

## Mat or Spot training and purpose

The purpose of mat training is so the dog has a specific place they can go to and feel safe or at home if they are away from home. If they are at home, then it is a spot in the house they can go to and not wander off, i.e. if you are in the front of the house and don't want them on the leash, when you are eating dinner and don't want them begging for food. If they are training to be a service dog or are a service dog and they can fit under the table then that is where they should be, they are not begging, and you are not feeding them from the table. Ensure when you start this exercise that you are in a location (living room, yard etc.) that is safe and secure so that your dog will not have a chance to wander off or get injured.

1. Have a mat (small blanket, towel, rag or old shirt, something that the dog is familiar with) tell the dog to sit or lay down (if it is only a short time have them sit, if it is a long time have them lay down). Ensure that you praise them and tell them what they did correctly.
2. Like the sit and stay exercise you will tell them to stay but you will also tell them to stay on their spot, mat or any name that you give it. Walk away and time how long that they stay on their spot.
3. After several stays on their spot repeat the process but at a farther distance and longer time.
4. After doing this several times and you are comfortable with the results, take the mat to another location (front yard, another room, etc.) and tell them to go to their spot and repeat the process.
5. When you are comfortable with this process and your dog is comfortable it is time to take this to the road so to speak. Find a location that is safe and secure and repeat the process all over again.

It is important that whenever you go anywhere that you bring the mat so that your dog will have a spot to lay down and be comfortable. Continue to praise good behavior and always reward it with lots of love.