



## Puppy Intermediate • Week 3

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### Sit/Down Stay

At this point, your dog should have a solid duration with stay in both a sit and down position. Now we can begin adding distance with our stays this week.

- Say “Stay” and take a half-step back. Be prepared to move forward/body block if your dog tries to break position.
- If they remain in position, immediately return to your dog, “Yes” and treat.
- Now try taking a full step back. Return back to your dog, “Yes” and Treat. Gradually increase your distance when you are having success. Keep “checking in” so they know they are doing the right thing!
- Watch your dog’s movement, the goal is to release them before they break the position on their own.
- Set your dog up for success, if they break position make it easier the next time.

#### **Tips:**

- If your dog tends to scoot toward you when you try to walk away, try this technique on a comfortable surface such as their bed/rug or an elevated surface. (Make sure they cannot fall off this surface!!) Providing them with a stationary spot helps them remain in position.
- Have a partner hold your dog on leash. When your dog is at the end of the leash, say “Stay” and walk a few steps away from your dog. Continue practicing the above steps with this tip. They are associating the word “Stay” with not moving toward you.

### Leave It - Step One

Since we all know our dogs love food (some more than others), first introduce the command by putting a treat in your hand. Similar to the “Easy/Gentle” command, hold a closed fist containing the treat in front of your dog’s nose. Say the command, “Leave it”. Wait until your dog stops pawing or nosing at your hand, immediately “YES” and treat from your other hand.

If you are having success, try slowly exposing your “leave it” item. Ever so slowly begin opening your fingers. If your dog moves toward the exposed treat, immediately close your fist.

**Tip:** Occasionally allow your dog to take the “leave it” item as a reward. This increases the likelihood of performing the desired behavior again.

### Go to Your Bed

When practicing this exercise, make sure your dog’s bed can be accessed from all sides. Eventually, the bed can be moved into a corner or the desired location.

Stand close to your dog’s bed and stare at it. Occasionally move around the bed without touching or stepping on it. Make sure your dog is aware you have treats so they are following you with anticipation. This is an example of *catching* the behavior. As soon as one paw hits the bed, immediately “Yes!” and treat. Repeat at least five times. Soon they will associate the change of surface with receiving a treat!

Now, wait for two paws to touch the bed before “Yes!” and treat, and so on. If you are having success, start a couple feet away from your dog’s bed before walking toward it. When adding distance, repeat the steps of one paw first. Unless you have already been practicing this at home, do not add the verbal command of “Go to Your Bed” until next week.

***Tips:***

- At the beginning, use a towel, mat or small bed. Eventually, your dog will be leaping onto their big fluffy bed on cue, but at the start we want to make it as easy as possible for them.
- If your dog is immediately playing “hot lava” (where they go circles around the bed and do everything for you besides stepping on their actual bed), try catching the behavior by using treats on their bed. To do this, toss a treat on their bed. As soon as a paw makes contact with the bed, “Yes!” *right* before they eat the treat.

## Recall Practice

This week, 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, like a toy, 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 in order to keep your dog from wandering off (try hiding behind a bush or a tree). For now, practice this in a large fenced area outdoors.