



HUMANE SOCIETY OF BROWARD COUNTY

Basic Obedience for Dogs

Handout #5

Stay – Distance

Continue teaching stay by adding the component of distance. The distance will be between you and your dog or being able to use a cue without being on the other end of the leash. Remember, we just spent a significant amount of time teaching your dog to come to you and that by coming to you great things will happen. This new behavior will not feel comfortable for your dog right away. His instinct is to be close to you and to seek instruction and guidance. Be patient.

- Place your dog in a sit / stay.
- Face your dog and take one step backwards.
- If your stays for just one second, deliver a food reward and verbal praise “Good Dog”.
- Do not reward if dog gets up. Place back in a sit / stay and repeat.
- The trick here is to set your dog up for success. Don’t try to leave your dog in a long sit /stay the first few times. Make it easy for him to get it right.
- Once you have one step back at a five count, add a release cue such as “OK” or “All Done”. Deliver food reward and verbal praise before release cue.
- If a five count is too hard for your dog, go to a three count.
- Continue in this manner. Once your dog can reliably complete the cue at a set distance (one step back), increase the distance (two – three steps back).
- If your dog is not responding after a few attempts once distance has increased, go back to your original successful distance and repeat a few additional times.
- Down / Stay: Place your dog in a down / stay position and repeat the instructions above.
- Once dog is responding reliably to increased distractions, you can start to put the whole thing together – duration, and distraction, distance.
- NOTE: Do not release your dog by calling him to you during training; always return to your dog to reward and release from a stay cue.

Distance Hints

- ✓ Practice frequently for short periods of time.
- ✓ Practice when your dog is relaxed or after exercise.
- ✓ Practice in a controlled environment.
- ✓ Do not advance to the next distance until your dog is comfortable with the one you are working on.
- ✓ Do not try to go too far too soon.
- ✓ Remember to be patient—this is a hard cue for your dog to learn.
- ✓ Learning takes time.
- ✓ Have realistic expectations.