



Pawsitive Experience
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Advanced Training of the Stay Command

Once your dog has a good “stay” in training class and at home, it’s time to take your training on the road. Take your dog to park settings or shopping areas where lots of dogs or people are around. At parks if you see a ball game going on, work your dog there. To keep your dog safe, have a 20 foot long line attached to your dog. If your dog gets distracted and takes off, you can step on the leash to stop him. Also, when working in our city parks, your dog will have to be on leash per city ordinances.

Work within what your dog’s capabilities and work up from there. I believe that success breeds success. Here are a few ideas:

1. Put your dog in a “down-stay” and or “sit-stay” and walk (or back) away from him with dogs and people around. Start by moving just five feet away, and slowly increase the distance and duration of the stay. If your dog doesn’t succeed make the exercise easier. If your dog is too distracted, move to a quieter area and slowly increase the challenge by adding more distractions. Once in a stay, you can go back and reward or call him to you. Vary it so he never knows what you will ask of him. You are in training, so always reward your dog for a good stay with treats and praise.
2. Put your dog in a “down-stay” or “sit-stay” and walk away and hide. Again repeat as above to make sure you set him up to succeed and keep him motivated. After hiding for a brief period, you can walk back to him and reward him for staying, or call him to find you in your hiding spot. This is really fun as you get more advanced. You can get further away and when you yell to release him, his job is to hunt you down. This is best to be done with two people in case your dog takes off in the wrong direction to find you. This is a safe and really fun game to play at home too. Put your dog in a stay and go hide. Hide under beds, in closets, behind furniture, in the shower and call your dog. The game is hide and seek and dogs have a blast playing the game.
3. Put him in “down-stay” and walk around him with other things going on in the park or shopping center.
4. Do step number one but in a location where there are people walking between you and your dog. Watch for people coming, put your dog in a stay, and walk across the path or sidewalk. This way you have people walking between you and your

dog. This is a pretty advanced stay exercise so make sure your dog is ready for this one.

Use your imagination and create your own stay games to play with your dog.

Meredith Gage

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