



INTERMEDIATE LEVEL

DOG TRAINING



Week

1

On Your Bed

This exercise is easier to train when your dog has had a walk and is slightly tired.

- Lure your dog onto his bed using a treat and reward him. Then call him to you and lure him back onto his bed. Introduce a verbal command of "bed". Repeat this several times.
- Next, say "bed", lure him onto his bed and then lure him to lie down. There is no need to say "down" at this point, as you want the "bed" command to instruct your dog to go to his bed and lie down.
- Call your dog from his bed again and repeat, each time from slightly further away. As you say "bed", point at your dog's bed.
- Once your dog is readily going to his bed when asked, build up the amount of time he spends lying down on his bed by waiting a couple of seconds before rewarding. Increase the seconds gradually so that your dog learns to lie down for longer.
- With practice, when you say "bed", your dog will go to his bed and lie down.

Never send your dog to his bed as a punishment for bad behaviour – your dog's bed must be a positive place to be. If you are having problems with unwanted behaviour please speak to us and we will help you.

Watch

This training is great for self-control as you're asking your dog to look away from what he wants. It can take a while to begin with as your dog needs to work out that it is eye contact with you that will get him the food.

- Hold a piece of food to the side of your face and wait for eye contact.
- As soon as your dog gives you eye contact, praise and reward with the food. If your dog doesn't look at you at all after 20 seconds make a small noise to encourage him.
- Gradually increase the length of time eye contact is held by delaying the reward one second at a time. If he starts to look away before you have rewarded, practise rewarding quicker and build up time slowly.
- Aim for three seconds of eye contact, indoors and outdoors. You can add the cue "watch" once he's reliably looking at you as soon as you hold the treat out.
- If your dog barks at any stage, turn your head, look away and hide the food for a few seconds before starting again.

Look at That

This command can be used to gain control around stimuli your dog finds exciting, such as other dogs, people, traffic, wildlife etc.

- Wait for your dog to look at the person/dog (you may need to be quite far away from them initially).
- As soon as your dog looks at them, praise and reward and repeat.
- Over time this will teach your dog just to look rather than to look, pull towards, bark or lunge.

Sit, Down and Stand (Hand Signals)

This is a refresher of what you taught your dog at Puppy School. Remember to be clear with your hand signals, initially exaggerating your movements and as your dog responds, gradually make your hand signals more subtle. For example when asking for "sit", you raise your hand to your shoulder. When your responds well to this, you can decrease the signal until your dog responds to a slight hand movement.

Remember – be clear with your spoken commands and only ask for a behaviour once (i.e. "sit", not "sit....sit....sit...sit")

Walking to Heel

For your dog to reliably walk with a loose lead you must be consistent with him. Ensure your lead is long enough so that your dog can walk next to you with a J-shaped loop from his collar to your hand. Retractable "flexi" leads are not recommended as the design means that the lead length is varied and there is constant tension.

Encourage your dog to your side using a treat or toy. Walk only when the lead is loose and free from tension. If you anticipate your dog is about to pull, stop immediately and call him back to your side. Rewarding loose lead walking with treats is recommended to begin with, and you will need to reward often at first.

If your dog loses interest in treats or you run out, simply stopping each time he reaches the end of the lead will teach him that pulling gets him nowhere.

Remember – be consistent. Praise your dog when he's walking nicely and stop immediately if the lead is tense.

Sit to Greet

As a responsible dog owner, it is important that you do not allow your dog to jump up at people. Dogs jump up to gain our attention or to get something we are holding. As with all training, consistency is essential, so you must ensure that everyone who interacts with your dog follows the same process. Sitting is incompatible with jumping up, dogs cannot do both at once, so teach your dog to sit when greeting people rather than jumping up.

- Each time you greet your dog, ask him to sit first.
- Once he is sitting, praise him and give attention.
- If at any point he jumps up, don't say anything, turn your back and ignore him until his paws are back on the floor. Then ask him to sit and praise when he does.
- Ensure every person who greets your dog follows the same process.

If your dog usually jumps up, you may notice an increase in his efforts when you start ignoring him for that behaviour. This is because previously jumping up got him attention, so before the behaviour reduces, it is common to see an increase.

