



SIT

Level 1

Goal: Asking a dog to sit is a great way to keep the dog calm and in a stationary position. We want to teach the dog to sit as soon as he/she hears the word 'sit' no matter where we are, no matter what is going on and no matter what position we are in. "Sit" is one of the basic behaviors to teach for good impulse control. We can ask the dog to sit before getting his/her meal, before going through doors, before getting out of the car, etc.

Sit involves an implied "stay" as the position should be maintained until we give the cue 'Free' or another cue.

Material: clicker and treats

TRAINING PLAN		
1.	Getting started: Luring	<p>Present a treat in front of the dog's nose. Slowly move it over the dog's head, towards their ears. As the dog follows the treat with his nose, they should look up and their hips should go down into a sitting position. Don't hold your treat too high over the dog's head or they might jump to try to get it. You might also have to wait a few seconds with the treat over the dog's head until they sit at first.</p> <p>As soon as the dog's butt touches the ground, click and treat. Treat in position 2-3 times, in other words, while the dog is still sitting. After treating 2-3 times in position, click and treat out of position (by presenting the treat out of reach of the dog) or use the cue "Free". If needed, make a small movement backwards, triggering the dog to get out of position.</p> <p>Repeat 5-6 times or until the dog gets into position quickly and easily.</p>
1.	Capturing/ Shaping	<p>Stand in front of the dog and wait. Most dogs will willingly sit at this point. If not, let them think about how to get the treat. It shouldn't be long before they get into a sit. As soon as the dog's butt touches the floor, click and treat. At first it may take a few seconds to a few minutes before the dog gets into position, but you should quickly notice that the dog is sitting faster and faster. If the dog loses focus and simply doesn't seem to understand, go back to step one (luring) for a few repetitions then try again.</p> <p>If needed, you can also <i>shape</i> the behavior by clicking and treating any movement in the right direction, in other words, any lowering of the hips.</p>
2.	Adding the cue	<p>Once the dog sits automatically and quickly as soon as they get out of position, you can start saying the word "sit" as they initiate the position, in other words, while their butt is going down. Make sure you only say the word once. You'll have to repeat this step about 50-100 times for the dog to make the connection between the cue (the word) and the behavior (sitting). After that, you can start saying the word "sit" to trigger the position.</p>
3.	Building duration	<p>When the dog sits, don't click immediately. Instead, wait a few seconds before clicking and treating. Reward in position, while the dog is sitting down. If the</p>



		<p>dog gets out of position to get the treat, pull your hand away and patiently wait for the dog to sit again. Wait a few seconds, then reward the dog. Use the cue “Free” to get the dog out of position, click and treat.</p> <p>Gradually work up the duration of the behavior to 6 seconds or more. It’s important to increase the duration randomly, so you might click and treat at 4 seconds, then 2 seconds, then 5 seconds, etc.</p>
4.	Changing your position	<p>Repeat steps 1-3 while changing your position. Try sitting on a chair, sitting on the floor, standing on one side of the dog, then on the other, lying on the couch, while walking with the dog, etc. If the dog moves in front of you, you can use a barrier. Work against a wall or use a chair for instance. You’ll gradually move the barrier (or you) further and further away until you can eliminate it completely.</p>
5.	Building distance	<p>Take a step away from you dog and ask for the behavior. The goal is to be able to give the cue ‘sit’ while at a distance of at least 5 feet from the dog. Click, then go to the dog to give them the treat. Gradually move further and further away from the dog until the dog readily responds when you’re about 5 feet away. You can make this step easier by tethering the dog. Give them the “free” cue or an alternative cue like “down” or “stand” if you have already taught them those behaviors.</p>
6.	Building distractions	<p>Gradually increase the level of distractions. Ask the dog to sit while there’s a toy or ball or even treats on the floor, etc. Move around the dog while dispensing multiple treats to the dog for staying in position. If the dog gets up at any time, reduce the distractions and slowly build them back up. Ask the dog to sit while there are other people standing several feet away, then closer. Ask the dog to sit while there is another dog nearby. Say another word or make another sound. Do not click if the dog sits. Work very gradually and be creative with this step. Stay at this step until the dog consistently responds within 3 seconds to the cue ‘sit’ and maintains the position even in the presence of intermediate levels of distractions (every dog is different so levels of distractions need to be adapted to your dog).</p>
7.	Generalization	<p>Repeat the steps in different areas. Make it easy at first and make sure the level of distractions is very low. You may do this in your kitchen, then your living room, your bedroom and your backyard. You’ll want to gradually build up the level of difficulty until you can successfully get and keep your dog’s attention in all sorts of places with lots going on (e.g.: crowded mall or pet store on a Saturday).</p>
8.	Fluency	<p>Gradually build up the level of difficulty until you can successfully get your dog to sit in all sorts of places with lots going on and start using this cue in everyday life, whenever you need to get the dog to sit. Use real-life rewards as often as possible. Ask for a ‘sit’ before giving access to the food bowl, before throwing a ball, going out the door, putting on the leash, giving access to play with other dogs, etc.</p>

CONGRATULATIONS! If you’ve come this far, you have taught the dog a solid response to the word ‘Sit’.