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TEACHING YOUR CAT TO “Rollover”

Definition:

From lying position cat will roll onto his back, then continue, and stop when his belly is touching the ground.

HOW TO TEACH:

Rollover: First have the cat lie down. Because the rollover behavior is lead with his head, you will click and treat (C/T) any movement of his head in one direction. When he turns his head consistently, then pause and wait for the cat to shift his weight to his hip. C/T him for moving from lying with his legs under him to lying on his hips, then C/T the cat for moving his head and weight farther over (toward the sky continuing to complete a circle). The first time (only the first time) he rolls over completely, give him a couple treats after you click.

Adding the cue:

You are ready to add the cue when the cat consistently rolls over. Say “rollover” as he finishes rolling over. After each subsequent incidence of this behavior, say the cue earlier than previously until you are saying it when the cat is lying down. Remember to have the behavior consistent before you start using verbal cues.

COMMENTS:

- If the cat is too distracted, start working the cat in an area (e.g., bedroom) that the cat uses as a favorite hangout.
- The behavior may happen very quickly, so make sure you are paying close attention to the body position of the cat.
- Keep training sessions for cats to no more than two minutes or 10 treats. Take breaks -- grooming the cat or giving attention at appropriate times -- between each training session.