

DOWN STAY

THE COMMAND: “Down Stay” Once your dog learns the down, teach them to stay down for any period of time.



HOW TO:

- Once your dog lies down readily, stop giving treats for only doing the down.
- Next, choose a consistent hand signal to use. Try a flat, outreached hand (imagine a traffic cop signaling you to ‘stop’ like in the photo).
- Now put your dog in a down.
- Ask him/her to “stay” while using the stay hand signal, then silently count to five. Do not move away from your dog. After five seconds, give the treat.
- Release your dog by saying “ok!” or “free”. This tells them that the “stay” is over.
- Once they can stay for five, repeat and count ten.
- Add on an additional five seconds, as long as your dog is successful.
- Once your dog is staying for a length of time, you can begin to move away from your dog. See the sit-stay program for more details on creating distance using stays.

Tips and Troubleshooting:

To make staying easier, try teaching your dog a “relaxed down” first. A relaxed down is when the dog, already lying down, shifts onto one hip to be more comfortable. Some dogs do this naturally.

To teach a relaxed down, ask your dog to “down”, then pass the treat from their nose to their hip in a semi-circle. When he shifts his weight onto the hip, say “relax” and give the treat. Now you have a relaxed down.

If your dog gets up as you try to extend the length of the down stay or relaxed down stay, return to the last length of time your dog was successfully able to stay in the down and then build up slowly from that point.

Once you add distance and movement into the down stay, your dog may get up to follow you. In that case, walk him back where he was originally lying down, then try again, making it slightly easier this time. Always set your dog up for success, so he’ll enjoy your training sessions!

