



Happi Dawgs Basic Dog Training Exercises:

SIT

Say “sit” voice command, ONCE. Then, show hand signal, by having treat in hand and moving it slowly over your dog’s head. As your dog’s eyes follow your hand, their body gets to a point where they will sit. Once your dog’s rear end hits the ground say “yes”, the positive word marker, verbally praise, smile and then give your dog a treat. Release your dog from the command by saying “ok”, the release word, and stepping backward and slapping your leg, letting your dog know exercise is over.

DOWN

Say “down” voice command, ONCE. Then, show hand signal, by having treat in hand and moving it VERY SLOWLY from your dog’s nose to their toes. Once your dog lays down on the ground say “yes”, the positive word marker, verbally praise, smile and then give your dog a treat. Release your dog from the command by saying “ok”, the release word, and stepping backward and slapping your leg, letting your dog know exercise is over. It’s easier for your dog to start to learn the down exercise from the sit position.

SIT STAY

Put your dog in a sit, using the above “sit” exercise, followed by the voice command “stay” and a hand position, signifying stop. Use an open hand, with your palm facing your dog. You don’t keep your hand up the entire time your dog is in a stay. Just use the signal once. Your dog should not move from this position. Start with a few seconds and slowly graduate to more time depending on your dog’s skill level. Always go for duration before distance. When your dog has stayed for the length of time you have chosen, (start at 5 seconds) say “yes”, the positive word marker, verbally praise, smile and then give your dog a treat. Release your dog from the exercise by saying “ok”, the release word, and stepping backward and slapping your leg, letting your dog know it can move again. Only when you say “ok” can your dog move. If your dog starts to move before you have finished the lesson, put your dog back in a sit stay. And try again. If your dog is having a tough time understanding the lesson, shorten the time on the stay to just a couple of seconds, then reward and release. It’s best to build on little successes. Don’t add distance on the sit stay until you have a least a minute stay close to your dog. Then add a little distance at a time, as you build the duration of the stay. Remember ALWAYS reward your dog in the stay position NOT after you released them.



DOWN STAY

Put your dog in a down position using the above “down” exercise, followed by the voice command “stay” and a hand position signifying stop. Your dog should not move from this position. Start with a few seconds and slowly graduate to more time depending on your dog’s skill level. Always go for duration before distance. When your dog has stayed for the length of time you have chosen, say the positive word marker “yes”, verbally praise, smile and then give your dog a treat. Release your dog from the command by saying “ok”, the release word, and stepping backward, letting your dog know it can move again. Only when you say “ok” can your dog move. If your dog moves before you have finished the lesson, put your dog back in a down stay. If your dog is having a tough time understanding the lesson, shorten the time on the stay to just a couple of seconds, then reward and release. It’s best to build on little successes than no success at all. Remember ALWAYS reward your dog in the stay position NOT after you released them.

WAIT

Using a doorway, with a door, and holding the leash very loosely, say the voice command “wait” as you hold the doorknob. Open the door very slowly. If your dog starts to walk through doorway, quickly close the door. Repeat until your dog does not move toward the doorway. As you are able to open the door because your dog is not moving forward you can now face your dog. Slowly walk backwards out of the doorway. If your dog moves forward, step right at him and back him up. Say, “wait” again, then slowly backup. Repeat until dog does not move forward. Once you are on the other side of the door jam, praise your dog, then give it the release word “ok” and pat your leg, encouraging your dog to walk through the doorway. Running through the doorway is the reward. If you want to give your dog a treat throw it behind your dog while he is waiting. This reinforces the behavior for your dog that “wait” means you can move, but you cannot come forward. If you do not have a door, then use your body. Use the same hand signal as “stay” and say “wait” as you step toward your dog’s chest. Face your dog, and block your dog from moving forward any further. Keep the leash loose. If your dog moves forward, step right at his chest and back him up. Make sure you are standing upright. Do not use your hands to push your dog. Do not use the leash. Just use your body. Some dogs are quick to run by you, so be ready. Once your dog is waiting, walk backward to the end of the leash. Once you are at the end of the leash and your dog is not moving, praise and then release. You may throw your dog a treat behind him, reinforcing the wait. But do not feed your dog when you release him through the door or you are rewarding the release NOT the wait.



