

THE ULTIMATE GUIDE ON HOW TO

TRAINING YOUR DOG IN 7-WEEKS

EASY TRAINING TECHNIQUES
FOR SUCCESS



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Even if your dog already recognizes his name, please don't overlook this vital lesson. We promise you'll learn something useful!

The first lesson we often teach our dogs, often without realizing it, is that a particular sound grabs their attention. This "sound" is their name.

That should be its sole purpose. However, many dog owners mistakenly use their dog's name as a catch-all command, assigning it different meanings based on their immediate needs: "Max!" (meaning "Come here!"); "Max!" (meaning "Stop that!"); "Max!" (meaning "Get down!"); "Max!" (meaning "Stop barking!"); "Max!" (meaning "Don't eat that cat poop!"). You get the idea.

Your dog may be exceptionally clever, but he isn't a mind reader.

You should use your dog's name in a manner similar to how you'd use a child's name. For example, when you call a child's name, he may acknowledge that he heard you (if you're fortunate), but typically, he will respond with, "What?" He probably won't even look away from his video game or whatever he was doing when you called him. You'll need to follow up with a clear instruction: "Bobby! Stop playing that game and do your homework!" (Then, he may or may not choose to comply with your request, depending on his training.)

A typical response might be a call back of “What?” He likely won’t even pause his video game or whatever activity he was engaged in when you called his name. To get through to him, you’ll need to provide a clear instruction: “Bobby! Stop playing that game and do your homework!” (Whether he follows your direction will depend on how well he’s been trained.)

The key takeaway is to use your dog’s name similarly—to capture his attention. After that, employ various sounds (commands) and actions to indicate what you want him to do.

Important: Even once your dog learns his name, he might continue his current activity upon hearing it (just like Bobby). Stay calm and patient. Avoid repeating his name: “Max... Max!... MAX!!!” This approach will only teach your dog to disregard you until he hears his name repeatedly. We will provide you with more effective solutions.

Now, let’s move on to the lesson.

Week 1 - Lesson 1: *How to Teach Your Dog His Name*

Read through this lesson first, and then practice it with your dog.

1. Begin by filling your pocket (or a bag or pouch) with about 20 treats.
2. Bring your dog to a quiet area with minimal distractions.
3. Wait for your dog to look away from you, then say his name (just once!).
4. As soon as he turns to you, reward him with a treat and say “Good!” (Or whatever phrase or clicker you prefer as your primary reinforcement; we will use “Good!” in our examples.)
5. Move a few steps to a new spot and wait for your dog to look away from you again.
6. Repeat his name and reward him with a treat and praise when he looks at you.
7. Continue this process five times. If your dog was particularly distracted before responding to his name, be sure to give him extra praise and treats.

If your dog doesn’t respond: If you call his name and he doesn’t look at you, he might be too distracted. In that case, move him a short distance to a different location and try again.

Say his name. Use an enthusiastic tone of voice. Give immediate rewards if he looks at you.

If he still doesn't respond to his name, clap your hands, whistle, or make some other attention-getting sound. When he looks, say his name again and immediately give the rewards. Do this as a last resort. You want him to learn to respond to his name, not the other sounds.

Note: If your dog does not respond to those attention-getting sounds, please check his hearing. Seriously. Some breeds, such as Dalmatians, are prone to hearing problems. A dog owner who thinks the dog is too dumb to learn is sometimes surprised to learn the dog is deaf!

Another tactic: put the treat in your hand and let your dog sniff your closed fist so he'll know it's there. Pull your hand away and wait until your dog looks away from you. Say his name and immediately reward his response.

If your dog continues to ignore his name after several attempts, could you try moving to a less distracting location? (Distractions include smells, not just sights and sounds.)

Keep trying, be patient, and remember not to repeat his name. Give immediate rewards when he responds.

This Week's Homework



Practice this lesson!

During this week, you'll be training yourself as well as your dog. The important lesson for you: Learn to say your dog's name only once. This is difficult for most people. We rely on verbal communication. Dogs don't. So you'll have to train yourself not to do what may come naturally: repeating yourself until you get a response. Practice this lesson several times each day during the week. Vary the time of day and location (both inside and outside). Do not, however, move to areas with greater distractions to challenge your dog with higher degrees of difficulty, even if he is a fast learner. The Happy Mutt Training System works best when you build on a strong foundation of success and progress slowly, one step at a time.

Do five repetitions during each lesson.

Concentrate on saying your dog's name only once.

Remember: do not use your dog's name as a "catch-all" command with multiple definitions. As our training progresses, you'll learn that each desired action will have its separate command (and it won't be your dog's name).

In Addition to Practicing This Lesson...

Learn the type of reward that is the best motivator for your dog. Food treats, such as small pieces of cooked chicken, can be kept fresh by placing them in sealable plastic bags and storing them in the refrigerator. Focus on positive reinforcement. You'll be teaching your dog that listening to you and learning are fun. Your goal is to have a happy student, eager for each lesson. Use treats your dog loves most, and give them immediately as instant reinforcers. Remember to use a combination of primary (treats) and secondary (praise or clicker) reinforcers together. When your dog responds correctly, immediately give the treat and say "Good!" Always use the same praise word/phrase. Have fun playing with your dog! Don't focus all your time together on training. Spend lots of quality time just enjoying each other's company.

Coming up next week Lesson 2: Quick & Easy Sit Training for your Dog



Even if your dog already knows how to sit on verbal commands, please don't skip this lesson. We promise she'll begin to learn something new! The method you'll use to teach your dog to sit is known as the "lure and reward" method. You'll lure your dog into a sitting position, then immediately reward her. It's a popular method because it's effective, easy for you to do, and easy for your dog to learn. A great "side-effect" of this method is that it allows a natural motion to become a visual cue... a form of sign language for your dog. This is so cool! Dogs are very visual and they often respond to body motions better than they do to sounds. (You'll need to keep this in mind as sometimes it can work against you: to your dog, your voice may be saying one thing while your body language is saying the opposite. In dog communication, body language trumps verbal language every time. We'll cover this in more detail later.) Imagine being able to use hand signals as commands for your dog when you're on the phone, or too far away for your dog to hear you. It's something worth pursuing. So let's get on with the lesson.



