



UNDER

Level 2

Goal: We use the cue “under” whenever we need the dog to go under a table a bench or our legs and stay out of the way. This behavior is especially useful when we go to restaurants, take the dog to work or school. When hearing the cue “under” the dog will go under the table or under our legs and lie down. The dog should be as tucked under as possible. This cue is often used with a hand signal to help the dog know where we need them to lie down.

There are three different ways to get a reliable response to “under, from preferred to least preferred: Luring, Targeting or shaping. Depending on the dog and on the situation, you might use one or the other.

Material: clicker, treats, mat.

TRAINING PLAN		
1.	Luring to lie down under the table	Establish “touch”; in other words, ask you dog to touch your hand 3-5 times. You will need a reliable touch to do this. Bring your hand under the table and then towards the floor. The dog should follow the hand and lie under the table, Click and treat. If the dog shows resistance, hold a treat between your fingers, show it to the dog and swiftly move it under the table, luring the dog in the position that you would like. Click and treat. Treat the dog 2-3 times for maintaining the position, then with a “Free” encourage the dog to come out from under the table. Repeat this process until the dog easily lies under the table, barely following the hand anymore. As soon as possible, start fading your hand away until you don’t need to lure anymore.
2.	Targeting to lie down under the table	Establish the body target (previously trained), in other words, place your target on the floor and click and treat the dog for lying on it. The target can be a small blanket that you might use when you go out, a mat or anything that the dog has learned to lie on. Repeat 3-5 times. Move the target closer to the table and gradually move it completely under the table. Once the dog reliably lies on the target, unless you’re using a blanket that you will always be using, you’ll have to gradually fade away the target by making it smaller and smaller until you can remove it altogether.
3.	Shaping to lie down under the table	Present the dog in front of a table while you stand slightly to the side. You can also walk towards the table with the dog on leash. Click for any movement towards the table, like a look, a forward movement, a head turn, etc. When the dog starts catching on what leads you to click, gradually increase the criteria and wait for the dog to take a step towards the table; then takes 2 steps; goes under the table, etc. until the dog lies down under the table. This process requires patience and breaking up the steps into very small ones to keep the dogs’ interest. Once the dog lies under the table, reward with a handful of treats for staying under for a few seconds, then with a “Free”, encourage the dog to get out of position. Repeat the process until the dog reliably goes under the table.



4.	Adding the cue	Say the word “Under” as the dog starts moving towards the table. You’ll have to repeat this step 50-100 times for the dog to learn that the word “under” means “go lie down under the table”.
5.	Building duration	When the dog lies down, don’t click immediately. Instead, wait a few seconds before clicking and treating. Reward in position, while the dog is lying down. If the dog gets out of position to get the treat, pull your hand away and patiently wait for the dog to lie down again. Wait a few seconds, then reward the dog. Use the cue “Free” to get the dog out of position, click and treat. Gradually build the duration by delaying for longer and longer periods of time until the dog maintains the position for up several minutes before you reward. Just like for any other behavior, when building duration, it’s important to increase the duration randomly. You might sometimes reward after a few seconds, then a few minutes, always setting the dog up for success.
6.	Changing your position	Just like you would do in a restaurant, sit on a chair in front of the table, then ask for the dog to go “Under”. If the dog gets confused, go back to using one of the techniques described earlier. Repeat until the dog goes under the table to the verbal cue only.
7.	“Under” your legs	Lure the dog to go under your legs when you’re in a sitting position. As soon as the dog lies down, click then treat. Treat again a few times as the dog maintains the position, then get the dog out of position with a “Free”. Click and treat. The dog should get out of position the same way they went into position. This will prevent getting tangled up in the leash. As with training “Under” the table, gradually minimize targeting or luring and increase the duration of the behavior. This position is great for keeping the dog out of the way and prevent others from interacting with the dog when waiting in an open space (e.g.: waiting room).
8.	Building distractions	Gradually increase the level of distractions. Slowly build up the level of distractions until you can include another person or dog in the training room.
9.	Generalization	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 different rooms then move it outside.
10.	Fluency	Gradually build up the level of difficulty until you can successfully get your dog to go “Under”, in different places and with different levels of distractions. Start using the behavior in everyday life, anytime you’re sitting at a table or waiting in a waiting room.

CONGRATULATIONS! If you’ve come this far, you have taught the dog a solid “Under”.