



***That's MY Food!*** You set your sandwich down and run to the fridge to get a drink. You return to see your dog licking his chops...what now?

**Jodi says:** well, you can't fix it NOW, but now you know you DIDN'T train your dog to *leave the plate alone*. Punishing the dog when you come back from the kitchen means, "She's really mad when she comes back from the kitchen!" and the dog will have difficulty knowing exactly why! In fact, the guilty look on his face is probably just the result of your scowl and angry tone, not guilt for the behavior of eating off of your plate...

*FOUNDATIONS FOR SUCCESS: Never give your puppy or dog a piece of food from your plate, and don't allow it by anyone else! This will help tremendously when it comes to learning good food manners.*

### TRAINING YOUR DOG TO: "leave the plate alone" Teach in several short sessions.

Teach OFF\* and TAKE IT\*. Hold a treat in your fist as a Lure, and he will sniff it. As soon as he backs off, CLICK and give TREAT. Repeat this a few times, until he seems to Get It.

ADD the word OFF when you present your fist. This command will mean "leave this alone". CLICK and TREAT to reward the lack of sniffing or touching.

It's good now to start rewarding a treat from the OTHER HAND so that the dog doesn't think he will get the "forbidden" treat eventually. Since you can't lure with one hand, treat with the other hand and click at the same time, say YES! as you give the treat.

CHANGE a variable: open your hand a bit. When he stays back from the treat in your hand, REWARD. Repeat this a few times, until he seems to Get It.

***NOTE: You may not need to feed a TREAT every time, but YOU MUST GIVE A REWARD every time. A REWARD is something your dog loves – a rub on the neck, a happy "YES!", a treat. Alternate rewards now and then, even try giving several treats at once as a jackpot occasionally too – it keeps the dog guessing and focused on you.***

**CHANGE to a plate:** hold the fist or slightly open hand with a treat over a plate. When he stays back from the treat, say YES and give a different treat with the other hand. Repeat this a few times, until he seems to Get It.

**End the session only with SUCCESS – the last thing before ending is a correct response from the dog.** When you start another session, review the basics above. GOING WELL?

Change a variable: this time try the plate on the coffee table or couch. Repeat a few times. *Modify this method for your situation; if your dog eats off the table or countertops, teach using that area.*

Change a variable: put tempting people food on the plate.

Remember to change only ONE thing at a time. If you move the plate, don't also put a more tempting morsel on the plate! Do those things one at a time. Give your dog a chance.

**The teaching time you invest now WILL BE WORTH IT! You will have a well-mannered dog.**

**\* NOTE:** you may use a different word for the command if you wish, for example: "LEAVE IT" or "DON'T TOUCH IT" instead of OFF and "OK" instead of TAKE IT, but you **MUST always use the SAME word/phrase** or else you will not be effectively teaching your dog.