Read this lesson first, and then practice it with your dog.

Week 2 - Lesson 2: *Quick & Easy Sit Training for Your Dog*

1. Load up your pocket (or a bag or pouch) with treats.
2. Take your dog to an area where there won't be a lot of distractions.
3. While your dog is standing, put a treat in your hand, and move your hand to within an inch or so of your dog's nose. Make sure she smells the treat hidden in your hand and is focusing her attention on it.
4. Move your hand slowly backward, about an inch over her head, between her ears, toward her tail. Keep your hand low over her head so she doesn't try to leap up to get the treat.
5. As your dog watches your hand with the treat move just above her head, she will raise her chin—and her butt will plop down into a sitting position. When that happens, immediately give her the treat and say "Good!"
6. Now move a few steps away. Get your dog to stand and follow you.
7. Repeat Steps 3, 4 and 5.
8. Did you notice you haven't told her to "Sit" yet? Don't say that until you can get her to sit consistently by moving your treat-filled hand over her head, toward her tail. Once you're sure she's going to do this properly the next time you do that, say "Sit" a split second before you start moving your hand. When she sits, immediately reward her with the treat and "Good!"
9. Repeat this process five times, saying "Sit" just before she does so. If your dog doesn't do what you want if your dog backs up instead of sitting down as you move your treat-filled hand over her head and toward her tail, position her so that she's facing out of a corner and cannot back up without hitting the wall.

This Week's Homework



Practice this lesson two or three times each day during the week. Vary the time of day and location.

Do no more than five repetitions during each lesson. Reduce the number of repetitions as your dog learns... eventually asking her to sit just once, two or three times a day.

Dogs tend to learn to sit quickly, and repeating the lesson too often will only make them bored (remember, we don't want bored students).

After a few days of successful "Sit" practice, start to focus a bit on your hand movement. As you move your treat-filled hand over your dog's head and toward her tail, begin to emphasize an upward sweep of your hand... less over her head, more in an upward curve toward your body. (Don't go too far with this just yet; we'll continue working on it in next week's lesson.)

In Addition to Practicing This Lesson...

Reinforce Lesson 1, Teaching Your Dog Her Name: Continue teaching your dog her name (as you learned last week) at various times throughout the week. Use a training area that is slightly more distracting than last week. Remember to say your dog's name only once, and wait for her to respond before giving the rewards. Have fun playing with your dog! Don't focus all your time together on training. Spend lots of quality time just enjoying each other's company.

Coming up Next Week Lesson 3, Teaching Your Dog to Come Every Time!



Teaching your dog to come when called is one of the most valuable lessons in this training course.

It can save your dog's life.

A dog that comes when called can be kept away from traffic or other dangers. You can let him run at the dog park, in the woods or along the beach knowing that when you call him back, he'll come. This training therefore gives you both more freedom.

But teaching your dog to come when called is also one of the most difficult lessons for you, not your dog. You'll need to control your normal human tendencies and pay close attention to your body language. What you'll be learning to do is counter-intuitive to humans, but very effective. The result—a dog that comes when you call him, every single time—will be well worth the effort.

Before we begin, you need to decide what command you'll use. Give this some thought, because you'll need to use it every time, without change. Consistency is key with verbal commands. You can't expect your dog to learn that "Come," "Come here," "Get over here," "Hey, come on," and "Max, get your butt over here right now!" all mean the same thing. The simplest, of course, is "Come!"



Three things during this training are going to be different from other lessons. First, your tone of voice. It should be upbeat and enthusiastic. Think of yourself as an excited coach yelling encouragements to a player running down the field, versus calmly telling the player what to do.

Second, repetition of the verbal command is good for this particular training, because a series of short, enthusiastic sounds works best when getting your dog to move quickly. Imagine a coach yelling “Go! Go! Go!” Also, clapping while giving the command is extremely effective.

Third, you’ll need to use your entire body (not just your voice) to get your dog to do what you want. Most people tend to stand facing their dog, or even step towards him when they want him to come. That’s the opposite of what you should do. To get your dog to come, you’ll need to turn and move away from him as you call him. This will be the hardest trick for you to learn, but you’ll be amazed at how well it works!

Think of yourself as “pulling” your dog toward you. When pulling something heavy on the end of a rope, you can stand facing it and pull it towards you with just your arms...

Or you can do it the easy and much more effective way—by turning, putting the rope over your shoulder, and walking away from the object, pulling it behind you.

Here’s another tip: most dogs want to go where their owners go. They figure out where we’re about to go by looking at our feet. That’s why you’ll be turning and moving away from your dog to get him to come to you.

One more thing before we begin. It is very important during this initial training that your dog learns to love coming to you. As mentioned earlier in this course, your primary reinforcer (such as the treat) must be something your dog loves—not just accepts, but really loves.

Your tone of voice when giving praise must be encouraging and happy, too. Have you ever seen someone yelling at their dog that got loose? Typically they lose patience quickly and switch from a cajoling voice to a stern, angry yell if the dog doesn’t come immediately. Think about that. Would you want to run towards anger? Of course not! Remember, your goal is to make your dog very happy to run to you when you call. So be very careful to not patient during this lesson, keep your voice happy and enthusiastic, and give tons of praise when your dog does the right thing. Now (finally), let’s get on with the lesson!

Week 3 - Lesson 3: *Teaching Your Dog to Come Every Time!*

Read this lesson first, and then practice it with your dog.

1. Fill your pocket (or a bag or pouch) with treats, ensuring you have more than usual for this lesson.
2. Take your dog to a location with minimal distractions.
3. Position yourself about 10 feet away from your dog while he is distracted.
4. Enthusiastically call your dog's name followed by the command: "Come! Come! Come!" Turn sideways (avoid turning your back, as you need to keep an eye on him) and start clapping while running away from your dog.
5. The moment he begins to move towards you, praise him with "Good!" and keep moving.
6. Gradually slow down and allow your dog to catch up; then stop and reward him with a handful of treats and ample enthusiastic praise—make it feel like coming to you was the best thing ever!

