**SIT-STAY (part 1)**

Use your dog’s training collar or harness only for training or when you need control, such as walking on leash. When you are not training, keep a flat collar with an ID tag on your dog. Two short training sessions a day are better than one long one.

Many trainers use their judgment to decide when to make things harder (*raising criteria),* but I strongly recommend being more systematic and using rules to decide 1when to make a behavior harder, when to keep practicing at the current level, and when to back off and make it easier. We’re therefore going to use a system called *Push, Drop, Stick.* You are going to do 5 repetitions in a row of an exercise and keep track of how many of those 5 your dog does correctly. Based on how he performs on those 5 repetitions (*trials)*, you will do one of the following:

PUSH    5 out of 5 = make it harder because he has proven himself proficient at the current level

DROP    0, 1 or 2 out of 5 = Make it easier because he is about to quit--this level is too hard for him right now.

STICK   3 or 4 out of 5 = Do another set of 5 at this level of difficulty.  He doesn't need you to make it easier but he's not ready for it to be more difficult.

SIT I:

1. Using a food lure, place your dog in a SIT on your right or left side *(be consistent with the side in which you want to walk your dog on).*

*2.* Remember to cancel the reward if your dog jumps or backs up.

Push on 5 for 5

SIT II:

1. Now put the reward in your other hand and keep it behind your back.
2. Do the motion as in *SIT I* but without the reward in your hand.
3. Praise your dog and pay immediately from your other hand as soon as he sits.
4. Pay while he is still sitting so that he eats in a sit--this is called *feeding for position.*
5. Ignore him (stand still) if he goes sniffing at the hand behind your back.

Push on 5 for 5

SIT III:

1. The reward is still in your other hand behind your back.
2. Do a faster motion with your command hand, like a scoop upward--this is the hand signal for *Sit.*
3. Praise and pay, feeding for position when your dog sits.

Push on 5 for 5

SIT IV:

1. *Before* you do the motion, say “SIT.”
2. Wait a *full* second or two.
3. Now do the motion.
4. Praise and feed for position when your dog sits.

Push on 5 for 5

SIT V:

1. Say “SIT.”
2. If your dog sits, pay, feeding for position.
3. If he doesn’t sitwithin 3 seconds, give him the motion, and when he sits, praise but don’t feed. When you need to give him the hand signal, it doesn’t count as a correct response. Pay only when he responds after the verbal cue.

Push on 5 for 5

SIT-STAY I:

1. Cue your dog to *Sit,* and pay him when he does.
2. Immediately after paying, dangle a treat in your fingers 2 ft in front of him at nose level. This will cause him to stand up and move toward the treat.
3. As he starts to get up, say “Too bad” and quickly cancel the reward by snatching it abruptly upward.
4. Repeat--he needs to learn that moving scares the treat away.
5. After several repetitions, your dog will stay sitting for just a second when you dangle the treat. Pay immediately, feeding for position (he must collect his reward while still sitting).

*Stay* is counter-intuitive meaning the right answer is *don’t get up,* even if it looks like a good idea to move. We’re going to teach your dog that not moving can be very productive indeed.

Push on 5 for 5

SIT-STAY II:

1. Set up the same way as *Sit-Stay I*.

2. This time, your dog must remain sitting for 3 seconds while you dangle the treat.

3. At the end of 3 seconds, pay immediately, feeding for position.

4. If your dog moves out of his *Sit* at any point in the 3 seconds, snatch the reward away.

Push on 5 for 5

SIT-STAY III:

1. *Sit* your dog and pay the sit.
2. This time, move the treat in your hand to the floor 2 feet away (if he mistakes this for a *Down* cue, don’t worry--just re-*Sit* him and try again slightly farther away).
3. If your dog remains sitting for 1 second with the food on the floor, pay him, feeding for position.
4. If he breaks out of his *Sit*, instantly cancel the reward and repeat.

Push on 5 for 5

SIT-STAY IV:

1. Now try the same thing with the food temptation on the ground for 3 seconds.
2. Be sure to feed for position.
3. If your dog finds this difficult (fewer than 2 for 5), drop to *Sit-Stay III* or split and try 2 seconds.

Push on 5 for 5

WALK-AROUND SIT-STAY:

1. *Sit* your dog and pay the *Sit.* Take a step in front of your dog then immediately back to his side (no delay).
2. If he remains sitting still (doesn’t get up or rotate with you), pay, feeding for position--then immediately take another step (without re-sitting him).
3. If he breaks his sit or rotates, you say “Too Bad,” pivot back, and start over at Step 1. Head movement is fine.
4. Once your dog has done 5 in a row without moving, repeat the exercise, this time taking 2 steps before pivoting back to reward your dog.
5. Once he’s 5 for 5, try *3* steps--you are working your way around your dog in a circle one step at a time, as though he were the center of a clock.
6. After you reach the halfway point directly behind you dog, and have done it successfully f for 5, complete a full circle around him all in one shot.

Watch your dog closely and cancel the reward (“Too Bad”) the instant he breaks.

SIT-STAY V:

1. Repeat the clock process in the other direction.
2. Get 5 for 5 with one step before progression to two, and so on.
3. Mind your timing--keeping your eyes on the dog will allow quick “Too Bads” if he breaks, which will really help him learn.

SIT-STAY VI:

Now do a full circle in each direction for one reward at the very end.

Reward the trainer--YOU!--heavily here!

You have nailed a key exercise!

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