

Sit

Keep in mind that puppies (8 weeks to 6 months) have short attention spans. Keep your sessions short at first to minimize distractions and maintain your dog's attention, gradually increasing the amount of time spent on training each day. The *SIT* is one of the easiest skills to teach. A dog who sits on cue is easier to manage until he learns more self-control. For example, when you teach your dog to sit when the doorbell rings, he is less likely to jump up on visitors when the door opens.

1. Get a handful of yummy treats (preferably soft and smelly)
2. If your dog is small, get on their level, either on the floor or in a chair next to them to start.
3. Hold a treat close to his nose and let his head follow the treat as you move your hand up and over his head. Hold your hand flat palm up, so that he will start to recognize the hand signal.
4. As his head moves up, his bottom will lower.
5. When his bottom hits the floor, immediately click or say “yess” and release the treat to his mouth. Make sure you praise him as well!
6. Repeat multiple times until he is doing it consistently. Then, pair the behavior with the word “sit.”
7. You should also start to implement a release word. This is a word to let your dog know that he is finished with a behavior. You can say “release”, “free”, or “all done!” To do this, guide your dog into the sit position with your hand and when he does, treat him like you did before. Now, we are going to have him wait to get up from the sit until you say the release word. After you treat him for sitting, wait 1-2 seconds and then say your release and take a step away. This should get your dog up. If your dog pops out of the sit before you release him, immediately say “uh uh” and guide him back into the sit (no treat) and then release after a few seconds.

Tips

- Don't treat your dog for the release. Only mark and treat the sit.
- Repetitions are important, but your dog will tire of multiple reps. Rather, play the sit game with your dog in short bursts multiple times every day. Once your dog is consistent with the verbal cue and the hand signal, start to vary when you give them a treat. They should always receive praise when they sit on cue, but only treat at random times. You never want

to stop treating all together, but the goal will be to have to do it a lot less. You wouldn't work if you didn't get a paycheck – it's the same for your dog!

- Reinforce the sit in other situations, like mealtimes. Have him sit before you put his food bowl on the floor or before you open the door to take him on a walk. If he breaks the sit, remind him of his job with a quiet “uh uh” before you open the door. If this cue is reinforced every time you ask your dog to sit away from the door, he will be less likely to bolt and run when the door opens. These examples are ways to begin proofing the sit. You should also practice outside of the home in new environments too.