

## Training Your Dog to Come and Sit

**Training your dog to obey command is a good first start.**

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One of the most important things your puppy can ever do is to come to you reliably when called. Young pups usually stick close to their pack members, so this exercise should come naturally. Puppies are very insecure until reaching the age of four to five months. Your pup wants to be near you at all times.

Put your targeting hand under your pups nose. Let him smell the treat and then step backwards two or three steps as you say Pup, come in a happy tone of voice. He'll immediately follow his target. Praise him enthusiastically as he comes toward you. If using a clicker, click the second he looks at you and give him a treat (appropriate times to click are shown in parentheses). Next, make him take a few steps toward you (click and give the treat). Build on his positive behavior in gradual increments. Don't expect the finished product right away.

When you stop moving backward, bring your hand over his head to an area just between his eyes so that he must look upward. Be sure that your hand is not more than two inches from his nose or he'll likely jump up. While he's looking up, say Pup, sit. As soon as his rear end goes down, praise him (click) and give him his treat.

Continually increase your steps backward as you practice the come command. This way, your pup will learn to come from increasingly longer distances. Always make him sit when he arrives. The last thing you want your pup to learn is to come and then leave, or to come and jump up. A come and sit maintains his attention on you and teaches him appropriate behavior patterns.

Once your puppy is reliably coming and sitting, attach a lightweight leash (anywhere from four to six feet in length) to his regular neck collar. Let him drag the leash while you work with him. This will allow your puppy to become acclimated to the feel of the leash without having it pulled or used in a manner that he does not understand. As you will not be holding the leash yet, be sure to be in your safe, enclosed area.

Next Step: Round Robin | More Puppy Lesson Plans

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