



## Training Plan: Teaching ‘Sit’

**Why this cue is useful for your dog to know:** You can ask your dog to sit whenever he is doing something rude, such as jumping up on you or counter surfing. If he’s doing something you don’t like, it’s much better to give him a clear directive to do something else, rather than just saying “no.”

**End behavior:** The dog sits for a hand signal and the verbal cue “sit.”

**Step 1:** Stand in front of the dog. Hold a treat between your thumb and index finger. Put your hand near the dog’s nose (but don’t let him get the treat). Slowly move your hand up in front of the dog’s face and over the dog’s head. As his head goes up, his rear will go down. When his rear touches the ground, click your clicker and reward (C&R) with the treat. Repeat in short sessions until he sits quickly, every time.

- If the dog won’t sit, C&R when he tracks his head up to get the treat. Repeat this until you see his rear end start to go down. C&R for his rear end going down successively until the dog is sitting.
- If the dog backs up without sitting, do the training with a wall or other barrier behind him so he can’t back up.

**Step 2:** Switch to a hand signal: Palm up (without a treat in your hand), bring your hand from waist high upward toward your body. When the dog sits, C&R. When he is sitting consistently with just the hand signal, go to Step 3.

- If dog won’t sit for a hand signal alone, use a food lure but bury it deep in your hand, and then feed him a treat from the other hand when he sits. When he’s sitting consistently, eliminate the food lure.

**Step 3:** Say “sit,” do the hand signal, and when he sits, C&R. Do this 5-10 times. Then say “sit” (wait patiently; do not repeat) and when he sits, C&R.

### Proofing

Proofing means teaching the dog to generalize the behavior in different contexts.

**Handler:** Have other people start from Step 2.

**Distractions:** Practice sit inside with another person moving around slowly, then more quickly. Add available distractions (kids, other dogs, etc.). Then move to other locations.

**Locations:** Practice someplace with few distractions (e.g., in your backyard), then in different places with steadily increasing distractions until your dog will sit on cue no matter where you are.

**If you get stuck** on any step, stop and take a break. When you try again, go back to the previous step in the plan. If necessary, create intermediate steps with intensity and duration that your dog is comfortable with. Don’t rush: Take it at the dog’s speed.