability tasks

Outline

- Concepts for:
 - Targets



- Husbandry
- Retrieval
- Recall
- Walking
- Impulse Control
- Body Awareness
- Foundational skills used to mitigate multiple disability types:
 - Explanation and demonstration
 - Potential applications

Course Expectations

Please allow multiple sessions of a couple of hours at a time to go through the course and review the references that will be provided. There are many details in the course materials and the accompanying manual, so please take time to digest them. If the topic is less familiar to you, you may need more time to view references or research the area in further depth.

Assessments exist throughout the course for you to test your understanding. They are a mix of mix of multiple choice, fill in the blanks, true false, and long answer questions.

Video assignments also exist throughout the course to help you gain feedback and ensure you understand how to implement what you have learned in this course.

Students have the opportunity to discuss their answers with Atlas faculty as well as retake tests as well as resubmit assignments as needed.