

HOW TO TEACH YOUR DOG TO SIT

Teaching your dog to sit is incredibly useful as it forms the basis of a lot of other training. It also helps when teaching good manners and keeping your dog under control.

Step One: Hold a small, smelly treat in your hand and let your dog put their nose to it. Whilst they're sniffing the treat, raise your hand up a little and over their head, towards their back. This movement encourages them to look up and put their rear end on the floor. Praise them and reward with the treat as soon as your dog is in a sitting position.

Step Two: Repeat step one until your dog is readily going into a sit by following the treat lure.

Step Three: Repeat as above, luring your dog with one hand, but now reward them with a treat from your other hand.

Step Four: Now it's time to take away the food lure and instead introduce a hand signal and voice cue. Say 'sit' and raise your palm to your shoulder. If your dog sits, praise and reward them.

If they don't sit, repeat the hand signal. Return to steps one and two if your dog needs a bit more practise sitting.

Step Five: Once your dog has mastered the hand signal with voice cue, you can train them to respond just to the voice cue. Say 'sit', wait three seconds and then give the hand signal, praise and reward your dog when they sit.

Repeat this, each time increasing the number of seconds between the voice cue and the hand signal.

Step Six: Now your dog understands how to sit on cue, start to phase out the treat reward (but not the praise). Treat only the faster sits whilst still acknowledging the slower sits with praise. This should result in your dog sitting as soon as you ask them to.

Once your dog can sit reliably when asked, you can vary reinforcement and give treats every now and then. If the environment is distracting continue to reward frequently. Practise asking for this position in lots of different locations, a 'sit' cue can be used in all elements of your dog's daily routine.