



Beginning Homework • Week 4

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Introducing Stay – The Three D's

Duration - The amount of time your dog can hold a position.

Distraction - What can be happening while your dog is holding a position.

Distance - How far away you can be while your dog is holding a position.

When working on “stay” it is important to slowly build up using the Three D's.

If you go too quickly your dog will have a flighty stay, or may not understand what you are asking.

Begin by standing right in front of your dog, ask for a “sit” or “down,” say “stay” and hold up your hand signal. As your dog holds the position, say “yes” and treat, followed by the release word. The first time your dog hears the command they may get up or offer a different behavior. If this happens say “uh oh,” and put them back in the same spot and try again. Short and sweet is the ticket when we first introduce the command. Once they understand the verbal cue you can begin building up the duration again and adding in some mild distractions.

Leave it

Begin exposing the treat. To do this hold the treat in your hand slightly above your dogs eye level when they are in a sit position. Open your hand so they can see the treat and say “leave it.” If they disengage from the treat say “yes” and treat. If they try to go for the treat quickly, close your fist, and then try opening it again. Don't repeat the “leave it” command! Continue to open and close your hand until your dog can hold themselves back while the treat hand is open, showing the treat. You can also practice this by placing the treat on a chair or the floor and covering it with your hand. The same rules apply, you are looking for your dog to hold themselves back even for just a second!

Drop

When your dog already has something in their mouth, we want them to easily and happily release it to us when we ask. If your dog has something inappropriate in their mouth, do not chase them! As long as it is something not dangerous, you want to act as if whatever they have is super boring. You can toss some treats on the ground and then sneakily grab whatever it was. To teach your dog the “drop” command start by having them grab a long toy or bully stick by saying “take it” and presenting the item to them. While still holding on to one end of the item, put a treat right up to your dogs nose so they can smell it, say “drop” as they open their jaws “yes”, treat and return the item to your dog. Make sure that the treat you are using is more exciting to your dog than whatever item you are practicing with.

Loose Leash Toward a Goal

Toss a treat out ahead of you. Do not allow your dog to get it. Using their name recognition and recall word call them away from the treat. If you have to lure them away with another treat that is okay too. Begin walking quickly towards the treat. If your dog lunges out ahead of you, stop and move backwards

away from the treat. Get their attention by patting your leg and encourage them to be next to you. Walk quickly towards the treat again, if they don't pull you they can take the treat. Verbal feedback can be useful here to help them get it right. Practice this exercise with walking towards places or people that your dog is eager to get to.

Grooming/ First Aid

Even if you leave all of the grooming and first aid up to the professionals, it is good to get our dogs comfortable with strange items and being handled in different ways. Engage your dog with a long treat or bully stick and slowly look at their ears and paws. If they ever disengage from the treat while you are doing this go more slowly, and remove the treat hand at the same time, or after you have removed your other hand. Show your dog grooming items like nail trimmers, brushes, droppers, syringes, and bandages. If your dog seems fearful of any of the items, place the object on the floor and place treats on or near it. Go slowly and practice often. We don't want the first time our dog sees these items to be when they are injured or sick.