

Sit

What does the behavior look like?

When cued, the dog will move his rear into contact with the surface while his front legs remain extended vertically.

Why should we learn it?

“Sit” can be used in a variety of settings and environments. You can use it as part of a polite greeting, before the dog eats plays or goes out of the house. It is a strong alternative behavior for teaching dogs to avoid jumping up.

Training:

Capture the Sit:

When the dog is already in a sit, say “Good Sit” or mark the behavior and reward.

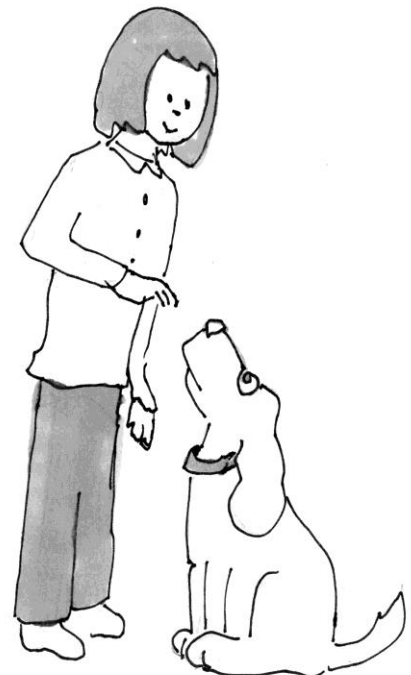
Lure the Sit:

1. Get the dog’s attention. Start out by standing in front of him.
2. With a lure in your hand, place it next to his nose. Slowly bring the lure slightly back and over the dog’s head. The lure should not be too high over the head as to cause the dog to jump or too low as to prompt a down.
3. Say “Sit” as the dog sits. Avoid saying “Sit” over and over again.
4. Mark the behavior or click, if using a clicker, and present the lure as the reward for the behavior. (Please review our **Marker & Release Cues** handout)
5. Duration of the behavior can be achieved by keeping the rate of reinforcement steady while the dog is sitting.
6. After a few seconds, say your “release” cue.

Shape the Sit:

Not all dogs are able to go immediately into a sit with the lure method. Some dogs benefit from the slow lowering of the body position over several sessions. This method is called SHAPING (Small incremental movements progressing toward the end behavior or successive approximations of the final behavior),

1. Note how much of a lowering of the back half of the dog’s body you are able to get before he pops up out of position.
2. Lure slightly more each time, delivering the food rewards in each new location.



Advanced Training and Application:

Losing the Lure

Food in your hand will become part of the cue if care is not taken to lose the food lure as soon as possible.

1. Following the steps above to get the initial behavior of "Sit", keep your hand in the same shape as if you had a lure and cue the behavior.
2. Pull a treat from the treat bag and present to the dog so he does not have to move out of position.
3. Try a process of using a food lure three times and the fourth time without a food lure.

Building Duration Using Your Release Cue

Duration comes as a result of clear understanding of the preceding behavior and the "release" cue. But as with any new behavior, building duration should be done slowly.

1. Cue the dog to do a behavior like "Sit".
2. You can generally control duration using a steady rate of reinforcement.
3. Three to four seconds before cueing "release," end the reinforcements.
4. Say your "release" cue and move slightly to invite your dog to move out of the sit.

Training Tips:

- Make sure the dog is not forced to move out of position in order to access the reward.
- Build duration slowly.
- Build duration first, before adding other distractions like handler movement near the dog or another dog, a bouncing ball or other environmental stimuli.
- Use a platform to build understanding of staying in place for the "Sit".

Training Resources:

Marin Humane's **Behavior & Training** conducts various training classes. Sign up on our [Behavior & Training](#) page for the next available class series.

We also provide **Dog Training Instructors** and **Consultants** available for private training or consultations (on-site or in-home) at 415.506.6280 or OhBeHAVE@MarinHumane.org.

Remember to license your dog (It's the LAW)! If your dog gets lost, a license tag on your dog's collar is the fastest way to reunite you and your dog. Even if your dog is microchipped, a license tag is immediately visible and doesn't require a scanning device to read. For more information about licensing, microchipping, and other services provided by **Marin Humane**, visit us at MarinHumane.org or stop by at 171 Bel Marin Keys Blvd, Novato, CA.