Park Your Dog

The idea of this exercise is to have your dog under control when you meet people who might not want to interact with him.

- As you approach or are approached by someone, ask your dog to sit. You may find it helpful at this stage to stand on part of your dog's lead, ensuring he can sit and stand comfortable but cannot jump up (if your lead is too short to do this without letting go of the handle, just keep hold of the lead instead).
- Keep your dog in a sit position by rewarding frequently and ask the other person to ignore him.

Down Stay

This command is used to ask your dog to remain in a "down" position while you move away.

- Ask your dog to lie down.
- Hold up your hand in a "stop" type signal and say "stay".
- Move away one or two paces, then return to your dog and reward.
- Gradually work up to moving three paces away.



Week 2

Leave it (from hand)

- Show your dog a piece of low value food (e.g. a boring biscuit) and place it in the palm of your hand.
- As your dog approaches, close your hand to make a fist and say "leave it".
- Keep your hand very still until your dog moves himself away, then praise and reward from your other hand with a higher value treat (e.g. ham or sausage).
- Repeat this until your dog is leaving the low value food instantly on command.
- Next, drop the low value food on the floor and as your dog approaches cover with your foot and say "leave it" keep your foot very still and as your dog moves away reward with high value food from your hand.
- Practice this until your dog is leaving the food reliably.

Drop

You can teach "drop" either whilst playing fetch or tug. Do not attempt to remove a toy directly from your dog's mouth as this may encourage your dog to think it's part of the game and hold on more.

- Tease your dog with a toy, then let him take it.
- With your dog holding one toy, show him a second toy.
- Wriggle or throw and catch the second toy to entice your dog.
- Say "drop" as you offer him the second toy.
- As soon as he drops the first, let him have the second toy.
- Repeat throughout your games.

If your dog will not drop the first toy, you need to ignore him and have lots of fun on your own with the second toy until he cannot resist any longer.

Door Manners

- Approach a door with your dog and ask him to sit.
- Place your hand on the door handle.
- If your dog stands up, remove your hand from the handle and ask him to sit again.
- Once your dog is sitting whilst you are holding the handle, slowly open the door a little way.
- If your dog stands up, close the door and again ask him to sit. Repeat until the door can be fully opened with your dog still sitting.
- Call your dog to you once you are through the doorway.

Sit, Down and Stand (voice cues)

Now that your dog knows all of the positions with a hand signal you should begin to teach them all with just a voice cue.

- Show your dog a treat then fold your arms.
- Give your chosen command ("sit", "down" or "stand") once. Reward as soon as he adopts the position asked.
- If your dog does not understand after a few seconds show him the hand signal and reward.
- Repeat until your dog is responding to the voice cue only.
- Remember to practice each command separately to avoid confusing your dog.

Be clear with your spoken commands and only ask for a behaviour **once** (i.e. "sit", not "sit....sit....sit....sit").

Walking to Heel

Slowing your dog down and keeping him calm is key for success with loose lead walking. Make sure to work on the door manners as you leave your front door to help your dog start his walk in a calm manner.

- Place a treat on the floor, keeping your hand there until your dog finds it.
- As your dog is eating the first treat, take a step away and place another treat down on the floor, again keeping your hand there until your dog finds it.
- Next take two steps and repeat.

Before long you should find that your dog is keeping by your side. If the lead goes tense at all, stand still, keeping your treat hand to the floor until the lead slackens.

Remember – be consistent. Praise your dog when he's walking nicely and stop **immediately** if the lead is tense.

Recall

Recall Tornado

This game is great for adding fun to your recall. It adds fluidity to the action meaning your dog gets to keep running around and having fun with you.

- Hold a treat in your hand and let your dog sniff.
- As he's engaged with the treat, turn forwards in a circle on the spot, keeping him with you and throw the treat underarm.
- As he runs to get the treat and eats it, call him back excitedly and repeat the process.

Top Tip: The more your dog has fun with you, the easier recall will be. Play short, energetic games with him as often as you can and end the game while he's having the most fun and before he gets bored.



Week
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Food Bowl Manners

When feeding your dog, teach him some self-control by waiting for him to sit calmly as you put his bowl down.

