

## TEACHING THE COMMAND SIT

by Terena Thomas

**\*\*When training over a period of time regress a step or two at the beginning of each session from where you ended up the last training session to help the dog remember what you want and to build their confidence\*\***

1. Put a dog treat ON the dogs nose. Make an arc with the treat slowly towards the dog's tail until a sit position is attained by the dog. Say the word sit followed by a click with the clicker. The click MUST occur when the dogs hind end is completely on the floor. Treat. If the dog is raising its front end the treat is too high; lower it for the desired response. If the dog simply backs up lift the treat up higher so the nose and neck are stretched slightly higher (approximately 50 degrees from horizontal). Repeat the slow arc with the treat ON the dog's nose. Repeat this 20 times making sure to say sit every time as the dog executes this behavior. When doing this exercise get the dog out of the sit position by practicing down or stand in between sits.

2. If you are teaching the dog to sit from a down simply put a cookie on the dogs nose and pull straight up about 1-1.5 feet from the dogs nose. Wait patiently and quietly.

As the dog moves up into a sit position be sure to say sit as he moves. Click and treat. If he stands practice the arc motion with the treat on the dog's nose until he sits. Click and treat. If he doesn't move out of the down position within 30 seconds put the dog treat back on his nose and pull it straight up more slowly using a jerking movement. Do not say sit until he is already planning on doing so. Click and treat

3. It is now time to test the dog. Place a dog treat in the palm of your hand. Hold it at waist level with the palm open to the sky. Say sit one time only and wait. If the dog complies click, treat and praise immensely. Be patient and do not speak except to initially state the command and to praise after the click. Allow the dog time to THINK!! Do this 10 times.

4. If the dog doesn't sit within 30 seconds repeat sit command followed with the treat on the nose making an arc motion. Do this another 10 times then attempt step 3 again.

5. After completing step 3 remove the treat from your hand. Give the hand signal above the dogs head with the palm to the sky as if you had a treat and say sit. When the dog complies click, treat and praise. Do this exercise 5 times.

6. If the dog isn't ready to advance to this step do 10 more sit exercises with the treat still in your palm. Be patient and stay calm. Try step 5 again.

5. When your pup can sit using the hand signal (without treats) 100% of the time he is ready to move to the next exercise. With all the treats in a bowl near you stand and ask him for a sit without a hand signal. Wait and be patient he has got to think and if you're repeating the command you're just distracting him. Give him 30 seconds or so to follow through with your wishes. If he doesn't comply that means he doesn't understand and you need to practice step 5. If he does sit then quickly click and treat and love on him to show him he did it just right and that you're proud of him.

6. Practice sit throughout the day (at least 10 times daily) for a week before progressing to step 7. He must be absolutely sure what you expect of him otherwise practice sit for a week longer.

7. We are now going to remove the clicker from the exercise. Keep everything the same as before. Ask for a sit and when he gives you the command IMMEDIATELY treat him and love on him. Do this 10 times a day for 3 days before moving on to step 8.

8. It is now time to vary the treat schedule. Instead of treating after EVERY sit the dog executes treat him periodically so he never knows when he will be treated. Still praise him and love on him just don't give him a tidbit. Ask the dog to sit throughout the day and evening. Treat him AT LEAST every three times but keep it a variable. Treat two times in a row then don't treat him once then treat him then wait three. Make sure you don't start to treat on some sort of schedule (treat twice then don't treat twice then treat twice etc.). We want the dog to never know if he'll be treated. Stay on this treating schedule for a week. If the sit behavior begins to diminish in the dog, treat more often and follow with pizzazz and praise extend your



training by another week.

9. For the next month continue asking for the sit command throughout the day. CONTINUE TO PRAISE AND LOVE ON HIM!!!!!! Gradually increase the amount of sits between treating until you only treat occasionally. It is important to always give the dog a paycheck for his work whether it's a treat, a pat or praise.

## **Canine Country School, LLC**

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**\*\*The Canine Country School is not responsible for any behavior problems you may experience with your dog\*\***