

# It's A Dog's World™

## K - 9 A C A D E M Y

3890 Walnut Ave. Chino, Ca. 91710 • Local 909-548-3150 • Toll Free 866-324-DOGS • Fax 909-548-3154  
www.ItsADogsWorld.biz

### GROUP CLASS: Week 3

The goal for this lesson is to teach your dog “*Down*”, “*Sit-Stay*” and the recall command (commonly referred to as “*Come*”). You will also learn how to give corrections properly for the commands that your dog learned last week.

#### CONSEQUENCES FOR BEHAVIORS

At this point, we have given your dog nothing but praise and positive reinforcement in learning new behaviors. By now, your dog should know the meaning of the words “*Watch*”, “*Sit*”, and “*Let's Go/Heel*” (combined with an Auto-Sit) and “*Come*”. It is always preferable to use positive reinforcement FIRST. Your dog will learn faster if s/he receives ongoing rewards for good behavior. Consequences drive behavior. For example, a runner leaps off his or her starting block when s/he hears the gun but it is really the reward of a gold medal that spurs them on, not the cue that starts them off. However, if your dog decides not to perform a command when you ask, you are going to administer negative reinforcement, also known as a correction.

Always pair the word “*No*” or “*Uh-Uh*” with the correction. Do not say your dog's name when you are correcting. Your dog should associate the word “*No*” as a negative and you don't want them to think that their name is a negative, too! There are several ways to administer a correction to your dog. You can give a verbal correction, such as “*No*”, “*Wrong*” or “*Uh-Uh*”, or you can give a correction through a collar and leash. The point is that your dog is going to receive a repercussion for not doing the requested behavior in a timely manner. Typically, when working on obedience cues, the correction through the leash and collar is most effective.

From this week forward, you are no longer permitted to repeat your commands. Your dog has until the count of “one” to start the behavior, and by the count of “two” to complete it (AKA the “1 to 2 second rule”). In other words, your dog only has two seconds to perform the command.

Corrections are given in the direction that you want your dog's head to go. There are also different techniques for giving a leash correction, depending on whether you are using a head halter or another type of collar. Please note that if you are using a head halter, make your corrections in a firm and steady manner. DO NOT JERK OR “POP” THE LEASH! Unlike traditional training collars jerking a head halter can injure your dog's neck and spine.

Remember to give your dog 1 to 2 seconds to complete the obedience cue before you leash correct. Don't inadvertently tug on the leash at the same time as giving the command. If you say "Sit" while tugging or pulling on the leash, your dog will feel pressure on the muzzle and may learn to associate the command with a correction. You must only tighten the leash when you are correcting by saying "No" and guiding the dog in the direction you want him or her to go. Try to remember to only give the "Let's Go" command when the leash is loose.

To correct for "Sit", you need to pull up on the leash. Remember, when the head goes up, the bottom goes down.

**Don't give up; make your dog give up.** When you are walking with your dog, give your dog a correction in the direction that you want him or her to move into. For instance, if your dog is moving too far away from your side, correct your dog back towards your body. If your dog is forging ahead, turn around and correct at the same time. You should always have a two-inch belly in your leash. And don't forget that your dog must perform an "Auto Sit" (sitting automatically when you come to a stop). If s/he doesn't sit within two seconds of you stopping, then you must give a correction like you would for "Sit".

**So the Golden Rule: Give command ONE TIME - dog has 2 seconds to comply. If he or she doesn't follow through - say "No" and correct with leash.**

## **DOWN**

You are going to start out with your dog in the "Sit" command. You may want to have two treats in your hand, one to give for the sit and one to give for the down. Once your dog is sitting, take your second treat and place it on the tip of your dog's nose. At the same time, you are going to bend or kneel down on your dog's right side. Place your left hand, with the leash in it, gently upon the dog's withers (shoulder blades). It is very important that you do not push down on your dog's back, hips or shoulders. With the treat on the tip of the dog's nose, *slowly* draw the treat straight down to the ground in between the dog's feet and give the command "Down". It is important that the dog is following the treat. As the dog is following the treat, *slowly* bring the treat straight out across the ground away from your dog (you are making an "L" shape with the treat). It is important not to pull the treat straight out from your dog's nose and then down, as this will bring your dog into the stand position. Once your dog is lying down, release the treat while saying, "Good down!" Before moving your hand away, give your release word.

