

BASIC: Week 3 lesson

A: HEEL- reinforce
B: WAIT- reinforce
C: UNDER- introduce
D: STAND- reinforce
E: BACK- introduce
Lecture–SET UPS

Lesson A: HEEL – pup faces handler; lure

Reason:

To teach the pup to sit in the correct position by the handler's left side

Graduates use the command when they need the dog on their left side (i.e. opening doors which swing open to the left), to move the dog from any position to their left side and in crowded conditions where the dog must be directly next to the chair

How to teach:

Give the SIT command

Move so that you are directly in front of the pup with her nose almost touching your legs

Give the HEEL command as you do the following

Move your left leg backwards (1-2 feet) while keeping your right foot in place

AT THE SAME TIME, encourage the pup to follow your leg by clapping your hand against your left leg and moving the leash in the same direction

If you are using a lure, place the lure in the hand that is holding the leash and move your hand in the direction you want the pup to go

When the pup moves parallel to your knees (facing the same direction as you), she should SIT

Praise the pup

Give the RELEASE command when you finish the exercise

Tips:

Keep sessions short

When the pup is moving into the HEEL position from a position facing the handler, the pup should walk towards the handler and turn in a tight circle slightly behind the handler in order to move into the proper HEEL position

If using a lure, place it in the hand that is holding the leash so that the pup will follow the leash when you discontinue using a food or toy lure.

If the pup sits out of position (or slumps), tell the pup HEEL, take one step forward, give the HEEL command and praise the pup when she sits correctly

Homework: Practice the HEEL command as described at least 6 times a day

Lesson B: WAIT – at doorways

Reason:

To teach the pup to automatically wait when the handler stops at a doorway

To teach the pup to pay attention to the handler

How to teach:

Give the LETS GO command

As you stop at a doorway, give the WAIT command

The pup should stop walking when you do; she does not have to sit or down but she must not take a step forward

Praise the pup "Good WAIT"

Give the LETS GO command and repeat

If the pup forges, give a firm correction straight back; tell her "Good Wait" when she is positioned by your side

Tips:

Keep the sessions short (are you starting to see a pattern here?)

At this point the WAIT command is given before the handler stops; the object is to teach the pup to stop with you; not to trick the pup

The pup should not cross the imaginary line in front of your toes

As the pup gets better at this command you should be able to move through the doorway without the pup following.

Homework: Practice at least 6 times per day

Lesson C: UNDER (lure and leash)

Reason:

To teach the pup to automatically go in and automatically lie down under objects such as table, desk and chair

Puts the pup in a position that is safer for themselves and others

How to teach:

Stand next to a standard sized table or desk with the pup

Place the lure (treat or toy) in the hand holding the leash

Lure the pup underneath the table and tell him "UNDER"

The pup should turn around and face the handler

At this point you may tell the pup DOWN (later she will be expected to do an automatic down)

Tell the pup "Good DOWN" and give the reward

When the exercise is finished tell the pup RELEASE (or LETS GO, or HEEL, or.)

Tips:

Keep sessions short

Be sure to lure the pup all the way into position (except for the DOWN) so that she learns exactly what to do

If the pup does not DOWN on command, correct her straight downwards as you would do at any other time

Do not repeat the UNDER or DOWN command

Make sure to put the lure in your leash hand so that the pup will follow the leash when you are no longer using a lure

Homework: Practice at least 5 times a day

Lesson D: Stand (verbal, lure)

Reason:

To teach the pup to hold a firm stand stay while being groomed and handled
To prevent pup from sitting or lying down on an undesirable surface (mud, sticky floor, public bathroom)

How to teach:

Give the STAND command

Lure the pup with a toy or your hand by moving your hand directly out from the pup's nose

Or—run your hand slowly under the pup's chest and scratch her belly gently

Praise when the pup stands. Start slowly and build for time.

Tell the pup 'RELEASE' when the exercise is complete

Tips:

The pup should move from a SIT to a STAND without walking forward

As she becomes more successful, change to a more stimulating environment

Reward and praise the dog while he is in the STAND position

Homework:

Practice twice a day.

Lesson E: Back

Reason:

To teach the pup to back up in a straight line in front of the handler

Used by graduates to maneuver through tight aisles and doorways

How to teach:

Set up a long narrow walkway (e.g., place two conference tables on their side approximately on foot apart)

Walk between the two tables with the pup behind you

Give the wait command when you reach the end of the walkway

Step out of the walkway and turn around to face the pup

Tell the pup 'Back' and walk towards him

If the pup does not move, step lightly on his front paws

The pup should move backwards slowly (not darting to the end of the walkway)

Give the release or Let's go command when you are finished

Tips:

As the pup gets better at walking backwards in a straight line slowly widen the training path

Homework:

Practice the back command 3-5 times per day.

