

SIT STAY

Why train sit stay?

Getting puppies to hold still can be a real challenge. Teaching sit stay helps them learn to wait at doorways, sit to greet, and to hold still for other things.

How to train it.

Step 1. *Say it.* Tell your puppy, “Sit” in a cheerful tone of voice, and then to “Stay.”

Step 2. *Show it.* Give the hand signal for sit: Place your hand out in front of you, palm facing your puppy, as though you were signaling “Stop.”

Step 3. *Pay it.* Treat immediately, before your puppy has a chance to lift her rear end off the ground.

Step 4. *Repeat it.* The first ten trials or so should just be 1-second stays. Build slowly from there, always working at your puppy’s level for success. If she gets up before you release, just have her go back into the sit and try again. If she gets up more than once, make it easier.

Training Tip: Only say the command once. Don’t get in the habit of repeating the word “Stay,” or you’ll likely always have to.

Training Tip: One key to successful stays is varying the amount of time you ask your puppy to stay. Don’t always make it harder and harder – throw in easy ones now and then to mix it up and make it fun for your puppy.

Troubleshooting: If your puppy breaks a stay, reset her and do several easier ones to reestablish success and keep your pup in the game. Constantly working on the outer edges of your puppy’s level will lead to an unreliable behavior, so be sure you’re making it easy enough that your pup is succeeding at least 9 out of 10 tries. If you aren’t getting that, slow down, scale back, and set your puppy up for success. You’ll get longer stays faster if you go slow at the beginning.

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 dishing out a belly rub or good ear scratch.

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 allowing puppy onto the couch with you.
Before hopping into or out of the car.