- With your dog's bowl (containing a meal) in your hand wait for your dog to sit. If he does not offer a sit after ten seconds or so, ask him once.
- Begin to slowly lower the bowl to the floor in front of your dog.
- If he stands up, raise the bowl back up and wait for him to sit again.
- Lower the bowl again as your dog remains sitting.
- Once you are able to put the bowl on the floor, say "ok" to allow your dog to eat.

Do not remove your dog's bowl while he is eating as this can cause serious possession problems. If you are having any issues with your dog around his food bowl please let us know and we will help.

Taking Items Away

Whenever you need to remove an item from your dog, always have something to swap it for. Do not take things from your dog unnecessarily as he may learn to guard items from you. Do not chase your dog to retrieve an item from him as this will teach him to run away from you whenever he has something. If your dog perceives his item to be more valuable than what you are offering, he may not swap with you. Practice swapping less exciting items, ensuring that you and your dog remain relaxed. Smelly treats often work well in exchange for something you need to take from your dog. Offer the treat first and throw it away from you so your dog moves away from the item before you attempt to pick up the item.

If your dog shows stiff posture, avoids you or growls, snaps or bites when you approach him, move away immediately to give him space. Remove the item when the dog is in another room as it may not be safe to do so otherwise. Contact us for help.

Sit, Down and Stand (Distance)

- Tie your dog up or have someone hold him on his lead at a fixed length.
- Show your dog a treat then move backwards two paces and ask your dog to sit, using an exaggerated hand signal and clear verbal cue.
- Return and reward well if your dog sits.
- If he does not sit, wait for three seconds and then run back to your dog and ask for a sit again from there.
- Once he's sitting at two paces, move away three paces and practise at that distance, ensuring you reward your dog well each time.

Down Stay

This command is used to ask your dog to remain in a “down” position while you move away. You should by now be able to move away at least three paces. To advance this command, turn your back on your dog as you walk away. You may find that this causes him to move, so turn back to face him after a couple of paces and call him to you.

- Ask your dog to lie down.
- Hold up your hand in a “stop” type signal and say “stay”.
- Turn your back to your dog and move away one or two paces, then turn back, call your dog to you and reward.
- Gradually work up to moving five paces away.

No Jumping

As well as teaching your dog to greet people by sitting, it can be helpful to train a backup cue for those times when your dog approaches someone unexpectedly.

- Hold your hand up, palm facing your dog, with your thumb and forefinger creating a wide “V” shape.
- With your other hand, throw a treat through the “V”.
- Repeat until you notice your dog looking at the floor as soon as you hold your hand in that way.

Middle

Teaching your dog to pop up between your legs is good for teaching your dog that proximity to you is rewarding. It can also help to improve recall as well as being the base behaviour for tricks such as “beg” and “walk on my feet”

- With treats in both hands, lure your dog behind you with one hand and through your legs with the other.
- When his head is between your legs, facing forwards, reward with a treat.
- Repeat, achieving the same position but by going around your other leg.
- Use this with your recall by calling your dog's name and then saying “middle”, indicating where you'd like him to go.

Button Hands

This is a fantastic game for working on self-control. Your dog has to work out how to open your hand, which is closed around a treat. To open the hand, your dog has to touch his nose on your opposite open hand.

- Hold a treat in your right hand and make a fist.
- Present both of your hands in front of your dog, right hand closed around the treat, left hand open (button) next to it (wrists almost touching).
- Allow your dog to investigate your right hand, sniffing out the treat. Wait until he touches your left hand (button) with his nose, then say "yes" and open your right hand for him to eat the treat.
- If he gets stuck, take your hands away, then present them again.
- Do not give any verbal cues for this, your dog has to figure out how to get what he wants by offering another behaviour (touching your button hand with his nose).
- As he gets the hang of it, start to gradually increase the space between your hands.
- Eventually you will be able to have your arms wide apart with your dog moving to touch the button hand to reveal the treat in the other hand.
- Expert level: get a friend to hold their hand open as the button hand so your dog has to go to them, touch the button and come back to your treat hand to eat.

Week
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Recall

The key to getting your dog to return on your call is motivation. If your dog's recall is a bit hit and miss, try to work out what usually distracts him. If he is distracted by playing with other dogs, you need to increase the amount of play he has with you and take a toy with you which he only gets to play with on walks. For every 5 minutes he spends playing with other dogs, he should spend roughly 15 minutes playing with you, so keep his play with other dogs fairly short and sweet.

