



STAY

Level 2

Goal: With this cue, we are teaching the dog to maintain the position until asked otherwise. There are different criteria for this behavior: Duration, Distance and Distraction. We refer to them as the 3 Ds. Each one of them will be taught separately before combining them together. In this training plan, we will use the behavior “Down”, but the same steps apply to other positions such as “Sit: or “Stand”. Each position should be well known by the dog before teaching “Stay”.

Material: clicker, treats.

TRAINING PLAN		
1.	Establishing “Down”	This behavior should have been previously trained. To refresh it, ask the dog to “Down”. Click after a few seconds, treat in position, then ask for a “Free”. Click and treat again. Repeat until the dog consistently maintains the position for at least 6 seconds.
2.	Adding the cue	Ask the dog to “Down”. Once in position say the word “Stay”, wait several seconds then treat in position. Get the dog out of position with the “Free” cue, click and treat.
3.	Building duration	Keep increasing the duration in the same way, until the dog maintains the position for at least 30 seconds.
4.	Changing position	Repeat the behavior while in different positions (standing in front of the dog, standing parallel to the dog, sitting on a chair, sitting on the floor, lying down, etc.). Anytime you change your position, be willing to relax your criteria and build the behavior up again.
5.	Building distance	While facing the dog, take a very small step back; then get back in position, click and treat. If the small step got the dog out of position, then lean back instead, click and treat. It’s important to help the dog succeed at every step. If the dog gets out of position, you are going too fast. Repeat this step until the dog no longer shows any forward movement or intent to get up when you step back. Gradually increase your distance away from the dog. Take two steps back; come right back to the dog; click and treat. Take 3 steps away, 5 steps away etc. Don’t stay away from the dog at this point, just go back and forth, click and reward. You may also decide not to click and just reward as you get back to the dog. Add the cue “Stay” just before you move away from the dog. You can also use a hand signal such as you palm facing your dog with your fingers up. Gradually move further and further away from the dog until you can walk up to 20 feet away and move out of sight of the dog. At first, disappear for just a second, then come back. As for everything, build up very gradually. The dog dictates the pace.
6.	Building distractions	With the dog in position, take a step to the side, come back in front, click and treat. Take two steps to the side, come back in front, click and treat. Keep moving around the dog very slowly until you can walk all the way around the dog. Repeat in each direction. Raise your arms up in the air, click and treat. If the dog has moved out of



		position, simply ask them to get back in the position and repeat. This time, don't raise your arms as high. With some dogs, you may not be able to raise more than your hands (or fingers). Keep building up slowly until you can do jumping jacks in front of the dog, then start working on other positions, like sitting or lying on the floor, turning your back to the dog, etc.
7.	Increasing criteria	Present a ball, click and treat for maintaining the position. Pick up the ball, put it back down, click and treat. Bounce the ball in front of the dog, just once, click and treat. Keep building it up until you can bounce the ball all around the dog. Use your imagination and keep looking for distractions: a favorite toy, food on the floor, food dropped, running around, stepping over the dog, other dogs loose, other dogs playing, etc.
8.	The 3 Ds	Let's put it all together! With the dog in position, gradually increase the distance between you and the dog with distractions present. As always, make sure that the dog is successful at every step. Keep going back to the dog often at first to reward staying in position and gradually increase the time in between the rewards.
9.	Generalization	Repeat the steps in different areas. You may do this in different rooms then move it outside, at the mall, in the stores, etc. Also, repeat the steps below with the dog in different positions ("Sit" and "Stand").
10.	Fluency	Gradually build up the level of difficulty until you can successfully get your dog to "Stay" in different places and with different levels of distractions. Use it in everyday life situation anytime you need to dog to maintain a position.

CONGRATULATIONS! If you've come this far, you have taught the dog a solid response to the word "Stay".