The hand signal for "Down" is holding your palm toward the ground as if you are pushing the dog's head toward the ground. Take your hand all the way down to the ground. Start using the hand signal after the third or fourth day.

For the rest of the week, continue working on the down command in the same fashion as “*Sit*”. Don’t be disheartened if your dog appears to not want to perform “*Down*” at first. This is the command that is least liked by some dogs, particularly if they are dominant, as it is a submissive posture. “*Down*” also puts dogs in a position that makes them more vulnerable to a potential attack, so if your dog is nervous, uncomfortable or unsure of his surroundings, he may resist doing the command.

## **COME**

Allow your dog to move away from you to the end of the leash. Put a treat in your right hand and hold it out in front of you at the level of your dog’s nose, then call your dog’s name and begin walking backwards while holding the treat. When your dog starts to move toward you, give the cue “*Come*” several times in a happy voice. When you come to a stop, use the treat in your hand to lure your dog into a sitting position in front of you (lure like you did with “*Sit*”). Don’t give the verbal command for sit. As soon as your dog sits, give your dog the treat and plenty of verbal praise (e.g. - “Good come!”) Before allowing your dog to get up, be sure to give him/her the release word.

It is very important that you ALWAYS reward or praise your dog when you have called him to you. Don’t ever call your dog to you with the intention of punishing them for something they’ve already done (e.g. – having a Housebreaking accident, dashing out the front door, etc.) You always want your dog to know that coming to you is the best thing in the world.

To give the hand signal for come, hold your right arm straight out to the side, away from your body then bend your arm at the elbow and bring your palm to your chest while saying “*Come*”.

## **SIT-STAY**

Start by having your dog in the “*Sit*” position. Since your dog is already holding a sit for up to one minute, it should be an easy transition to teaching “*Sit-Stay*”. Give your dog the hand signal, which is a flat palm toward your dog’s face, and tell your dog to, “*Stay*”. Give your dog a treat. Keep giving your dog a treat about every five seconds, then every ten seconds, then every fifteen, and so on. You are also going to start building distance. Slowly, take one step back and give your dog a treat. Then take two steps back and give your dog a treat. Continue until you are at the end of the six-foot leash. If your dog gets up, you may give a “*Sit*” correction. Practice stepping back into your dog before giving the release cue. By the end of the week, your dog should be able to do a “*Sit-Stay*” for two minutes.

## **HOMEWORK**

Work with your dog several times a day for only 10 – 15 minutes in each session. Keep your lessons upbeat and always end on a good note.

By the end of the week, you should be able to:

- Continue practicing “*Sit*” & Loose Leash Walking without using treats, while incorporating corrections for ignoring you or breaking command early. Don’t repeat commands!
- Get your dog to perform “*Down*” without luring.
- Give the hand signals and verbal signals simultaneously.
- Work up to a one minute “*Down*” in your front yard - do not move any further than six inches from your dog.
- Get your dog to walk alongside you, while you are standing upright.
- Practice “*Come*” with the “front sit” behavior in several locations and situations. Start in low distraction areas and work up to more distracting environments. Always have your dog on a leash for this exercise.
- Have your dog perform “*Sit-Stay*” for two minutes at the end of a 6-foot leash in the front yard. Practice walking around your dog while in the “*Sit-Stay*” position. As your dog gets better, continue practicing in new locations and situations (e.g. – a park, a school, on the sidewalk during a walk, etc.)

**Remember to have fun!!!**