



🐾 **Sit For Something Special** 🐾  
**A Basic Exercise for Great Manners**

*What if every time your dog wanted something she would just sit politely? When she wanted to say hello, instead of jumping on you she would sit. If she wanted to be petted, she would sit. If she wanted to go for a walk she would sit. When it was time to eat, she would sit.*

*Sounds impossible? Actually, it's quite easy. You must be consistent and patient, remembering that dogs are **MASTERS** of your body language and timing. Meaning, if you give your dog any type of attention when they are misbehaving and they deem your attention worthwhile they will more likely than not begin to do that behavior because they have learned that it works. Dogs are also very motivated by what is the most fun and what gets the biggest reward. So when you want to develop a behavior, then reward the behavior you want, highly. Your dog will choose that behavior over a behavior that doesn't get rewarded.*

*Dogs learn what works for them and what gets them what they want. They live in the present. They learn from us by watching our body language and trying different behaviors or actions to see what they can get from us or the situation. For example, if your dog grabs your favorite socks and you chase your dog to get them back, then your dog will learn that grabbing your socks means they get to play a game of chase with you. If you ignore your dog, the sock stealing game isn't as fun. I know, what if your dog gets your socks then starts chewing them? You offer your dog something better than the sock, in trade. Keeping in mind, for a dog to trade they must deem the item better than what they have, **NOT** what you think they should trade for. If you are truly offering something better your dog will trade.*

*To eliminate your dog from doing things you don't want, you must utilize management tools. Management is putting away your socks, or closing the doors to the bedrooms, or keeping your dog on a leash, giving them a toy or bone they love to chew, having them take a nap in their crate, or utilizing an exercise pen, baby gates or a tie down. By utilizing management tools you control the situation and can mold behaviors that you want your dog to do.*

*By teaching your dog "Sit for Something Special" you will address all of this and end up with a dog with great manners.*

- 1. Have your dog on her leash and attach her leash to your waist.*
- 2. Don't feed your dog in her food bowl, instead measure her food and put it in a treat bag that you wear around your waist, or put it in a plastic bag in a pocket.*
- 3. Face your dog and ask her to sit, when she sits tell her "Yes" and then immediately give her a treat as you also verbally praise her in a nice voice. By doing this, you just showed her that sitting gets a huge reward and you really like it. Now put your dog to work....*



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- 4. Ignore your dog and go about the house, doing whatever it is you need to do. She will have to follow since she is on your waist, on a leash. She might try to move away or jump or bark, just ignore her. She will start to get bored and she will want to get your attention. She will remember that when she sat you gave her a great reward, so she will try sitting to see if she gets your attention again.**
- 5. EVERYTIME your dog sits, tell your dog 'YES' and give your dog some of her meal. You can also entice your dog to work a bit harder by rewarding her with a higher value treat like a small piece of chicken. Notice, you are not telling her to sit, she is making this decision on her own and learning by the fact that you reward her, that sitting is a great thing to do. Remember to tell her "Yes" the moment she sits.**
- 6. Practice this several times a day, remembering to ignore your dog if she is not sitting and feeding her when she sits on her own.**
- 7. Now start to add distractions. Dogs do not generalize. As the situations and locations change they must learn the behavior again. It's sort of like running a marathon, you just don't one day decide to run 26.2 miles. You must take it a day at a time and increase your time and distance. The more you practice, the farther you can run. Same applies to your dog. In your home is very easy. Doing the same behaviors outside in your back yard is harder. It's even harder for your dog to do the same behavior away from their home with other people and dogs as distractions. So make sure to build on the distractions. Only going to the next hardest distraction, once your dog has mastered the easier level. For example, you can squeeze a squeak toy and ignore all behaviors like jumping or barking that your dog might do to get the toy. Be very patient and wait until she sits. When she sits give her the toy. You can even give her a treat and her toy, letting her know that great things come to her when she is calm and sits. Practice this often until her first response to the squeak toy is to sit. Then move up a level and try another distraction.**
- 8. The more you practice and work on your timing and patience, "Sit for Something Special" will become your dogs default behavior and you will have a very well mannered dog!**