



## SIT, STAND, DOWN

Lure/Reward training is one of the easiest and most efficient methods for teaching your pup to sit, lie down and stand on request which sets the stage for good manners and for years of fun teaching tricks and playing games that build on these foundation skills.

### Sit

1. When your pup is standing hold a tiny bit of food in your hand between your thumb and pointer finger.
2. Place your hand close to your pup's mouth and move your hand very slightly up and back towards your pup's rear so they lift their head slightly to follow the lure which means their rear will go to the ground and into a sit position.
3. The moment their rear hits the ground say your marker word (yes or good) and give them the tiny food reward.
4. Repeat so your pup has the opportunity to build a strong learning muscle that following your hand into a sit when it moves slightly up and back results in the reward.

Refrain from adding a verbal cue (**sit, stand, down**) until you have given your pup the opportunity to develop a clear understanding of following your hand into each of these positions. Think of it like this, you can name the behavior once you are confident you can get the behavior using a lure.

Plan for initial sessions just prior to your pup's meal times so they are highly motivated to follow the food lure. Have their food and/or special treats broken into tiny pieces no bigger than a thumb nail, and start in an environment with as few distractions as possible.

Be sure to practice all three body positions (**sit, stand, and down**). If you practice just the sit and down you might find that your pup learns to automatically go into a down after you request a sit. This is an anticipatory response since you have only taught two behaviors and your pup knows what the next request will be. Teaching all three body positions and randomizing requests (**stand to sit, stand to down, sit to down, sit to stand, down to sit, and down to stand**) is advised.

# Stand

1. When your pup is sitting or lying down, hold a tiny bit of food in your hand between your thumb and pointer finger.
2. Place your hand close to your pup's mouth and move your hand forward to where your dog's nose will be when they stand. If your pup starts in a sit, move your hand very slightly down and forward and if your pup starts in a down move your hand slightly up and forward.
3. When your pup stands say your marker word (yes or good) and give the tiny food reward.
4. Repeat so your pup has the opportunity to build a strong learning muscle that following your hand into a stand when it moves slightly forward results in the reward.

# Down

1. When your pup is sitting or standing, hold a tiny bit of food in your hand between your thumb and pointer finger.
2. Place your hand close to your pup's mouth and move your hand slightly down towards the ground and slightly inwards towards your pup. Be sure to move your hand slowly to the ground and slightly inwards rather than forward away from your pup and down (which will lure your pup to move forward and stand, rather into a down).
3. When your pup is lying down say your marker word (yes or good) and give the tiny food reward.
4. Repeat so your pup has the opportunity to build a strong learning muscle that following your hand (as you move it down and slightly towards them) into a down results in the reward.

**The ease and effectiveness of lure and reward training means you can enlist the assistance of loads of people to practice with your dog. Even those inexperienced in training can successfully master this method and help your dog learn to be social in a mannerly fashion (for example, sitting to greet).**

# Adding verbal cues

1. Once you've given your pup plenty of opportunities to learn to follow your hand into each of these three behaviors and they are doing so without hesitancy you can start adding the verbal cues in non-distracting environments.
2. Say the word just before you make the hand movement. For example, say "sit" just before you move your hand from in front of your pup at nose level up and slightly back so they sit and then mark (say yes or good) and reward.
3. Since your pup already understands that following your hand movements into a sit, stand, or down is likely to earn them a reward it means they will do so when you add the verbal cue and they will start to make an association between the words, the already known hand signals, and the behaviors.
4. Lots of repetitions results in your pup building learning muscles about what the words mean (hear the word, see the hand movement, do the behavior, get a reward).

# Fading the lure

Lures help set a foundation of understanding for your pup, but we want to avoid them becoming reliant upon you holding a food reward to respond promptly to your requests. The following steps will help your pup learn to be responsive regardless of whether or not you have a lure:

1. Once your dog is reliably following your hand while you hold a food lure, move the food to your other hand. For example, if you have been luring with your right hand, move the treat to your left hand.
2. Now hold your right hand as though you have a treat in it and move it the same way as described above for each of the positions (up and back for sit, forward for stand, down and towards your pup for down).
3. For each successful response to your hand movement mark and reward your pup with food from the hand that did not make the hand signal. We call this the 'tricky treat hand' stage of fading the lure. For example, if you are using your right hand to lure, then reward from the left hand.

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## Advanced exercises

With practice you can start fading reliance on the 'tricky treat hand' (holding your thumb and index finger together as though you have a treat) and make a more formal hand signal.

### 1. Say sit.

Move your hand with your palm held flat and palm up to the ceiling slightly up and back. When your dog sits, mark and reward with a tiny treat.

### 2. Say down.

Move your hand held flat and with your palm facing the floor down to the ground. When your dog lies down, mark and reward with a tiny treat.

### 3. Say stand.

Hold your palm out in front of your dog at their nose level, When your dog stands, mark and rewards with a tiny treat.

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One of the many benefits of teaching using lure/reward training is that your pup will learn both hand signals and verbal cues.

As your pup progresses randomize how often you reward and what rewards you use. Food rewards are great (especially for foundation training), but praise, the toss of a toy, being allowed to walk out the front door with you, or being invited on the couch, really anything your dog likes, are also valuable rewards.