

SIT

Why train sit?

Every puppy should have one command she can do anywhere, anytime. Sit is a great contender for that job. It gives your puppy a way to say, "Please," and can become her default greeting, which stops her from jumping on people.

How to train it.

Step 1. *Say it.* Tell your puppy, "Sit" in a cheerful tone of voice.

Step 2. *Show it.* Pause a second (one-one thousand), then lure your puppy into a sit by putting the treat up to her nose and slowly moving the treat backwards and up. Keep the treat lure close to your puppy's nose—if you move your hand up too quickly or too far away from her mouth, she may give up and lose interest.

Step 3. *Pay it.* As soon as your puppy's hindquarters hit the ground praise and treat. Repeat as many times as you can, so long as you and your puppy are still enjoying yourselves. Praise and treat every sit.

Step 4. *Repeat it.* Repeat the exercise several times over a few days. When your puppy sits reliably, it is time to take the treat out of your hand and use the verbal cue alone, mark it with "yes" and then give your puppy the treat. If your puppy makes a mistake, first try luring without the treat. Only put the treat back in your hand if all else fails.

Training Tip: Only say the command once. Say it, pause, then lure.

Troubleshooting: If you have trouble with this exercise, try practicing with your puppy standing in front of a wall or fence. This way, when you move her back, she has nowhere to go but into a sit. Then break the exercise into small steps. First treat your puppy for putting her nose in the air. Then wait until she lowers her hindquarters and treat for that. Finally treat generously when your puppy's bottom touches the ground.

When to practice.

- Before throwing a ball, Frisbee, rope-toy, etc.
- Before giving your puppy a toy.
- Before putting the food bowl down.
- Before handing over a treat or chewie.
- Before opening a door.
- Before putting on a leash to go for a walk.
- Before taking off a leash at the park or beach.
- Before dishing out a belly rub or good ear scratch.
- Before hopping into or out of the car.
- Before allowing your puppy onto the couch with you.