

Setting SMART goals is important for success

SMART is a tool for setting **s**pecific, **m**easurable, **a**chievable, **r**elevant, and **t**ime-bound goals.

Specific – Your goal should be specific. What needs to be accomplished? What steps need to be taken to achieve it?

Measurable – Your goal should be measurable. Can you quantify your goal? How will you know when it's accomplished or the goal has been reached?

Achievable – Your goal should be realistic and not a pedestal dream. Is this something your dog could ever do? Remember, dogs are only so big and don't have opposable thumbs!

Relevant – Your goal should be related to your overall goal with your assistance dog. Why are you setting this goal? What is the purpose? What need does it meet?

Time-bound – Your goal should have time-related parameters. When do you want to accomplish this goal by?

Goal 1: In three months my dog will retrieve the phone from the end table and bring it to my hand wherever I am in the house with an 80% accuracy.

Goal 2: In two months my dog will lay under my chair for 15 minutes without getting up while we are in a busy restaurant.

Goal 3: In four months my dog will be able to walk over uneven, rough, and weird surfaces (like storm grates, planked walkways, etc.) wherever we are without avoiding them 90% of the time.