Important: This technique reinforces your dog's actions twice—first for redirecting his attention (Step 4) and second upon reaching you (Step 5).

Step 4 is just as crucial as Step 5. Be consistent in praising your dog the instant he acknowledges you. Given the myriad distractions in your dog's environment, successfully getting him to stop what he's doing and focus on you is impressive, so express your appreciation. Praise him with "Good!" immediately when he looks at you and starts moving towards you. Ensure that when he reaches you in Step 5, you give him the treat right away. Do NOT delay, as he may sit down. If you reward him after he sits, he might think sitting is what earns the treat, rather than coming to you.

7. Walk about ten steps away from your dog and wait for him to look away.
8. Repeat Steps 3, 4, and 5.
9. Carry out this process three times.

If your dog doesn't respond or come, it's likely he's too distracted. That's perfectly okay. Keep in mind, that he hasn't yet realized that coming to you is more rewarding than whatever else he's focused on.

Here's how to proceed: go to him. (Some may find this challenging, thinking it means "giving in" to their dog. But trust us, this is the correct approach at this stage of training.) Show your dog you have a treat in your hand, and use it to entice him as you walk away while giving the "Come! Come! Come!" command. After a few steps, stop and reward him with the treat.

If the treat lure doesn't work, put a leash on him and gently pull him along as you give your command. Stop after a few steps and give him the treat. Remember to keep your tone of voice upbeat, enthusiastic, and happy.

This Week's Homework



Practice this lesson several times a day. Vary the time of day and location. Think of the training as a fun game for you and your dog.

Remember to use the same come command every time, turn away from your dog, and clap while running away. Give instant praise when he turns his attention to you, and instant treats when he reaches you.

Be aware of what your dog is doing when you call him to come to you. You want him to learn quickly and easily, so don't call him when he's focused on something else. Keep the degree of difficulty for this exercise as low as possible at this point.

Use the command also when you know you're dog will be coming to you automatically, such as when you put his food bowl down.

Also remember the key to this lesson is to teach your dog that coming to you is a wonderful thing. So for now, do NOT use the command to call him to you if the end result is something he won't like, such as having his toenails trimmed. Instead, go to him, put him on the leash, and lead him to where you need him to go. Keep your tone of voice upbeat, friendly, and encouraging, but be sure to avoid using the come command when your dog won't like what happens afterward.

In Addition to Practicing This Lesson...

Reinforce Lesson 2, Teaching Your Dog to Sit. Continue teaching your dog to sit (as you learned last week) at various times throughout the week. Remember not to change your verbal command. If you started with "Sit," do not say "Sit down" or anything else.

After a few successful sessions with the basic lesson, during your next session, put your treat in your other hand (not the one that is moving over his head toward his tail). This will teach your dog that he'll get a reward for doing the right thing (sitting) even when he can't sniff the food.

Remember to say "Sit" before moving your arm.

After a few successful sessions, during your next session, try saying the word alone, without moving your arm (or anything else). It may take him a few seconds longer to sit on just the verbal command, so wait until he does so before giving lots of praise and several treats. If your dog doesn't sit on just the verbal Command, resist the temptation to repeat the command.

Instead, go back to using the arm motion with the verbal command. Don't worry if he won't respond to the verbal command without the arm motion at this point. When you feel your dog is ready to move on, during your next session, try teaching him to respond to the arm motion alone. Modify the arm movement somewhat, so it's more of an upward motion out and back toward your chest than a movement over your dog's head toward his tail. Use just the arm movement alone, without the verbal command. Give extra praise and treats to reward him if he sits. After he learns to respond to just the verbal command, and to just the visual command, alternate them (but not during the same session). Sometimes ask him to "Sit" verbally. Other times just use the arm movement. Give lots of praise for doing the right thing. Be patient; this alternating of verbal and visual commands is a bit complicated for your dog. Don't switch commands during the same session. Go back to using the verbal command and arm motion together if he doesn't respond to either alone. All dogs learn at different paces. Just keep working at it. Make sure there aren't too many distractions. Give lots of praise for doing the right thing. Keep your practice sessions to no more than five repetitions per session. Reinforce Lesson 1, Teaching Your Dog His Name: Continue teaching your dog his name at various times throughout the week, allowing the level of distraction to increase during your practice sessions. Remember to say your dog's name only once, wait for him to look at you, and then immediately give praise.

Intermittent Reinforcement Begins when you're confident your dog will respond to his name each time, you can begin "intermittent reinforcement." Continue giving verbal praise, but back off on giving treats every time your dog responds correctly. Give treat rewards intermittently, at random. This gradual withdrawal of treats is an important step, so don't skip it. (You can delay it another week, though, if your dog doesn't yet respond consistently to his name.) Start using petting (make sure it's the kind your dog likes—most dogs do NOT like pats on the head, for instance) and play as other forms of reward. Have fun playing with your dog! Don't focus all your time together on training. Spend lots of quality time just enjoying each other's company.

Coming up Next Week Lesson 4: Teaching Your Dog Patience



It can be challenging for a dog who enjoys your company to remain in place while you walk away. However, teaching your dog to stay has numerous advantages. For instance, when your dog stays on command, you can keep her safe while you quickly cross the street. Additionally, the stay command fosters patience and impulse control in your dog. Incorporating a visual cue for stay will help ensure her safety, even when your voice cannot reach her, so we'll add a hand signal to this training.

You will use two verbal commands in this lesson: one to instruct your dog to stay and another to signal that she can move again (releasing her from the stay). As with all training, it's important to choose specific verbal commands and apply them consistently. The straightforward command for staying is "Stay." Avoid extending it to phrases like "Stay there." For the release command, you might choose "Release," "Free," or "Okay." Ensure it's not a term you might use in other contexts, like "Release" when asking your dog to drop a toy. Using "Free" is probably the best choice, as it is unlikely to be confused with other commands. This will be the term we focus on in this lesson.

