

## **SIT & DOWN – Capturing – Exercise 3**

Basic obedience commands like SIT (and DOWN) will help you and your dog safely navigate the world together. We want to start ‘capturing’ behaviors that are predictable, like SIT & DOWN.

**Setup** (*review clicker mechanics from Session 1 before you begin*)

- Gather your clicker, your treat bag filled with high-value treats.
- Choose a quiet, boring spot in the house.
- You should keep this training session short (one to three minutes).

### **Steps**

1. First you will practice SIT; not DOWN. Watch your dog carefully to see if he happens to SIT on his own. As soon as he does, click and reward him with treats.
2. If you hold the treat just out of reach, he has to stand up from the sit position to get the treat, which sets him up to sit again. Now watch and wait to see if he sits on his own again. Continue to click and treat every time your puppy sits on his own.
3. If your dog does five or six sits in a row within about 30 seconds, he’s probably figured out that sitting earns clicks and treats.
4. Once your dog is repeating this behavior in an obviously deliberate way (offering the behavior repeatedly), it’s time to give the behavior a name. In other words, once your puppy is offering the desired behavior repeatedly, it is at this point in clicker training that we add the command or cue.
5. Wait until you are sure that your dog is about to do the behavior, and then say SIT just before he enters a sit. Then click and treat.

#### **When practicing SIT, the sequence is:**

- ⇒ Dog’s body language indicates he is about to sit.
  - ⇒ You say SIT.
  - ⇒ Your dog sits. *Note: this is just a coincidence at first, due to your excellent cue timing.*
  - ⇒ Now click and offer a treat a short distance away from your dog so he has to get up to eat the treat.
6. After a few sessions of using the SIT cue because you know your dog is about to sit on his own, you can move on to trying the cue when your puppy isn’t about to sit.
  7. Wait until your dog is standing and not focused on you, then say SIT. If your pup sits after hearing the cue, click and treat.
  8. If your dog doesn’t sit when you say the cue, go back to the step above (introducing the SIT cue when you pup is about to sit on his own). Dogs may take anywhere from three repetitions to dozens of repetitions of hearing a new cue before associating the cue and their behavior, especially if this is one of the first cues they have learned.

**Note:** After your puppy reliably responds to the SIT cue, follow the steps above for DOWN.

