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## **The Wait Command**

I call the wait command a safety cue. It prevents the “door dasher” from running out the door before you do. The “wait” command differs from the “stay” command in that it means do not move forward. It works very well at any doorways around your house or yard, and at the car door. It is a very easy command to teach and you can use it to keep your dog from running loose on the street, or from jumping out of your car into traffic.

I have taken an excerpt from Dr. Patricia McConnell and Aimee Moore’s book “Family Friendly Dog Training.” They have done an excellent job of explaining this simple command.

Turn your body partially toward the door and say “wait” in a clear concise voice, using a quiet comforting tone. Open the door about a foot or so, keeping your eye on your dog. Most dogs try to dash out the instant a door is opened, so be ready to block your dog by stepping in front of him and blocking his access to the great outdoors. Think of it as managing the space around your dog-the message is “that space is not available”. If your dog pauses the slightest bit and you no longer feel that he’s about to dash out, step aside a step. If he still stays in place for just a microsecond, say “okay” and let him trot outside.

The easiest mistake to make is to wait too long, and miss the opportunity to reinforce your dog for hesitating. Concentrate on this split-second timing you’ve been working on, and you’ll be amazed at how much progress you can make in a few sessions.

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