Teaching your dog to stay involves working with three elements:

- 1. Distance.** Distance refers to how far you move away from your dog.
- 2. Time.** Time refers to how long you want your dog to stay.
- 3. Distraction.** Distraction refers to everything going on around your dog that is tempting her to get up. It's best to begin with easy challenges for your dog in all three elements: short distance, short time, and fewest distractions. Eventually, we'll work on each element separately, gradually increasing the degree of difficulty. Let's get on with the lesson.

Week 4 - Lesson 4: *Teaching Your Dog Patience*

Read this lesson first, and then practice it with your dog.

- 1.** First, load up your pocket (or a bag or pouch) with treats.
- 2.** Take your dog to an area where there won't be a lot of distractions.
- 3.** If you're right-handed, put a treat in your left hand (vice versa if you're left-handed; you want the treat in the hand you won't be using for your hand signal).
- 4.** Place yourself about two feet away from your dog.
- 5.** Ask your dog to sit. As soon as she does, say "Stay" in a low, quiet voice and raise your hand, palm open and facing her, in the universal "Stop" hand signal. Look directly at your dog. Try not to move any other part of your body.
- 6.** After a very brief pause of just 1 or 2 seconds, say "Good," lean forward, and give your dog the treat from your other hand. Important: Make sure to quickly move the treat to her mouth so she's not tempted to get up and move toward it.
- 7.** While your dog is still eating her treat, release her by saying "Free" in a low, quiet voice, and lean back away from her.
- 8.** Important: Let your dog get up or do whatever she wants, but do NOT praise or reward her for getting up. You want her to learn that the Stay action is the one that will reap the rewards.
- 9.** Repeat Steps 4-8. Be sure you don't allow more than a couple of seconds to go by before rewarding after giving the Stay command.

10. Repeat this process five times. If your dog doesn't do what you want If your dog doesn't stay still for a couple of seconds, she's probably too distracted. Try moving to a different location, or waiting until she has less energy.

Make sure she knows you have a treat in your hand.

Keep your tone of voice low and quiet, letting it drop in pitch (versus going up, as if you're asking a question).

Make sure your hand motion is distinct and does not look like the arm motion you use during the Sit training.

This Week's Homework



Practice this lesson several times a day, with fewer repetitions. Vary the time of day and location. Make sure there are as few distractions as possible.

Remember to use the same commands ("Stay," "Free") every time, using a low, quiet tone of voice.

Give instant praise and reward after just a couple of seconds by bringing the treat all the way to her mouth so she doesn't move to get it.

Do not be tempted to see if she'll stay longer. Right now it's very important to lay a solid foundation.

Practice your "Stop sign" hand signal and make sure it's different from your "Sit" motion.

In Addition to Practicing This Lesson...

Reinforce Lesson 3, Teaching Your Dog to Come when Called. Continue teaching your dog to come when called. Practice in various locations that are free from distraction, at different times of the day.

Remember the priority is to teach her that coming to you is a wonderful thing that will make her very happy. Don't use the come command when what you'll do when she comes is something she won't like.

Resist the temptation to give the come ("Come! Come! Come!") command more than once if your dog doesn't respond. Instead, go to your dog and show her the treat in your hand. Give the verbal command, turn, and move away while clapping. Be sure to praise ("Good!") as soon as she looks at you, and then reinforce generously with treats when she reaches you.

Reinforce Lesson 2, Teaching Your Dog to Sit. Continue teaching your dog to sit at various times throughout the week. You can use a training area that is slightly more distracting than last week. After a few successes when using both the verbal command and arm motion together, try them separately. First by saying the word alone, without moving your arm (or anything else). After a few successes with that, try using the arm motion alone, without giving the verbal command, during your next session. Alternate these during practice sessions throughout the week... separately, not during the same session. Be sure to give lots of praise and several treats to reward the correct action.

Intermittent Reinforcement Begins...

When you're confident your dog will respond correctly when asked (verbally and via arm motion) to sit, you can begin "intermittent reinforcement" for this particular command. Continue giving verbal praise, but back off on giving treats every single time your dog sits on command. Give treat rewards intermittently, at random. This gradual withdrawal of treats is an important step, so don't skip it. (You can delay it another week and continue with giving treats 100% of the time, though, if your dog doesn't yet sit whenever asked to do so.) Start using petting (make sure it's the kind your dog likes most dogs do NOT like pats on the head, for instance) and play as other forms of reward. Always include verbal praise.

Reinforce Lesson 1, Teaching Your Dog Her Name: By this time your dog should be responding to her name even when the level of distraction is high. If she does so consistently, you can stop practicing this lesson. Give yourself a treat! At the end of this week, you'll have been patiently being an excellent teacher for your dog for a full month! You've had to retrain yourself to focus on communicating in ways your dog understands, which may be contrary to what you're used to. That's hard work! So reward yourself for a job well done. Go out to dinner, indulge in your favorite food treat, do whatever you consider a great reward. Seriously, please do this. You deserve it... and it will help reinforce your correct behavior! ☺ Have fun playing with your dog! Don't focus all your time together on training. Spend lots of quality time just enjoying each other's company.

Why is it important to teach your dog to lie down on command?

In a word: control. A dog that is lying down is not chasing a cat, barking at other dogs, getting under your feet while you're trying to cook dinner, or otherwise being a pain in the neck when you want peace and quiet. Sometimes a dog, like a five-year-old child on a sugar rush, can get so wound up and full of energy they can get themselves into trouble. They need to calm down. A dog that will happily lie down when you ask him to will calm down and is less likely to get himself (or his owner) into trouble.

This lesson uses methods similar to the ones you used when teaching your dog to sit. But it may take your dog a bit longer to learn to lie down on command than it did to sit on command. Lying down, after all, takes a bit more effort... and being asked to lie down when you're not even tired seems kind of silly, even to a dog. So it may take longer, but don't get impatient or discouraged. As with other lessons, you need to decide what command you'll use.

