



Solve behaviour problems using a simple sit

Candi Moon

One of the most useful commands we can teach our dogs is 'sit'. The applications of the 'sit' command are practically endless; a dog who is sitting is not digging, barking at passers by, running after the cat, jumping up on you and your guests etc. Think of the behaviour problems you have with your dog and try solving them by asking for a 'sit' when your dog is performing a behaviour you don't want. When your dog complies by sitting, praise him and offer a small food reward. Behaviour that is rewarded, i.e. that has good consequences for the dog, is likely to be repeated.

If you have a dog who is a leash puller, asking your dog to sit frequently during walks will help increase her focus on you and help her to calm down. Over time you will end up with a dog who is much easier to walk. Begin by asking your dog to sit to have her leash put on, to sit before you open the front door and the gate and to sit again while you close the gate. This may take a bit of patience at first, but is well worth it. Throughout the walk ask for a sit every few steps, once your dog is good at this and complies quickly every time you ask for a sit you can increase the distance walked in between sits.

If your dog is overexcited at first and ignores you when you ask her to sit, repeat the command more firmly. Continue to repeat the command and/or give the hand signal until your dog complies. In time your dog will learn that when you ask for something you mean it and obey more quickly.



If your dog does not yet know how to sit, training this is very easy. Get a few small food rewards that your dog enjoys. This could be polony, viennas, small bits of cheese or biltong or even his breakfast or dinner food pellets. Begin working in an area where there are no competing distractions, usually your garden or home. If you have several dogs separate them and train one at a time until they have all learnt the command, after this you can work with them all together. Place one food treat right next to your dogs nose and then raise it up slightly. Your dog should target the food treat and follow it with his nose. As your hand goes up

so the dog will raise his head to follow it and as your dog's head comes up his hindquarters will go down and you will end up with a sitting dog. Say 'sit' and give the dog the treat. If your dog stays standing try raising the treat a little higher up, if your dog jumps up at the treat hold the treat lower down.

Once you have done this a few times (I usually try three to five repetitions) with your dog you can move off of luring and on to using a hand signal and command. Do this by making the same movement with your hand that you did with the food treat in it, but this time use an empty hand without the treat. If your dog complies give her a 'jackpot', two or three treats instead on just one, or an especially good treat like biltong. If your dog does not respond wait while you count to ten and give her a chance to figure it out. If she still does not respond, lure her with the food in your hand one more time, and then try again with the empty hand.

Copyright Candi Moon, this article may be freely distributed provided it is left intact.

Brought to you by Furbabies Training School

Tel: 079 490 3233

Fax: 086 545 7303

Email: furbabiestraining@gmail.com

Website: www.furbabiestraining.co.za

