

CREATING A DEFAULT SIT BEHAVIOR



WHAT IS A DEFAULT BEHAVIOR?

These are behaviors our dogs default into when they're relaxing, or when they don't know what else to do. These behaviors are taught early on in training, have an extremely strong history of being rewarded, and have been practiced so frequently, they've become habit.

WHY SIT?

Sit is incompatible with all kinds of normal dog behaviors that we would rather they not be doing. For example, sitting is incompatible with jumping up, so if we create a super-strong sit, and it also works well for the dog, we'll see jumping up behaviors decrease as sitting behaviors increase.

BUT... MY DOG ALREADY KNOWS HOW TO SIT

Actually, most dogs entering this program have started on a sit, but with this one, we not only need to strengthen this behavior in your dog, we also need to teach you some new mechanics. We want you to be so well versed at this, you don't even think about it anymore.

Plus, this isn't where this behavior ends. We'll be building on it in future weeks, so we need you and your dog to be really good at it before proceeding on with it.

HABITS ARE HARD TO BREAK - AND THAT'S THE POINT

We want them to learn a habit not a trick! We want you AND your dog to practice this one so frequently, it just becomes part of your routine. Kinda like turning on your turn signal when driving. It takes a lot of concentration when you're first starting out, but now, we don't even think about it! We just do it!

SIT TO SAY PLEASE

EVERYDAY LIFE, NOT JUST IN A TRAINING SESSION

After today's practice session, instead of setting aside a few minutes each day to practice, we want you to integrate it into your everyday life. When your dog approaches, when you get home, when going out the door, Right before petting, etc.

SCRAP THE BOWL - KIND OF...



Of course we want you to feed your dog their daily ration of food, but since we're going to be working at this in all of our interactions, we're gonna have to use part of their meals for it. Put part of their meal in your bait bag and keep it on you. When your dog approaches, prompt for a sit. If your dog is finicky, try putting some salmon oil over it or mixing in some other goodies too.

THE HIGHER THE DISTRACTION, THE BETTER THE TREAT



Inside your house kibble will most often be fine, but as you progress into higher distractions, you'll need to go up the pay scale because unless you've got the least finicky dog ever to walk the planet Earth, it's not high enough value. See the shopping list video / handout for other ideas. And in really high distractions, like on walks when another dog appears, prep some cheese and hot dogs. For 99.99% of dogs, these will work well.



HOW LONG DO I NEED TO DO THIS?

We are going to want you practicing this about 2-3 weeks total. It'll absolutely get to the point where your dog is coming and sitting in front of you a whole lot. Keep paying it. It'll feel like a lot, but we're training for the next 10+ years, put in the effort now.



THE WHOLE FAMILY IS INVOLVED

We want everyone in the household on the same page with this. Better yet, recruit visitors to help with this too!

SIT TO SAY PLEASE

DAY 1: GETTING THE SIT

- Extend a treat or kibble right in front of the dog's nose. We need them to catch the smell, then quickly bring the treat back to your core.
- Once seated, quickly deliver the treat. Do this fast enough that the dog remains seated while you deliver. If you deliver too slow, your dog will jump for the treat, we don't want that.
- With both hands at your core, treat in one hand, take a few steps quickly back. Flash the treat at the dog's nose, then bring it back to your core. Repeat many times.

DAY 2:

- Warm up with a few repetitions from yesterday's activities, then move about your day. When your dog approaches you for any reason, flash the lure, get the sit and pay it, then go about whatever you would normally do with them next.

DAY 3-5:

- When your dog approaches you, wait with your hands at your core. DO NOT FLASH THE TREAT. If your dog sits, reward. If they don't sit after a few seconds, flash the treat in front of their nose and wait, then pay the sit.

DAY 5-10: TRY IT IN NEW WAYS

- Warm it up in the yard, and then start integrating it in there too.
- Can your dog do it while you're seated?
- Can the puppy do it when you walk in the door from outside?
- What if you're holding things?

11+ DAYS: OUTSIDERS

- Start recruiting new people to help. The more people your dog learns require a sit, the stronger this behavior will become. They will treat the dog too!

REGRESSION IS NORMAL

If at any point your dog struggles, give them more info. Flash the treat in front of their nose. If it's not high enough value, go up the pay scale.