If your dog is more likely to be motivated by the lure of discarded food, try using all of his daily food allowance for training rather than feeding from a bowl. Some of his food can be taken out on walks to be used as rewards when he returns to your call. Mix in some strong smelling treats with this food for an added lure.

Whilst you are training your dog to come back every time you call him, you should keep him on a long line and harness when you are not in a secure area.

Leave It (from floor)

Now your dog can leave food from your hand or the floor, it's time to step it up to temptations when on walks. South London is not short of fried chicken shops, and unfortunately there are often discarded bones on the pavements. As these bones are cooked, they pose a serious risk to your dog if ingested, so you need a solid "leave it" command in place.

- With your dog on lead, walk him past a treat (low value) on the floor, ensuring that he cannot reach it.
- If he looks at the treat, say "leave it" and wait for him to look away.
- As soon as he stops looking at the treat, praise and reward with a tasty treat from your hand.
- Repeat this several times.
- In the next session, put something more tempting on the floor, and repeat the process. Make sure your reward is even tastier.

If your regular walk usually involves passing fast food shops, stay vigilant for scraps of food on the ground. Give the command "leave it" and your dog should look up at you for a reward. Praise and treat well.

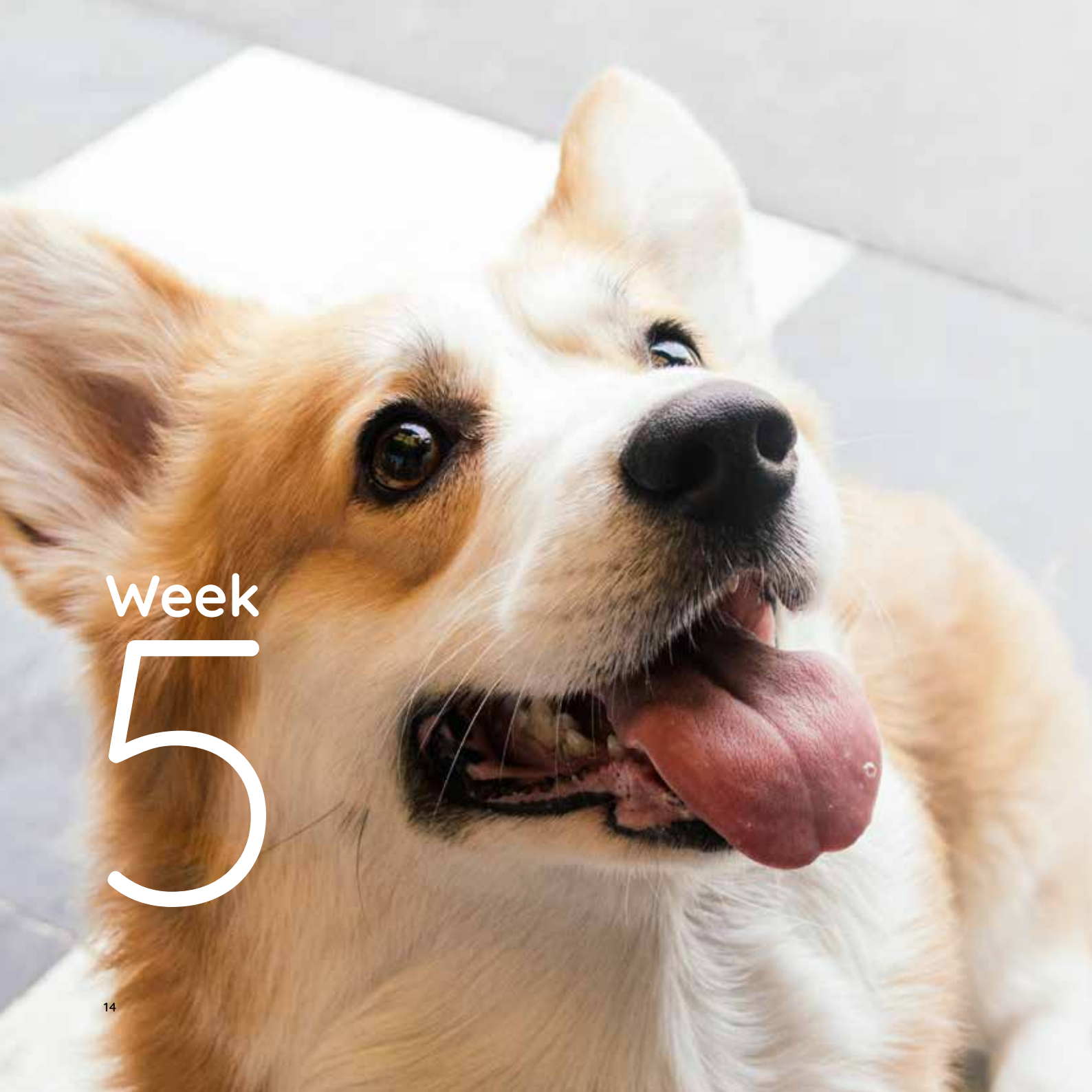
If your dog is more motivated by toys than food, follow the same process but with a toy on the floor and a favourite toy as the reward.

