Tips for Clicker Training Cats

Avoid Frustration
- Cats are built to notice tiny movements, so try to avoid distracting by moving stuff around too much (ex: hands, clicker, treats, target, etc.) when training
- Resist repeatedly calling, wiggling the target, or trying to get their attention
- They need time between reps, so don’t get pushy
- Wait until food rewards are fully swallowed, lips licked, and attention is back on you before asking for another rep

Tips for Success
- Cats prefer familiarity to feel safe
  - Train in locations where cat is comfortable, such as a room they love or on their favorite tree or chair
  - Offer treats they’ve tasted before
- Minimize distractions
  - Turn off the TV, radio, etc.
- Remove young kids and other pets

Using Markers
- Be Patient
- Many cats startle at the sound of a clicker
  - Avoid box clickers
  - Quieter options: iClick, Click-R, Clicino, clicking pens, etc.
- Associate the click with things the cat loves, like treats
- Every click is followed by a reward

- Keep sessions short (ex: 1-3m at first, esp for shy cats; no more than 10 min)
- After session, encourage play followed by rest, calm, and quiet time/space
- Signs that mean “take a break”
  - Refusal to look at the target
  - Cheeking, sudden grooming, etc.
  - Repeatedly walking away in a curved path with tail up in a question mark