

Training Your Dog to Sit

Teaching your dog to find a target and sit is the first step towards an obedient dog.

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Good as he takes it from you. Do this several times. Next, hold the treat in your fingers, place your hand within his reach and wait for him to touch your hand with his nose. Say Good pup! (please substitute his name wherever I use pup) and give him the treat. Repeat this two or three times.

Next, move your hand a little to the left and then to the right. As your puppy keeps his nose on target, praise him and give him his treat. Add an up-and-down motion. Each time your puppy follows the target, reward him. Keep adding more and more criteria (movements) prior to each reward.

Now we'll work on the sit. (We still have a few minutes left in this first training session.) Place your targeting hand in front of the pup's nose and lift it slightly upward toward his eyes. As you do this, say Pup, sit. Your puppy will be watching his target and, as his head moves upward, his rear end will go down, like a see-saw. The moment his rear end touches the ground, praise him and give him his reward. Make sure your timing is accurate. Puppies can get up just as quickly as they sit, so you want to be sure your pup understands that he is receiving his reward for sitting. Thus, make sure he is in fact sitting when you give the treat!

Through this exercise, you are teaching your puppy to stop whatever he is doing, remain still and pay attention. This is very important, for your pup can't learn if you do not first obtain his interest. It takes far longer to explain how to do this than it takes to actually do it! Within your puppy's first training session, he should be able to target and sit as well as do the next exercise: come and sit.

Next Step: [Come and Sit](#) | [More Puppy Lesson Plans](#)

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