Find It

This is an introduction to scent work, getting your dog to use his nose to find hidden items.

Start with a small toy to find. Once your dog has grasped the concept of searching you can swap the toy for more useful items such as keys, remote controls etc.

- Play a short, fun game with the toy (and your dog!).
- Whilst your dog is still interested in the toy, quickly hide it somewhere obvious (behind a chair for example) and ask your dog to "find it".
- As soon as he locates the toy (you can give a little help if needed), resume your fun game with it.
- Repeat, changing the location but still making it easy so your dog is successful quickly.
- You can start to ask your dog to wait while you hide the toy.
- Once your dog understands to look for the toy you can increase the difficulty slightly. At this point your dog is most likely using his eyes to look for the toy – ultimately he needs to use his nose as the toy will soon be hidden out of sight. Listen for when you hear your dog sniffing – that's exactly what you want!
- If your dog is not motivated enough by a toy, you can hide a treat instead, then hide a treat inside a toy (such as a Lotus ball or small Kong).
- Keep training sessions short and successful, dogs tire very quickly when using their noses.



Week

5

Sit, Down and Stand (Distance)

If your dog can now perform these positions at three paces, it's time to increase the distance.

- Practice sit, down and stand at three paces, praising your dog and rewarding.
- Try going an extra pace, so you are four paces away.
- Ask your dog for the positions and reward.
- Increase the distance gradually, shortening the distance if your dog does not respond to you.

Down Stay

If your dog can stay lying down while you turn and walk away a few paces, try moving out of sight briefly.

- Ask your dog to lie down and give the signal to stay.
- Turn your back and leave the room, returning immediately.
- If your dog stays, reward well with praise and treats.
- Next, ask him to stay and leave the room for a couple of seconds before returning and rewarding.
- Increase the amount of time you spend away from your dog, a few seconds at a time.

Stop

This training teaches your dog to stop and either sit or lie down on command. Initially you train it when your dog is running towards you, once he understands this you can start to train when his back is to you.

- With a long, low arm movement, throw a treat a few meters forwards, ensuring your dog can see it.
- Once he's eaten the treat, he should turn towards you again, at which point you throw a treat with a long, low movement in the opposite direction (behind you).
- Repeat this a few times so he's racing back and forth, following the treats.
- As he's running towards you, throw your hand up quickly – as if you are throwing a treat towards him and say “stop”. This action should cause him to put the brakes on quickly as he anticipates a treat being thrown. As soon as he stops, praise and reward immediately.
- Go back now to throwing the treats in front and behind you as before. This is so he runs towards you each time – don't ask for a stop every time or he will start to anticipate it and hesitate in coming back to you.
- Repeat the throwing action and “stop” command until he's reliably stopping on cue, then add in a “sit” or “down” command.
- Practise until your dog stops and sits/lies down when you throw your hand up and say “stop”.



Surrey and
South London
Dog Training
& Behaviour

CONTACT

Louise Taylor

077 0379 0825

louise@trainingandbehaviour.co.uk

www.trainingandbehaviour.co.uk

This hand-out is only intended for the use of training dogs who have attended the Intermediate Level Dog Training course and should not be distributed or shared to others. For more information please contact Surrey and South London Dog Training and Behaviour.