



5 Essential Commands - you can teach your dog

It is vital for your dog to know basic commands such as sit, stay, come and a few others as this will help you to keep them under control and avoid stressful situations, i.e. your dog running off the lead, visitors to the house, etc .

Remember that every training needs to be positive and it is your responsibility to set your dog up for success



Let's have a look at 5 easy enough commands you should teach your dog. Training a dog does not require hour-long sessions but should be done in 5-10 minute sessions with repetitions.

Keep in mind that a dog's attention span is very short and to ensure successful and positive engagement it is better to keep your training units short and do 2-3 repetitions throughout the day.

Focus on one command to start with and work your way up, incorporating the commands with each other once your dog is solid with one

For example, once your dog knows the sit command and knows it is only allowed to get up before being released add the stay command, and so on

Before you start training think about the logical order you plan on teaching your dog the relevant commands.

Command #1 - Sit

This is the first command we recommend to start with as it is one of the easiest ones, using the dog's natural behavior.

- Hold a treat close to your dogs nose
- Move your hand slowly upwards, allowing your dogs head to follow the movement and causing his bottom to lower until it sits
- Once your dog sits firmly say "sit" and give your dog the treat and loads of cuddles



The Sit Command should be understood by your dog fairly quickly. A few repetitions with a valued treat and your dog will understand what is asked of it. Once your dog knows the command practice throughout the day by simply giving the command and treating it once your dog remains in a sitting position. Over time your dog should not need the treat to follow the Sit command

Command #2 - Come

Another important command every dog needs to know is the come/recall command. The recall command can keep your dog out of trouble and save its life.

- Start training recall with your dog being attached to a lead
- lower yourself to your dogs level and say "come" while gently pulling on the lead
- When your dog gets to you reward it with a treat and affection. Make it clear that coming to you is an amazing thing and only good things will happen



The Come/Recall Command needs to be mastered before you ever consider letting your dog off the lead.

Once you feel your dog fully understands the recall command practice it with your dog off the lead in a safe and secure area.

Following that, practice in a public space with distractions with your dog being on lead

Only after your dog shows full acknowledgment of the command in any situation should you let it off the lead in a public area.

Command #3 - Stay

Before you attempt this command your dog needs to have mastered the "sit" command

- Place your dog in the "sit" position
- Hold your open hand in front of you with your palm facing your dog (as if to tell someone to 'stop')
- take a few steps back and reward if your dog stays in a sitting position (this might take a few tries so don't get discouraged, if your dog gets up, stop the exercise and try again)
- Once your dog remains in a sitting position gradually increase the number of steps you take before rewarding
- Always reward your dog if it stays sitting, even if it is only for a few seconds



The "stay" command is a self-control exercise and some dogs will understand the expectations quicker than others.

If your dog takes some time to understand the command don't get frustrated. Try 2-3 times per training unit and stop the exercise before it becomes a negative experience.

If your dog does not stay in a sitting position allow a few seconds of quick play and once more place your dog in "sit" and try again.

Command #4 - Down

The "Down" Command is a more difficult command to teach but one your dog needs to know.

- To train the "Down" Command you will need a high value treat (favorite toy or a very yummy treat)
- While having the Reward (toy,treat) in your closed hand hold your hand close to your dogs snout. When your dog starts sniffing your hand move your hand (slowly)to the floor and allow your dog to follow it
- some dogs might only lower their front so use your other hand to tap/slide on the floor and encourage your dog to lower his whole body
- Once your dog is in the "Down" position say "Down" and give your dog the treat and once again make it a great experience with loads of affection



The "Down" Command is a more challenging one and should be practiced every day, even after your dog fully understands the expectation. Once you have trained your dog the command use treats for rewarding less often as with any of the training. If during a "Down" training session your dog sits up or lunges after your hand to get the treat use a sharp "No" and remove your hand. To reset the exercise allow a few seconds of play time and restart the command process

Command #5 - Leave It

The "Leave It" Command is different to the "Drop it" command. The "Leave It" command helps to keep your dog safe when they see or smell something that might be dangerous to them.

- Place a treat in your hand
- Show your closed hand with the treat inside, palm side up to your dog and say "Leave it"
- Allow your dog to sniff, lick, paw, bark or any other way to try to get to the treat (without getting hurt of course) - but completely ignore the behavior
- Once your dog stops trying to get the treat give him the treat using your other hand
- Repeat until your dog moves away/stops trying to get to the treat after being given the "Leave it" command
- Once your dog understands this up the challenge of the exercise by only giving the treat after your dog moves away from your fist and actively looks at you instead of your hand



As with all training don't rush things. Allow your dog to understand the command and expectations. If you decided to make any training more challenging and see that your dog is struggling go back to the previous stage and start again from there.

Remember that we are setting our dogs up for success and a positive experience.