How to train it.
Get a mat. You can start with a dog bed, bath mat, towel, or yoga mat. Use the same one for the first few weeks until she understands the behavior and then you can try different mats. Have your clicker and treats.

**Step 1.** Sit down and put your mat close to you where your dog will naturally be when she knows you have food, which is probably right in front of you. Your dog will come over and stand on the mat. Immediately click and toss the treat on the mat ten times; then toss the next treat off of the mat. Click when your dog returns to the mat and toss the next ten treats on the mat and then another one off of the mat.

**Step 2.** Move the mat *a few inches* away from you. Click when your dog returns to the mat and toss the next ten treats on the mat. Then toss one off the mat (this gets the dog a chance to get back on the mat of course). The two parts to the behavior are 1) be on the mat, and 2) get on the mat. Repeat another ten times then move the mat a few more inches away from you. Continue as before.

**Step 3.** When the mat is far enough away from you that she is not going to naturally hit it, she may go looking for it (yay!), or you may have to sit with a totally quiet body and look at the mat. When she turns her head toward it, or moves her body closer to it, click and toss the treat on the mat. Now go to five clicks with treats tossed on the mat and one click off the mat, then five more on and one off.

**Step 4.** When she's figured out the game and is finding the mat by herself every time, you can move to one treat on then one off, OR you can move the mat further and further away from you continuing with 10 treats on and one treat off. Just make one thing more difficult at a time. If you do this often enough you should get to the point where you have to hide the mat to get any other behaviors out of her. If she sees the mat she should be heading for it.

One more thing. She needs to be on the mat not just touching it. Once she's eager to head for the mat you can start shaping the number of paws on it. If she is consistently putting two paws on, start with that as your base behavior. Click two paws on the mat ten times, then one off. She runs back to the mat, puts her two paws on it, and looks expectantly for the treat. But that's not quite enough. If she really knows you've been clicking her for being on the mat she will try something new. Be patient. When she moves further on to the mat, click three paws on and move on from there until she understands four paws on the mat. Be very clear about your criteria or you'll see her just standing near the mat wanting a click.

**Step 5.** Adding a cue. Don't say a word until your dog is offering you the behavior. When she's running to the mat over and over again, it's time to tell her what the behavior is called.
Step 6: Add a "down". When your dog understands what going to her mat means, ask for a down as soon as she is on the mat. If you do this often enough she will begin to anticipate the cue and offer it automatically. Then work on staying on the mat.

**Troubleshooting:** She just stares at me and doesn't look for the mat. Just back up a step or two; you moved the mat too fast.

**Training Tip:** As your dog gets better and better, space out the treats she gets for staying on her mat. Eventually she will stay for no treats at all, but to keep the behavior strong, thank her occasionally for a job well done.

**Troubleshooting:** If your dog gets up before you release her, tell her, “Ah-ah” and immediately direct her back onto her mat and into a down. Don’t treat her, but make the duration of this down short, so you can release her and repeat the exercise right away and reward for a successful result.

What this is great for:
- Working at your desk.
- Watching TV.
- Cooking in the kitchen.
- When guests are visiting.
- Anytime you need to get your dog out from underfoot.
- When to practice.
- Practice when you can pay attention. For example when you are answering easy emails, not when concentrating on a report due tomorrow. Or when preparing a sandwich, not trying a gourmet recipe for the first time. And TV commercials are a better practice time than engrossing movies.