



## Beginning Homework • Week 5

Heather James, Instructor

### Stay, Part 3: Distance

You've made it to the final piece of teaching your dog how to have a nice, solid stay! We started with duration – simply meaning how long your dog will hold a position. Then we added distraction – jumping up and down, toe taps, etc. while requiring your dog to stay. Now we add everyone's favorite – the distance. With a leash on, start by asking your dog for a position and say "stay". Take just one step back, then return to your dog and release. Continue to practice this with varying distances. Sometimes move farther, sometimes stay closer. Avoid calling your dog to you out of the stay position. 99 times out of 100 you'll want to return all the way to your dog, reward ("yes!" treat), and then release. A dog that remains in the stay position until you return will have a casual, relaxed and solid stay. When you call them out of it all the time, they will have a flighty and restless stay.

### Leave-It, Part 3

Keep working on leave-it and practicing real-world applications. A good exercise is to take a few pieces of paper trash from your bin and spread them around the yard. I like to use napkins, muffin wrappers, banana peels, etc. and make my own little leave-it mine field. These are the kind of items you would see when out for a walk and the continued practice will make all the difference. A good leave-it will not only allow you an enjoyable walk, but can prevent injury or illness from your dog ingesting dangerous items.

### Come (Recalls)

As long as you're having good success with your recall practice, it's time to add distractions. Try using some toys or objects your dog hasn't seen before, and call him passed them. The more enticing the object, the harder the recall will be. Remember to continue to keep recalls as fun, lively and happy as possible. When your dog comes to you have a little party with lots of praise, lots of little treats, and lots of happy touching and talking. I like to wiggle my dogs collar around while throwing this little recall shindig, all while praising and giving lots of treats and positive feedback.

### Wait

Wait and stay are different commands. I say wait a dozen times a day when requesting just general good manners and obedience. I say stay only when I'm training and working the formal command. Wait is one of my favorite tools for dogs that like to bolt out doors, or trip their humans when walking down stairs, or just dogs that can be overly pushy or lack impulse control. Practice this exercise at a door your dog goes in and out of frequently. With your dog on leash, open the door a tiny bit. If your dog begins to push through, correct them with a verbal "no" or "uh-uh", and shut the door. Repeat this until your dog pauses at the open door, then release them through it. The reward in this instance is the release, so a treat is not required. As they become more successful, you can start cueing the request with the word "wait". As your dog masters the other doors around your house, you can practice on the top of the stairs, in the car, or even on your way into the kitchen.

**\*\*\*Graduation is next week! Make sure you bring all your Lucky Bones and have been working on a trick!\*\*\***