Remember, consistency is key with verbal commands; one word or phrase, one meaning. If you use "Down" for this lesson, you can't use "Down" to also mean "Get off the couch" or "Stop jumping on Aunt Mavis!" Many trainers use "lie down," but that's a bit too close to "get down." To make it easier on your dog, we recommend a totally different-sounding word: "Rest." We'll use that word in our training lessons.



Let's dive into the lesson. Lesson 5: Teaching Your Dog to Lie Down. Begin by reading through this lesson, then practice it with your dog.

Week 5 - Lesson 5: *Lie Down Like a Pro*

1. Fill your pocket (or a bag or pouch) with treats.
2. Choose a quiet area with minimal distractions for training.
3. Place a treat in your hand and ask your dog to sit.
4. While your dog is sitting and you are squatting or sitting beside him, hold the treat about an inch from his nose. Slowly lower your hand straight down toward the ground. Important: ensure your hand moves directly down, just below his nose, taking care not to pull it away, as this may cause him to get up and follow it. If he does, simply start over.
5. Your dog should follow the treat down with his nose and then lie down completely. You might need to hold the treat on the ground for a few seconds before he lies down. Tapping the ground with your other hand can also help. Be patient.
6. As soon as your dog lies down, give him the treat and offer verbal praise ("Good!") immediately.
7. Move a few steps away to a different location.
8. Repeat Steps 3 through 7 multiple times.
9. Have you noticed that you haven't asked your dog to "Rest" yet? Just like with the Sit command, avoid giving the verbal cue until he lies down consistently by following your hand with the treat. Once you're confident he will do it correctly, say "Rest" in a calm, low voice just before you begin moving your hand. When he lies down, reward him instantly with the treat and a "Good!" praise.
10. Repeat this process five times, saying "Rest" calmly just before he lies down and rewarding him for his correct response.

If your dog isn't responding as expected:

If he backs up instead of lying down, try having him sit with his back against a corner to prevent him from moving away.

If he doesn't lie down completely, repeat Steps **3** through **7**, but add this: use your other hand (the one without the treat) to gently push him slightly sideways and downwards from behind his shoulders as you lower the hand with the treat to the ground.

If your dog still doesn't want to lie down, try moving him to a rug. (Some dogs simply don't like lying on cold, hard surfaces.)

As with other lessons, make sure your dog is not too distracted...or nervous. He'll be more willing to lie down if he's calm and relaxed. If he's nervous or full of energy, postpone your lesson until he's settled down.

Remember to keep your tone of voice calm and low.

Remember, the instant he lies down, give the treat and praise ("Good!").

This Week's Homework



Practice this lesson several times a day. Vary the time of day and location.

Also, watch your dog when you're not practicing the lessons, and when he starts to lie down on his own, say "Rest" as he does so. Then quickly give him a treat and praise.

In Addition to Practicing This Lesson...

Reinforce Lesson 4, Teaching Your Dog to Stay. Vary the time of day and location. Make sure there are few distractions. Remember to use the same commands ("Stay," "Free") every time, using a low, quiet tone of voice.

Practice using your "stop" hand signal, making sure it's different from your "Sit" hand motion. Hold the treat in the hand you are NOT using for the "stop" signal. Give instant praise and reward after just a couple of seconds by bringing the treat all the way to his mouth so he doesn't move to get it.

If that's consistently going well, try extending the amount of time for your dog to stay by a few seconds longer before being released.

Important: Don't be tempted to extend the stay any longer than a few seconds before you've built a very strong foundation with this command.

Reinforce Lesson 3, Teaching Your Dog to Come when Called. Continue teaching your dog to come when called at various times throughout the week.

Practice in various locations, at different times of the day.

Remember the priority is to teach him that coming to you is a wonderful thing that will make him very happy. Don't use the come command when what you'll do when he comes is something he won't like.

If he's responding well when you're 10 feet away, try moving about 20 feet away from your dog before asking him to come.

Resist the temptation to give the command (“Come! Come! Come!”) more than once if your dog doesn’t immediately respond. Instead, go to your dog and show him the treat in your hand. Give the verbal command in an enthusiastic voice, turn and move away while clapping.

Be sure to praise (“Good!”) as soon as he looks at you, and then reinforce generously with treats when he reaches you.

Note: Remaining calm and patient when being ignored is difficult for most people, but please don’t get frustrated if your dog doesn’t come every time you call him. Some dogs learn more slowly than others. Also, like children, dogs tend to become more willful as they get older, and may occasionally decide that whatever they are doing is more interesting at the moment than coming to you. Sometimes even walking over to him and showing him the treat won’t work. Don’t get angry, don’t raise your voice, don’t repeat the command over and over. Instead, gently take him by the collar or snap on the leash and lead him away from whatever he’s interested in and to the destination you want then give him praise and a wonderful reward.

The worst thing you can do is lose your temper and yell angrily at your dog. If your dog ignores your command but eventually does stop whatever he’s doing and comes to you on his own, you can say to him whatever you want to vent your frustration as long as you say it in a loving, happy, singsong voice. “You stubborn little bastard. If you ignore me like that again I’ll sell your ass on eBay.”

Remember, you’re saying this in a loving, happy voice. Pet your dog as you’re saying it. Make him happy he came to you. This little mental trick will help you feel better while still reinforcing your dog’s correct (though belated) behavior.

Reinforce Lesson 2, Teaching Your Dog to Sit. By this time your dog should be responding to both the verbal and arm motion sit commands even when the level of distraction is fairly high. If your dog does so consistently, you can back off on the formal practicing of this lesson. But do continue the verbal praise (“Good!”) when your dog sits on command. Also, use petting (make sure it’s the kind he likes) and play as a reward instead of treats. (An occasional treat is still a good idea.)

Have fun playing with your dog! Don’t focus all your time together on training. Spend lots of quality time just enjoying each other’s company.