SET-UPS

Many dog trainers use set-ups to eliminate unwanted behaviors. A set-up is a situation created by the handler to bring negative consequences in response to an undesirable behavior. For example, a pup whose favorite hobby is stealing socks may soon discover that all socks have acquired the taste of Bitter Apple or Vick's Vapor Rub. In addressing a behavior problem, it is often necessary to do both set-ups to eliminate the undesirable behavior while also teaching the dog an appropriate behavior. The following are set-ups for different types of problems. Remember, the consequences can be directly administered by the handler or by a previously set up trap.

A. Stealing Food off of the Counter

Rover consistently steals food off of the counter when no one is looking. His most recent theft was a freshly baked cake for a birthday party that evening. The exasperated puppy raisers decide to try a set-up. Since Rover only steals when he is unobserved, the puppy raisers will have to set up a trap. They use a light string or fishing line to attach three coke cans together. Inside of the cans are two pennies each. The string is then attached to a hot dog. The hot dog is placed on the edge of the counter and the cans are strung out behind it. When Rover comes to steal the hot dog, the cans come crashing down on him. He runs from the room leaving the hot dog. The puppy raisers do not show any reaction. During the next couple of weeks the puppy raisers are careful not to leave any food on the counter except for the piece of food (hot dog, bread, etc.), which is attached to the can. Rover no longer feels tempted to steal food from the counter.

B. Digging

Rex consistently digs holes when his puppy raisers are gone and he is left alone in the back yard. They have tried scolding him but it does not seem to help. After seeking the advice of their trainer, they implemented several things: First, the puppy raisers made hellos and good-byes calm and uneventful to avoid building anxiety. This helped to keep the dog calm so that he did not need an immediate release of energy. Second, they increased his exercise and made sure that he exercised DAILY. Third, they placed a little peanut butter in his Kong toy and gave it to him ONLY when he was going to be left in the back yard alone. These first three steps are designed to eliminate the underlying problem--Rex was relieving his anxiety and/or boredom by digging. Finally, they buried some of Rex's feces in his favorite digging spots. Dogs are generally very clean animals and will not dig where feces are buried. Within a few weeks, Rex's digging had stopped and his overall behavior had improved.

Digging is a difficult behavior to eliminate especially in dogs that have a natural tendency to "enjoy feeling the cool earth beneath their toes". If burying feces is not effective, you may want to try placing chicken wire underneath a small layer of dirt. An alternative is to give the puppy his own place to dig. Bury treats or favorite toys in his digging spot and praise him every time he digs appropriately. Finally, prevent the puppy from digging up your favorite rose bush or garden area by placing a fence around it or providing him with an enclosed dog run.

C. Jumping Up

Rita is extremely friendly and gets excited when her puppy raisers come home or when visitors arrive. In an effort to greet them, she consistently jumps on whoever walks through the door. The puppy raisers have tried using the OFF command and even a squirt bottle. Both have been ineffective.

The puppy raisers need to begin solving this problem by making entrances and exits very calm. Rita is affected by the excitement of arrivals and only becomes more excitable when given a correction. Second, Rita should only be greeted when she is sitting as she cannot Sit and jump up at the same time. The puppy raisers should begin by ignoring Rita for the first 3-5 minutes after they are home. If she jumps up, they should simply turn their back. Once Rita has calmed down, the puppy raiser should tell Rita to "Sit" and calmly praise and pet her (if she can remain calm). Rita will soon learn that jumping up does not get her the desired attention and she will try more appropriate behaviors.

If ignoring the puppy is ineffective, a sharp leash correction downward with a firm OFF command should eliminate the problem. However, you must be sure to correct the puppy every time he jumps up on a person. Talk to your trainer or puppy coordinator for additional assistance if the above methods are not successful.

Rita should also be exercised regularly in order to help reduce her energy. However, these exercise sessions should not begin immediately upon arriving home, as this will only increase her anticipation and excitement of the puppy raiser's arrival.

There are many ways to eliminate jumping up. If you are having problems in this area, please discuss it with your trainer or puppy coordinator. Whichever method is decided upon, remember that each person who comes into contact with the puppy must carry out the method exactly. A puppy that receives mixed messages from different people will tend to strengthen the undesirable behavior.

Each puppy raiser should be prepared to discuss a behavioral problem that he or she is having so that the class can help to create some behavioral steps and set-ups that might be effective.