

# Deep Sea Learning with Georgia Aquarium



## How to Train Your Dolphin: Fact Sheet

### Key Terms:

- **Successive Approximation:** A series of positive rewards for behavior changes that are steps toward the final desired behavior.
- **Bridging:** a signal that communicates to the animal that a particular behavior is what is earning the positive reinforcement about to be received.
- **Positive Reinforcement:** An encouragement like praise or even food, that follows a behavior to encourage the behavior to happen again in the future.
- **Target Pole:** A particular object that an animal is taught to touch with a specific body part, such as a paw or flipper, for training and communication.



### Furthering Knowledge:

1. Dolphins aren't the only animals at the Aquarium that are trained with this method or through the use of target poles! We train many animals in our living collection this way, including our sea lions, whale sharks, sea otters and beluga whales!
  2. If you would like to see a 360 degree view of us feeding the whale sharks from the topside of our Ocean Voyager Built by The Home Depot gallery, please follow this link: <https://youtu.be/EhE2bcHA1i4> You can see how target training and conditioning works even for fish!
  3. B.F. Skinner is the father of conditioning psychology that these training methods are founded on. If you would like to learn more about his work in that field read this resource: <https://www.simplypsychology.org/operant-conditioning.html>
1. You can try to communicate desired behaviors to your household! For the target pole, you may use your arm, a kitchen spoon, a broom or make *your own target pole!*
2. Experiment with successive approximation and try to communicate a behavior. See how long it takes them to understand the idea!



Visit <https://www.georgiaaquarium.org/at-home-learning-with-georgia-aquarium/> for more online resources to use at home!