Coming up Next week: Lesson 6, No More Jumping on People

The importance of this lesson may depend on the size of your dog. A dog the size of a Chihuahua jumping up on you (or visitors as they come through your door) won't create quite the same problem as a 100-pound bear of a dog. But then again, muddy paws are messy, regardless of their size. And some visitors may not enjoy being "greeted" by any jumping dog.

Teaching your dog not to jump up on people will take extra time and patience because dogs naturally greet friends and family by sniffing or licking each other's muzzles. Your "muzzle" is too high, so they try to jump up to reach it. They're not being rude or pushy; they're being sociable! We just need to train them to be sociable in human terms.

You'll need a volunteer to help you with this lesson.

Week 6 - Lesson 6: *No More Jumping on People!*

Read this lesson first, and then practice it with your dog.

For Teaching Your Dog Not to Jump on Visitors:

1. Load up your pocket (or a bag or pouch) with treats.
2. Take your dog near the door where you and your visitors most often come into the house. (You and your dog will be inside the house.)



3. Ask your helper to come through the door and, as soon as your dog gets within a few feet, have your helper ask your dog to sit in a low, calm voice.
4. If your dog sits, immediately praise him and give him a treat. (Your helper makes the request, but you provide the reward for correct behavior.)
5. Repeat this exercise five times.

If your dog doesn't do what you want if your dog doesn't sit when asked to do so by your helper, move in front of your dog (so you're facing him) and ask him to sit yourself. Immediately reward his correct behavior with praise and a treat. Practice this a couple of times: after your helper comes through the door, you step in front of your dog as he approaches the helper, face your dog and ask him to sit, then give the reward. After he sits successfully for you two or three times, ask your helper to ask your dog to sit after coming through the door.

If your dog still won't sit and keeps trying to jump up on your helper, don't raise your voice or show impatience; your dog is probably just a bit too excited about greeting your helper. Instead, when your dog doesn't sit as asked by your helper, instruct your helper to abruptly turn his back on your dog, walk outside, and close the door. If your dog then turns to you, do the same—turn your back on your dog. After about 10 seconds, have your helper come back in, approach your dog again, and ask him to sit... and again turn his back, walk out, and close the door if your dog does not comply. Have your helper keep doing this until your dog sits as requested—then immediately reward your dog with praise and several treats for (finally!) calming down and doing as asked!

Note: If you can get more than one person to volunteer to help you with this lesson, individually at various times, your dog will more quickly learn the correct response (sitting, not jumping) for anyone who comes into the house. For Teaching Your Dog Not to Jump on You:

1. Think of situations in which your dog is likely to jump on you, and be prepared to ask him to sit before he can do so... ideally when he gets within six feet of you.
2. Practice training sessions where you go out and come back into the house, through various doors. Use the same methods as mentioned above: ask your dog to sit after you come in, and immediately reward the correct response.
3. Plan your practice sessions for when your dog is relatively calm.
4. Use your verbal sit command as well as your hand motion, as learned in *Lesson 2*.

Important: Keep your voice low and calm. This may require diligence and practice on your part, especially if you're coming home after being gone all day and are used to greeting your dog with excitement and enthusiasm. Remember: the goal is to control your dog's excitement so that he's less likely to jump up on you. So try not to sound excited to see him. If you're calm, he'll calm down quicker.

5. Give praise and treats when your dog sits as requested. Tip: Have a baggy of treats ready outside your door, so you can quickly reward your dog for sitting whenever you come into the house.

6. Don't have your dog sit for long. Ask him to sit, give him the rewards as soon as he does so, and then move away and allow him to follow. Give him a chew toy or do something that takes his focus away from jumping up to greet you. If your dog doesn't do what you want If your dog doesn't sit when asked, turn your back on your dog, walk outside, and close the door. After about 10 seconds, come back in, approach your dog again, and ask him to sit... and again turn your back, walk out, and close the door if your dog does not comply. Keep doing this until your dog sits as requested—then immediately reward your dog with praise and several treats for doing as asked.

If you're practicing in other areas and other situations where your dog might jump on you, immediately turn your back on him if he doesn't sit when asked. Don't talk to him.

The point is to teach your dog that he'll lose your attention when he jumps up on you or doesn't sit when asked.

Important: When your dog jumps up on you, do not attempt to correct this behavior by pushing him away with your hands, or by bringing up your knee to block his jump or force him backward. This is what many trainers tell people to do, but don't do it. Most dogs will perceive this action as play, and they'll get even more excited and will jump back with greater enthusiasm. This is not the effect you want.

Instead, follow the above instructions for deterring their jumping behavior (turn your back, walk away). Being ignored by you is "punishment" enough for most dogs, and they'll quickly learn to sit as asked, rather than jump up.

Bonus Lesson: Getting Your Dog to Go to His Room when Visitors Come Sometimes it's easier to avoid a jumping-up situation than try to prevent or correct it. To do this, teach your dog to run to another room when the doorbell rings or someone knocks.

For this lesson, you'll need a hallow toy stuffed with peanut butter, cheese or some other food your dog really likes.

1. Pick a designated room where you want your dog to go when the doorbell rings or someone knocks.
2. Have the hallow, food-stuffed toy ready on a shelf or somewhere (other than the floor) in that room so you can quickly grab it.
3. When your dog is in the house and calm, go to the door and ring the bell and/or knock, then run to the designated room, calling your dog and clapping so he'll run after you.
4. As soon as your dog follows you into the room, give him the food-stuffed toy, leave the room, and shut the door (with him still in the room, of course).
5. After 10-20 seconds, go into the room, take the toy away, and let your dog out.
6. Wait about 10 minutes, and then repeat Steps 3 through 5.
7. Practice this exercise three times, pausing for several minutes between each session. This will teach your dog that if he runs to the designated room when the doorbell rings or someone knocks, he'll get a delicious reward.
8. For your fourth practice session, change the procedure a bit. While your dog is still inside the closed room busy with the food-stuffed toy, go ring the doorbell or knock and then talk as if you're greeting friends. After a few seconds, go let your dog out of the room.
9. After your dog has learned to run to the designated room when the doorbell rings or someone knocks, advance the training with a real visitor. After the visitor has been inside for a few minutes, go let your dog out of the room. As your dog approaches the visitor, practice the "no jumping" lesson where your visitor asks your dog to sit as he approaches. Immediately reward his correct response.

