

# House Dog Obedience Class - Week 5

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## **Practice Positions without Food (Sit/Down/Target/Heel Position)**

Behavior: Dog offers behavior when you don't have treats in your hand

Verbal Cue: Whatever behavior you are cuing

Practice cuing two behaviors in a row, mark and reward like we have been. Next set your treat bag on a chair/counter etc and move at least four feet away with your dog. Cue the same behavior.. Mark the behavior like usual, but instead of rewarding from your hand now you must walk four feet to the treat bag, pull out a treat and return to your dog to reward them. If you asked them for a stationary position (sit or down) then make sure the dog is still in position before you feed them! If they have moved to follow you to the treat bag, simply use that reward to lure them back into position before giving it to them.

## **Leave-it Step 5**

Behavior: Dog stays away from a treat on the floor

Verbal Cue: Leave-it

Have yourself in a seated position. Show your dog a treat and place it on the floor. Instead of closing your fist around the treat you will be covering it with your hand if it's comfortable or you can use your foot. Cue your dog to leave-it. If s/he goes for the treat, keep it covered then when she lets up and backs off, mark the behavior and feed a different treat from your hand or treat pouch. Once she has mastered this behavior try placing the treat on the ground with yourself standing up. Then see if she will leave it with the treat uncovered. Finally if all is going well, try "dropping" the treat on the ground and ask her to leave it. The reward will always be a different treat from your hand or treat pouch and not the piece you have set on the ground.

## **Sit at Open Door Step 5**

Behavior: Dog sits at an open door as you exit and does not rush past you

Verbal Cue: Sit

Hopefully your dog can maintain their sit as you interact with and even open the door.

Approach a closed door. Cue a sit (you don't have to feed them here). Warm your dog up with a couple easy repetitions. Then you will open the door wide and turn toward the open door. Mark and feed your dog. Let the door close behind you or manually close it so that you are set up for the next repetition.

Gradually begin to move closer to the threshold and finally step over it with each repetition. If at any time your dog gets up, close the door, cue them back into a sit and try again at an easier step.

## **Down & Magic Mat Step 5**

Behavior: Proofing a down stay

Verbal Cue: Mat/Bed/Place (Pick ONE!)

Cue your dog into a down on a mat or bed just like last week. It's time to start proofing this behavior. Will your dog maintain her down if you bend over to tie your shoe? How about if you have a seat on your chair? Bounce a tennis ball or toss a toy while s/he is in a down. Will s/he stay down while you wash the dishes? What about if you drop a treat on the ground... (what?! That's a leave it AND a down stay!) As long as she maintains the down with whatever you're using to proof it with, mark and reward by setting the food on the mat between their front legs. After every 3-4 repetitions marking and feeding for holding position on the mat, release your dog with their release cue and toss a cookie away from the mat. Repeat the exercise.

### **Loose Leash Step 5**

Behavior: Dog maintains a loose leash while you walk past another dog

Verbal Cue: No cue at this time

Teach your dog that passing another dog (or sometimes even other people for those super social dogs) is no big deal and that YOU pay out and the other dog (or person) does not. If you need it, space is always your friend. Move to the other side of the street if you need to pass a dog or step off the sidewalk into the street for a moment. As you pass the other dog, reward yours at a high rate of reinforcement for being in heel position, looking at you and keeping a general loose leash. You can have the dog follow the food lure in your hand in heel position like we did in the early weeks of class. If your dog needs a little more structure, ask them for a sit or hand target to keep them occupied. Continue to mark and feed as often as you need to until the other dog and handler have passed.

### **Come Step 5: Collar Grab**

Behavior: Dog accepts a collar or harness grab after they come to you

Verbal Cue: Use your recall cue if your instructor says you're ready

Start with a few easy recalls like we have been practicing for two or three repetitions. Then at the next repetition, mark and feed your dog for coming to you but then you will slip your fingers underneath your dog's collar or harness. Mark this collar grab and feed another treat. Let go after you feed and let your partner call the dog or toss your reset cookie. Repeat.

How often should you practice these behaviors?

EVERY DAY! Keep training sessions short – between 10-15 minutes

Where should you practice these behaviors?

Everywhere! Start in one room of your house. Once you have both mastered a behavior in one room, then move to another. Then move outside. Then practice when you're on a walk down the block. Then when you are at the park. Then when you are at the veterinary office! So on and so forth... This is called generalizing a behavior and it is a very important concept to practice!