



## Beginning Homework • Week 4

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### The 4 D Rule

It is important to recognize the 4 D's when training your dog to stay.

**Duration** - How long your dog remains in position

**Distance** - How far away you are from your dog

**Distraction** - The amount of distractions in play

**Delivery** - Frequency of rewards

When first introducing "Stay", focus on how *long* your dog can remain in position before attempting to take a step away from your dog. We want to set our dogs up for success by gradually integrating the 4 D's together. Begin recognizing when it is appropriate to introduce a new "D" and when to make necessary adjustments for your dog's progress. For an example, when your dog has a solid and consistent duration for "stay" the delivery of treats may significantly decrease. Once you begin introducing a distraction, you'll notice the delivery of rewards becomes much more frequent.

### Sit/Down Stay

Introduce the verbal command "Stay". Only say the command *once*. Providing a hand signal (visual command) will help refrain from repeating the word "stay". Remember to "release" your dog from the position.

Focus this week entirely on duration. Your dog must understand the meaning of the verbal command "Stay" before moving on to the next step.

**Tip:** Pay attention to surface changes. You may have more success on a rug or carpet compared to a hardwood floor.

### Name

Increase distractions when using the name. Try using their name when you are out for a walk. If they do not respond, remember to put a treat in front of their nose to help redirect their attention. If that doesn't work, your distraction level may be too high.

### Leave It - Step Two

At this point we want our dogs to look away from the leave it item. Wait until your dog turns their head away from your fist, "Yes" and Treat.

When your dog is completely turning away from the Leave it item, slowly begin exposing the item.

- Slowly open your fist and say "Leave it"
- If your dog tries to inhale the leave it item, immediately close your fist.
- If your dog moves away from the Leave it item, immediately "Yes" and treat. Give them a jackpot!
- Don't forget to give them the Leave it item at least once during the activity!

## Polite Greetings

Practice polite approaches by cueing your dog to sit as a person approaches. When you can, utilize another person for this activity.

- Have a buddy approach your dog with treats in their hand.
- When your dog sits, have your buddy “Yes” and treat
- If your dog does not sit, have your buddy turn around and walk away. Wait a few seconds and try again.

### ***Tips for greetings:***

- Consistency is key; make sure to supervise all meetings and introductions with your dog
- Inform greeters that your dog is in training and needs to sit before they provide attention.
- Keep a leash near by the front door to help manage your dog from a distance if needed.
- If needed, It is okay to add a “Off/”ah-ah” command, be extremely careful not to inadvertently reward the behavior. Yelling can actually make the problem worse!
- Teach your dog a “go to your place” command to help when visitors come to the front door. We learn this in the Puppy Intermediate class!

## Recall Practice

Try adding minimal distractions to your recall. During class, your biggest distraction may be the other dogs. At home, you can utilize another family member as a distraction. Create an obstacle or minimal distraction in your dog’s path before you call them to you. If they reach you with success make sure to let them play with the item they avoided!

To encourage your dog to check in with you, play a game by hiding from your dog. Dogs get worried when you go out of their sight; this teaches them to check in periodically. Depending on your dog, you may need to help them out by whistling!

You may not be at the point of letting your dog off leash yet, but if you have plans to hike with your dog this is a great activity to practice to keep your dog from wandering off. For now, practice this in a large fenced area outdoors.