Tip: Give your dog the food-stuffed toy whenever visitors are in the house, so he'll be more interested in that than jumping up on them.

This Week's Homework



Practice these lessons several times a day. Vary the time of day and location. In Addition to Practicing This Lesson...

Reinforce Lesson 5, Teaching Your Dog to Lie Down. Vary the time of day and location. Make sure there are few distractions.

After getting your dog to sit, move your treat-filled hand directly downward from his nose. Say "Rest" in a calm, low voice for a split second before you start moving your hand. Be prepared to hold the treat on the ground for a few seconds, or tap the ground to get his attention. If necessary, press gently on his back.

When he lies down, immediately reward your dog with the treat and “Good!” praise. Also, practice saying “Rest” just before your dog lies alone. Reward him as usual.

Reinforce Lesson 4, Teaching Your Dog to Stay. Vary the time of day and location. Make sure there are few distractions. Remember to use the same commands (“Stay,” “Free”) every time, using a low, quiet tone of voice. Give instant praise and reward for staying as asked by bringing the treat to his mouth so he doesn’t move to get it. If that’s consistently going well, try extending the amount of time for your dog to stay a few seconds longer than last week before being released. Later this week, when you think your dog is ready, work on the “distance” element of this lesson by backing up just one or two steps after asking your dog to stay. As you back up, slowly drop your “stop sign” hand signal, so both your arms are loosely by your side. Stop moving after a couple of short steps and stand very still, looking directly at your dog.

After a couple of seconds, move forward and give your dog the treat. As your dog is eating it, rock back a bit, wait a second, and give the release command (“Free”). Remember to keep your voice low and calm when giving the release command and don’t praise him for getting up. If your dog starts to get up before you give the release command, immediately move forward to block his forward motion, raising your hand in the stop signal again.

Important: Drop your arm and back off as soon as he stops moving forward. If you wait too long and your dog is already up and moving before you can “block” him, just go up to him and use a treat to again lure him back to where he started... and try again. Remember to remain calm, and avoid repeating the verbal command to stay.

Reinforce Lesson 3, Teaching Your Dog to Come when Called. Continue teaching your dog to come when called at various times throughout the week. Practice in various locations, at different times of the day. Remember the priority is to teach him that coming to you is a wonderful thing that will make him very happy. Don’t use the come command when what you’ll do when he comes is something he won’t like.

If he's responding well when you're 20 feet away, try moving about 30 feet away from your dog before asking him to come. Resist the temptation to give the command ("Come! Come! Come!") more than once if your dog doesn't immediately respond. Instead, go to your dog and show him the treat in your hand. Give the verbal command in an enthusiastic voice, turn and move away while clapping. Be sure to praise ("Good!") as soon as he looks at you, and then reinforce generously with treats when he reaches you.

Have fun playing with your dog! Don't focus all your time together on training. Spend lots of quality time just enjoying each other's company.

Coming up Next week: Lesson 7, Heel Training Made Easy



If you've ever been taken for a walk by a strong, willful dog, you can't help but gaze in wistful admiration at people whose dogs walk calmly by their sides, even when off a leash.

But there's more to gain from teaching your dog to heel than no longer being dragged down the street. When walking your dog is not a "chore," you'll enjoy it more, you'll do it more, and you and your dog will both benefit from more frequent walks.

Teaching an energetic and always-curious dog to walk slowly by your side and ignore all the fascinating scents and other distractions during your outings will be a major challenge. After all, dogs, unlike people, do not naturally walk side-by-side with their friends and family.

Some dog trainers (amateurs and professionals alike) use various forms of choke collars, brute force, and intimidation to teach dogs to heel. From a dog's point of view, this concept of "heel" must seem more like "hell."



As you know by now, that's not how we operate. Teaching your dog to heel will be easier than you think when you make the lessons an interesting game. But it will take a little time; you may not get to a finished "heel" for a few weeks. That's OK because the process will be lots of fun for you and your dog.

Follow our training system, and soon you and your dog will be the ones struggling dog walkers gaze at in wistful admiration!

Week 7 - Lesson 7: *Heel Training Made Easy*

Read this lesson first, and then practice it with your dog.

1. Load up your pocket (or a bag or pouch) with treats.
2. Take your dog to a quiet area where it's safe for her to be off a leash.
3. Decide on which side you'd prefer your dog to heel—your left side or your right. It doesn't matter which side you choose, but once you decide, don't change your mind later and confuse your dog. For this lesson, we'll use the left side. If you prefer the right side, just substitute "right" whenever we say "left."
4. Put a few treats in your left hand.
5. Show your dog the treats in your hand and then start walking away.
6. Encourage your dog to stay with you as you walk away. Call her name, slap your left leg, make smoochy noises, etc. Pick up the pace of your walking, almost as if you're trying to get away. As you're doing all this, wave the hand with the treats down low on your left side so your dog knows where they are.
7. If your dog follows you, stop after a few strides and give her the treats and lots of praise. It's great if she's stayed right by your side, but don't worry if she lags a bit behind at this point.
8. Wait a couple of minutes, and then repeat Steps 4 through 7. Vary your walking speed and make sudden changes in direction. The point is to make it interesting and fun for your dog to keep up with you.

If your dog doesn't do what you want if your dog doesn't follow you, go back to her and put the treats right under her nose before walking away and encouraging her to follow.

If she still isn't interested, the treats are not tempting enough or she's too distracted.

Find a treat she likes better, wait until she's hungrier, or move to a less-distracting location.

This Week's Homework

Practice this lesson a couple of times a day, but only for short periods of a minute or less.

Make sure there are few distractions, and your dog is eager to play and get lots of yummy treats.

In Addition to Practicing This Lesson...

Reinforce Lesson 6, Teaching Your Dog Not to Jump Up on People. Vary the time of day and location. Make sure there are few distractions.

