



**PARROT KINDERGARTEN**  
STOP GUESSING, START TALKING!

## How to Pick Reinforcers & Treats 🤔

Rewards for your parrot are a really big deal. For training, it'll be easiest if you can figure out what kinds of treats your bird loves best. 🦜

If you already know, awesome! You can withhold those super favorite food treats and save them for only learning time to make training even more fun. (NOTE: If your bird only eats that food item, please don't starve them! Try other types of treats or explore a diet conversion plan with your behavior teacher, Cassie!

If you aren't sure what your bird likes best, you can experiment with different options. When I meet new birds, I create a small plate sampler of (unsalted) nuts and seeds, such as 4 or 5 different ones from the list below. Then I offer one at a time and watch to see which ones the birds eat.

- Raw, shelled sunflower seeds
- Raw, shelled pine nuts
- Almonds
- Walnuts
- Pistachios
- Pecans
- Millet
- Apple
- Banana
- Mango
- Pear

You could even have a little tasting party, trying different foods together. Your bird may have a favorite that isn't on this list, and that's great too!

## PROFESSIONAL TRAINER TIPS

Here are some professional trainer tips.

**Trainer tip #1:** Once you've figured out your bird's favorite treats, break them into small enough pieces that they eat it in one quick bite, instead of holding it and munching... and munching... and munching. For my cockatoo Ellie, this is a 1/2 shelled sunflower seed or a 1/2 pine nut.

**Trainer tip #2:** If you discover a few treats your bird loves, switch them up during the learning session to keep your learner even more excited and motivated, always wondering which treat is coming next!

**Trainer tip #3:** If your bird is taking a long time to munch between treat offerings, don't worry, they'll probably get faster over the next week or two, once they discover they're getting yummys on the regular. 👍

Lastly, if you haven't been able to figure out your bird's favorite food yet, be sure you're offering the treats before they eat breakfast or dinner, while they're still a little bit hungry. If they're full, they probably won't eat treats!

Happy tasting!



Jen  
Co-Founder and Bird Mom  
[www.parrotkindergarten.com](http://www.parrotkindergarten.com)