



Julie Smith

DOG TRAINING & BEHAVIOUR CONSULTANT

PUPPY GUIDANCE SHEET

TEACHING DOWN

Having a well-mannered dog who will lie down on command is one of the most useful commands you can teach him. It allows him to calm down after playtime, relax in front of guests or friends and allow you to have him lying calmly next to you when required.

Here are some tips on how best to teach this command with your dog:-

- With your dog already in a sitting position say your command 'DOWN' whilst luring him into a down position with a treat. Hold the treat just under his nose and lower this to between his front paws. If he stands, start again from the sit position. This may take a few attempts initially until he clicks what you are looking for.
- As soon as he lays down give him the treat immediately and say 'GOOD DOWN, good boy'. Continue to practice this until you can lure with only your hand and no treat and eventually just by saying the command 'Down'.
- Practice this command in various places. Kitchen, living room, in the garden etc and practice daily!
- Make a game of it whilst out walking and practice the 'down' command on walks. Giving the command and a treat for doing it randomly on queue.
- Practice over time, having him lay down for longer periods before rewarding so you can then progress to having your dog lay down until you say the command 'UP' or 'OK'.
- Adding a new and separate command for his own bed means you can differentiate between down and go to bed. Practicing the 'down' command whilst adding 'Go to bed' and training him to then lie down in his own bed will allow you to be able to say To to bed and him know the difference.

- Adding hand signals is a great way to further train this command to be able to get your dog to lay down with just a small hand signal.

To achieve this again make the hand signal you are using such as flat palm to the floor, or pointing to the floor along with the verbal command. Initially you may need to exaggerate your hand signal all the way to the floor (again luring) but gradually you can stand or sit where you are and just make a more basic signal and achieve the down command.

PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT!

Practice daily, add distractions, make it more difficult, ask for longer downs before rewarding and reduce the amount of times you give a treat using mainly praise as the reward.

The treat then becomes a lucky dip! "Maybe this next down I'll get my reward!"



JULIE SMITH

www.juliesmithdogtraining.com