You'll need a helper to come in the door and ask your dog to "Sit," while you're ready with a treat and reward if she does so.

After a couple of successes, see if she'll sit automatically when your helper comes in, without giving the "Sit" command. If she does, give her lots of praise (but in a low, calm voice) and extra treats. If she doesn't, go back to practicing with the verbal command a couple of times, then try again without it.

Don't get frustrated if your dog has a hard time controlling her excitement and learning not to jump up on people. Some dogs learn this lesson quickly; others take a long time and a lot of practice.

Make sure you and your helper remain calm with body movements and tone of voice (even when giving praise). Remember, with this lesson, it's very important to quell your dog's excitement, not encourage it.

Try to get visitors to ask your dog to sit every time they approach your dog. Be sure to have treats ready (and be sure your dog knows you have them). Don't bother trying this when your dog is overly excited.

Also, practice coming in the door yourself. Have a treat ready, ask her to sit as soon as she approaches you, and give the rewards when she does so. Repeat this three or four times.

Practice giving verbal praise ("Good") in a quiet tone of voice, with long, slow sounds rather than short, high-pitched tones.

Try to do two or three sessions a day, if possible.

Reinforce Lesson 5, Teaching Your Dog to Lie Down. Vary the time of day and location. Make sure there are few distractions.

This week you want to work on getting your dog to lie down without pressing on her back or tapping on the ground as encouragement. Sit or squat down next to your dog. Ask her to lie down ("Rest"), followed by moving your hand (filled with a treat) down toward the ground. Do not tap the ground; do not press on her back.

If she lies down, immediately reward your dog with a treat and praise her with "Good!" If she doesn't lie down, try again, ensuring she sees the treat in your hand. Use it as a lure, guiding it under her nose and towards the ground.

After a few successful attempts, ask her to lie down again, but this time, move your hand only partway to the ground, stopping a few inches above it. Praise and reward her when she responds correctly. Continue this for several sessions, gradually raising your hand higher each time after giving the verbal command. (Remember not to give her the treat until she lies down.)

In later sessions during the week, ask her to lie down ("Rest") while standing. Make sure she knows the treat is in your hand, and use it to lure her down by bending your knees and bringing your hand close to the ground so she understands your intention. Important: Avoid bending at the waist toward your dog, as this may confuse her and make her think it's part of the nonverbal command.

Practice asking her to lie down ("Rest") from a standing position, sweeping your hand downward towards the ground while bending your knees. As you progress, gradually bend your knees less and raise your hand higher from the ground. Ultimately, you want her to respond to the verbal command while you stand upright, using only the arm motion without lowering the treat.

Additionally, throughout the week, continue saying "Rest" just before she lies down on her own, rewarding her as usual. Reinforce Lesson 4, Teaching Your Dog to Stay, at various times and locations. Always use the same commands ("Stay," "Free") with a calm and quiet tone.

Gradually increase the duration, distance, and level of distraction as your dog improves in practice sessions, focusing on one of the "3 D's" at a time. Remember to emphasize the "Stay" with rewards, rather than the release ("Free"). If your dog is responding well, ask her to stay while lying down, which is helpful when you want her to remain in place for more than a minute.

In a quiet environment, position yourself about two feet away from your dog and ask her to sit, then lie down (“Rest”). Aim for her to lie comfortably on her side, rather than on her belly with her legs tucked under, which indicates she’s ready to jump up. If she doesn’t settle down on her own, encourage her to roll onto her side by holding a treat in front of her nose and gently luring her head back towards her shoulder. This should help her flop over. Once she does, reward her with the treat and offer soft verbal praise to avoid excitement that might make her get up.

Keep another treat handy.

Ensure you maintain that two-foot distance to avoid looming over her.

Command her to “Stay” using a firm tone, and signal with your hand in a “stop sign” position. After a few moments, lean forward and, with an underhand motion, pop the treat into her mouth.

Be prepared to “block” her with your body, as you learned in the previous lesson, if she tries to get up.

After a couple of seconds, calmly issue the release command (“Free”) and walk away, remembering not to offer praise or rewards after the release.

After a few minutes, repeat the lie-down/stay exercise, aiming for two or three short sessions each day.

Reinforce Lesson 3, Teaching Your Dog to Come when Called. Continue practicing the recall command throughout the week in various locations, both indoors and outdoors, at different times of the day. Your goal is to teach her that coming to you is a rewarding experience. Avoid using the command if the outcome will be something she dislikes.

If she is responding well from 30 feet away, gradually increase the distance to about 40 feet, but be mindful of any distractions between you and your dog.

Keep in mind that coming when called can be a challenging lesson for your dog. Unlike sitting or lying down, it’s not a behavior she naturally exhibits. Only increase the distance as she demonstrates readiness, recognizing that each dog learns at their own pace. If she isn’t ready for a greater distance, don’t force it—move closer and try again, keeping the excitement factor in mind.

Resist the temptation to give the command (“Come! Come! Come!”) more than once if your dog doesn’t immediately respond. Instead, go to your dog and show her the treat in your hand. Give the verbal command in an enthusiastic voice, turn and move away while clapping. Be sure to praise (“Good!”) as soon as she looks at you, and then reinforce generously with treats when she reaches you. Even if she’s responding well, don’t start skimping on the treats just yet. Continue giving generous rewards.

Have fun playing with your dog! Don’t focus all your time together on training. Spend lots of quality time just enjoying each other’s company.



CONCLUSION



More than merely giving commands, training a dog involves developing a bond built on mutual respect, trust, and understanding. You have gained step-by-step guidance on how to lead your dog from basic obedience to more complex behaviors over the course of these seven weeks. You've set yourself up for a happy, well-adjusted companion who can comfortably travel the world with you if you're consistent, patient, and positive.

Recall that training doesn't end after seven weeks. It's an ongoing process that intensifies as your relationship does. Your dog will grow to be not just obedient but also a happy and valuable member of your family as long as you continue to praise positive behavior and promote learning. There will be many chances along the way to make treasured moments with your well-mannered dog.

Happy Training!