

# HOT DIGGITY DOG REWARD TRAINING

## Downs Are Easy to Capture

Downs Are Easy to capture, and you don't have to wander around all day with a clicker, waiting for the moment.

Take your pup, a clicker, treats, and a magazine into the bathroom. Remove the trash can, the bathmat, and anything else that might interest the puppy. Shut the door and have a seat. (I'm sure there's one somewhere.) Now ignore your puppy and read the magazine.

**OR** put your dog on leash sit down at the computer, put the end of the leash under your foot and read your e-mail or surf the net. Keep one eye on your pup. (no staring at your dog) Have your clicker and treats ready.

Your pup is going to lie down within a minute or two. The second those elbows hit the ground, click and toss the treat **AWAY** from the pup so he has to get up to get it.

Then go back to reading your magazine, or computer Your pup is going to be staring holes at you and trying any clicked behavior he knows. **Ignore him.** He'll get bored and lie down. Click -- **toss the treat away** a bit so he gets up to get it.

Repeat ten times. Thus endeth session one.

Repeat bathroom/computer sessions until the pup is actively offering the down to make you click. That means you toss the treat, he jumps up and gets it, and then he plops back into a down immediately.

You can begin adding the cue at this point. As he starts to go down add the cue/command to down.\*\*\*  
Then start adding the cue sooner.

Then we need to change the picture.

Then do ten reps with you standing in the bathroom or kitchen by computer, not sitting.

Keep changing the picture by moving to different rooms, standing etc. Always click and treat at this point for correct behavior. And so on, to generalize location.



## LURING the DOWN

1.) Begin with your dog in a sit. Hold a very tasty food lure right next to his nose and slowly bring your hand with the food straight down to the floor. Don't move your hand away from the dog but down toward his front feet. Some dogs will assume the 'playbow' posture - forequarters down and

hindquarters stuck up in the air. By slowly moving the treat: a few inches either forwards away from the dog's forepaws, or backwards between his forelegs toward the dog's chest, the rump will lower to the floor. If your dog stands up instead, just start over at the beginning. At this stage of training, reprimands are inappropriate, since the dog has no idea what you are trying to teach, and so as yet, it is not doing anything wrong. If he hasn't learned the answer yet he can't be right or wrong.

2.) Click and Treat (C/T) as soon as his **elbows** or rump touch the floor

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3.) Repeat steps 1 & 2 until the dog downs instantly with the food and hand motion signal. (At least 3 repetitions)

4.) **NOW WITHOUT** food in your hand use the hand motion to lure the dog into a down. Wait a moment. If the dog downs give a big reward (JACKPOT) from the other hand. If not repeat Step 1 two times and try again.

5.) Repeat step 4 until the "empty" hand signal is very reliable. (8 right out of 10)

6.) Adding the verbal cue to "DOWN" before you give the hand signal:

- ▶ Say "DOWN" in a quiet, flat or descending tone), wait 1 second
- ▶ Give hand signal (without food)
- ▶ Dog downs.
- ▶ Dog is rewarded! (jackpot)

7.) After repeating Step 6 several times, give the "DOWN" verbal cue and simply wait! (treat hidden). Ignore any behavior from the dog except a sit. If the dog sits at any point say "YES" and jackpot the dog.

8.) Practice the "down" in different areas of your home, always starting at Step 1 in each new location. You should be able to work more quickly through the steps once your dog learns that the "down" cue means the same thing in different contexts. ( i.e. in kitchen, in living room with owner sitting in chair, owner standing by the sink, etc.)

9.) When the dog understands "down" in different areas of the house, start with Step 1 outside, in the least distracting area you can find.

When the dog is sitting quickly start randomly treating for sits, trying not to get into a pattern.

