



Teaching 'Sit'!

You can teach 'Sit' quickly by 'shaping' your dog into the sit position with a 'target stick'! Your 'target stick' can be as simple as a wooden spoon! Targeting versus luring, teaches your dog to 'work' to earn his rewards. Using a 'target stick' doesn't set your training up to always require treats to lure your dog to get the behaviors you want! And, there is no food lure to fade out!

Teach your dog to 'target' the stick first. Just hold out the stick, he'll investigate, and his nose will touch the stick. Mark, treat. Repeat 2-3 X Next, we position the target stick to help your dog 'sit'. No words yet! We 'shape' the behavior before we call it anything!

Now, begin with your dog standing. Remember, do not use the word 'sit' yet!

- 1.) Hold a 'target stick' out for your dog.
- 2.) With the 'target stick' close to your dog's nose, move it back over his head
- 3.) Your dog's nose will follow the 'target stick' so that his head goes up & back, and his bum goes down, into a 'sit'!
- 4.) 'Mark' the behavior as soon as his bum hits the floor, 'Yes', and give the treat!
- 5.) Release your dog from the 'sit' quickly, with a low value 'search' treat toss.

Practice 4-5X/session, 4-5 sessions, with a 'play break' between each session!

Now, you can start saying, 'Sit!' When your dog can do a 'sit' with the 'target stick', 5 out of 5 times, you are ready to add the verbal cue, 'Sit'.

"SIT!"

- 6.) BEFORE you put the stick to the dog's nose, say, 'Sit' (stay perfectly still, no hand motions or movements as the dog will pick those up as a cue, too!)
- 7.) Wait a second to see if he will 'sit' - add the target stick only if he doesn't sit.
- 8.) 'Mark' the behavior as soon as his bum hits the floor, 'Yes', and give the treat!
- 9.) Release your dog from the 'sit' quickly, with a low value 'search' treat toss.

Practice 4-5X/session, 4-5 sessions, with a 'play break' between each session!

NOTE: You should now be able to 'fade the target stick', meaning you won't need to use the stick at the dog's nose to get him into a sit, since your dog is starting to understand the verbal cue, 'sit'.

Teach your dog to 'sit', beginning with your dog lying down. too. With your dog in a 'down' position', put the 'target stick' out to his nose, slightly over his head in the same way. You will want your dog to be able to 'sit' from a stand, and also come up into a 'sit' from a down. Teach 'sit' to your dog, from both a stand and a down, individually.

We don't teach a 'Stay' cue. 'Sit' is a control position. There is no need to teach 'stay', if you simply teach your dog to hold a 'sit', until he hears a 'release cue', like 'Break'. We teach 'Break' when we are teaching 'I Love My Crate', but you can teach it easily in the context of creating a hold in 'sit'. Just replace your 'search' cue, with 'break' (a release cue). Now, no treat on 'break' or leaving the 'sit' position. You always want the best reinforcement to happen when holding the 'sit' position, not leaving it! Now, your dog is learning that the cue 'sit', means 'sit' until I release you! Boom! No need for the added 'stay' cue.

Now, onto the '4 D's' of Training', using each criteria to build a reliable 'Sit'!

1.) Duration in his 'sit': (formerly know as the 'stay', but instead we use a 'release cue')

Begin by simply waiting 3-10 seconds before marking the 'sit' with 'Yes' and a treat. Vary the time you expect him to hold his sit, going to shorter times, then working up to longer times, with shorter times in between.



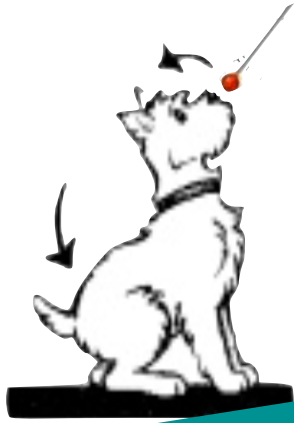
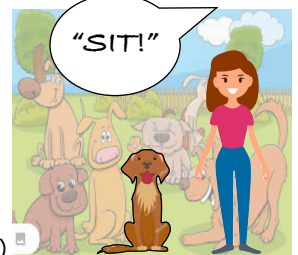
2.) Distance when asking for a 'sit': Ask your dog to 'sit' - and step away.

Practice asking your dog for a 'sit' when you are standing close to him, when you are standing behind him, when you are standing 2' away from him. Work up to asking your dog to 'sit' when you recall him, before he gets to you! Now, that's a challenge! How far away can you go from your dog, and he will still hold his 'sit'? Can you leave the room, go out of sight?

3.) Distractions when asking for a 'sit': ask your puppy to sit, and add distractions: drop a treat nearby; bounce a ball; run past him; have someone shake a bag of treats; ring the doorbell; etc. HINT: train distractions close up and you'll find your dog can cope better with distractions at a distance when asked to 'sit'!

4.) Difficulty or Diversity: Practice asking your dog for a 'sit' in different rooms in your house, in your backyard, in your driveway, then in more distracting places, like a parking lot, a public park or before he gets to go into the Dog Park! (Source: Susan Garrett, 'Say Yes'; Terry Ryan, 'Coaching People...')

"SIT!"



You can teach 'sit' with a simple tug toy, or even a 'paw target', too! Just ask us how!