



TEACHING SIT

Why train sit?

Every dog should have one command she can do anywhere, anytime. Sit is a great contender for that job. It gives your dog a way to say, "Please," and can become her default greeting, which stops her from jumping on people.

Easy Beginnings

Step 1. *Lure it.* Hold a treat in your hand. Then lure your dog into a sit by putting the treat up to her nose and slowly moving the treat backwards and up. Keep the treat lure close to your dog's nose — if you move your hand up too quickly or too far away from her mouth, she may give up and lose interest. The hand signal for this is to hold your palm upward facing the ceiling.

Step 2. *Pay it.* As soon as your dog's hindquarters hit the ground click and treat. Repeat as many times as you can, so long as you and your dog are still enjoying yourselves. Click and treat every sit. Keep treating him to thank him for staying in the sit. After a few seconds tell him, "Okay!" and encourage him to get up. If he gets up before you release him, say, "Ah-ah" and ask him to lie back sit. Release him more quickly this time, then keep practicing to work up to longer sits.

Step 3. *Repeat it.* Repeat steps 1-2 several more times. When your dog gets into the sit quickly, it is time to take the treat out of your hand and try luring only with your hand signal but without the treat. Only put the treat back in your hand if all else fails.

Add the cue.

We add the cue, "sit" only after your dog will go into position reliably and predictably with your hand signal.

Step 1. *Say it.* Tell your dog, "Sit" in a cheerful tone of voice. Remember, no treat in your hand!

Step 2. *Pause* a second (one-one thousand), and then use your hand signal (palm upward) to help cue your dog into a sit by putting your hand near his nose and slowly moving it up and back.

Step 3: *Pay it.* (See Easy Beginnings Step 2, above.) Repeat many times and in many different places.

Step 4: When your dog will go into the sit after you pause a second and before you give the hand signal you know he understands the verbal command. Now you can do one or the other but not both cues.



SIT (CONTINUED)

Training Tip: Only say the command once. Say it, then pause waiting for the correct response, and then pay it. When your dog is fluent at the sit (sitting quickly and consistently after you give the cue) the clicker is no longer needed.

Troubleshooting: If you have trouble with this exercise, try practicing with your dog standing in front of a wall or fence. This way, when you move her back, she has nowhere to go but into a sit. Then break the exercise into small steps. First click and treat your dog for putting her nose in the air. Then wait until she lowers her hindquarters and click and treat for that. Finally click and treat generously when your dog's bottom touches the ground.

When to practice.

- Before throwing a ball, Frisbee, rope-toy, etc.
- Before giving him a toy.
- Before putting the food bowl down.
- Before handing over a treat or chewie.
- Before opening a door.
- Before putting on a leash to go for a walk.
- Before taking off a leash at the park or beach.
- Before dishing out a belly rub or good ear scratch.
- Before hopping into or out of the car.
- Before allowing him onto the couch with you.