LEAVE IT (2 EXERCISES)

- 1) Put a treat in each hand. Present the treat to your dog from one hand only. As you show your dog the treat and put it by its nose use the voice command, “leave it”. If your dog goes for the treat in your hand, close your hand. Repeat this, probably 10-20 times, until your dog shows the first sign of not looking at the treat. Reward with the positive word marker “yes”, and give your dog the treat from your other hand. After practicing this several times, graduate from giving your dog a treat when it shows a little sign of not looking at it, to only when your dog looks at you in the face and sits.
- 2) Drop a treat on the ground far enough away from your dog so you can block him. As you drop the treat, use the voice command “leave it” and use your body and feet to block your dog from getting the treat. Dogs are quick so be careful not to let your dog get the treat. Your dog will stare at the treat on the ground and you will block your dog by stepping toward his chest to keep him from getting the treat on the ground. Don’t just stand in front of the treat. Block your dog then step to a spot where your dog can look at the treat on the ground OR look to you. If he goes for the treat, step toward him and repeat until he looks to you. Eventually, your dog will stop starting at the treat on the ground and look to you to see what’s going on. The moment your dog looks up at you say the positive word marker, “yes”, then give your dog a treat from your hand and pick up the treat on the ground. This signifies to your dog that you have control of all the resources on the ground and that it is worth it for your dog to look at you and leave the item alone because you are a fun and rewarding leader.

OFF/NO JUMP

Drop and step on your dog’s leash leaving enough so as not to pull down your dog’s head. Give the command “off”, praise and give a treat if your dog does not jump up on you. Tell your dog “off” as the other person approaches. If your dog does not jump up praise and give your dog a treat and have the other person praise and give your dog a treat too. If your dog jumps up have the other person who was approaching your dog turn around and walk away. Do this several times and with several people. Once you have practiced sit a lot and your are good at it, you may also tell your dog to sit as the other person approaches. If your dog stays in the sit he gets praise and treats from both people. If he jumps up, the other person walks away and you cross your arms and look away until your dog sits again. You must practice this skill a lot!

SIT WHEN FED

Get a bowl, put some treats in it, say “sit” and when dog sits start to place the bowl on the floor. If your dog gets up from his sit, take the bowl away and start again. Keep doing this until the bowl goes on the ground and your dog does not get up out of his sit. When this happens, tell your dog the release word “ok” and let him eat what’s in the bowl. This teaches your dog nice table manners and reinforces the release word and sit command.

LOOSE LEASH WALKING

Keep the leash loose, and keep your dog's attention on you. Don't let your dog pull. Say "let's go" as you walk and your dog is at your side. Rewarding your dog for looking at you and not pulling. You must always lead the walk and your dog should look to you for direction. Never let your dog lead the walk. Always say the positive word marker "yes" when your dog looks up at you while at your side. Remember to praise and reward your dog for walking nicely on leash! Body language is very important! So hold the leash loose, stand up straight and practice your skills so your dog understands you are the leader of the walk. If your dog pulls you may stop and wait until your dog comes back to you then start your walk again. Always praising and rewarding your dog for a loose leash, walking on one side and looking at you. You may also turn into your dog and walk in a big circle until he looks at you. Or you can change direction the second your dog starts to get a tight leash. Doing a 180 degree turn before your dog pulls helps your dog realize that he better watch where you are going and pulling only makes your disappear in the other direction and has him going the opposite direction of where he wanted to pull you to. When he doesn't pull you, head toward something he likes and release him and let him play and sniff. Another option for pulling is the backup method where the second your dog starts to get ahead you walk backwards at least 3-10 steps backwards. Keep walking backwards until your dog is walking towards you on the side you want him to walk on. You can maneuver the leash with a sweep of your hand so your dog ends up on the side you want as well. Then step forward and start walking forward again. By doing this, you step right past your dog and your dog is now back next to you with a loose leash.

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