



Stay in 3 Easy Steps

Stay

A clear definition of “Stay” is to remain where placed until asked to do something else or until given a release word, such as “Okay”. There are 3 parts to the stay: Duration, Distance & Distractions. Set a goal for you and your dog, such as staying for 1 minute while you walk 20 feet away. Start by teaching each part separately and keep training sessions to a maximum of about 5 minutes. If your dog breaks a stay, simply ask for the position again and try for a stay that is not as hard, so you achieve success. **Remember to set you dog up for success.**

Duration:

Teach your dog to stay while you are next to him by asking him to sit or lie down and counting to **one** before you mark the behavior saying “Yes” and then give them a tiny food reward. Ask your dog to sit or lie again and this time delay offering the treat for a count of **two**. It will take numerous training sessions to work towards a consistent 5-10 minute stay with you next to your dog. As you repeat, gradually increase the delay in the marker/treat and also vary the time. For example a series of 10 repetitions might look like this **in seconds**: 2,5,8,2,10,9,12,3,6,15

Distance

Once your dog is skilled at a 5 minute stay with you by his side, you can work on distance. It's best to **decrease** duration when you are working on distance. Start by taking **one** step back as your dog waits 1-2 seconds for the marker/treat. Gradually increase the distance until your dog has a solid stay when you walk 10 feet away for just 4-7 seconds. **Gradually** build the duration and distance.

Distractions

Once your dog is skilled at a 15 second stay with you 10 feet away, work on adding mild distractions. Mild will vary from dog to dog. To a ball dog, a ball is not mild. Start with something that is not that interesting to him. Gradually build up to bigger distractions. Remember, achieve success, so don't make it too hard at first. Each success will get you more success. If you dog regresses a little, go back to the stay with you by his side. Work back up to the distractions.

- Plan brief training sessions throughout the day for no more than 2-4 minutes.
- IMPORTANT to Remember in this order: “**Stay**” - “**YES**” - **Treat** - “**Okay**”.
- Always start with a few easy ones to “warm” your dog up.
- Always go back and reward your dog, don't call your dog from this position when teaching it.

