

# Teaching a Dog to Stay in Place

"Stay" is a skill that is useful in a variety of situations. With training, you can have a dog who'll stand still while you towel him off and won't bolt when you open a door. It can be a challenge, though, so start slowly and always set your dog up for success! Add steps gradually and be patient, since this skill involves duration, distraction, and distance.



## STEP 1

Lure your dog to sit. Say "Stay" and place a flat palm in front of your dog's nose. Count 1 second. Say "Yes!" and reward with a treat. Repeat a few times. Next, follow the same steps, but offer a few treats with a few seconds in between treats. Once duration is built, proceed to the next step.

## STEP 2

At 30 seconds, add distractions. Place a toy a few feet away, cue "Stay." Count 3 seconds, say, "Yes!" and treat. Release the dog. Increase proximity to the toy. If your dog gets up, redirect your dog and lure back to a sit. Give the hand signal, say "Stay" and try less time and distractions.

## STEP 3

Add distance. If your dog stays 30 seconds with a distraction, proceed. Cue "Stay." Step a foot away then step back to your dog. Say, "Yes!" and treat. Release. Vary steps, say, "Yes!" and treat. Repeat this step several times while slowly increasing distance and adding duration. Release your dog.

Put it all together when 30 seconds is reached with distraction and distance. Cue, "Stay," take a step, then drop a treat. Say, "Yes!" and treat. Step again, say, "Yes!" then treat. Pick up the distraction treat and release. Each time add a few steps away with the distraction, always controlling the distraction treat.

Written by: Leslie Hudson, CPDT-KA

