

## Finish

### Finish Cue

1. Begin with your dog sitting in front of you.
2. Use a lure with your left hand to guide your dog to your left side.
3. Then, continuing to lure, bring your luring hand back past your body and step straight back with your left foot. The step allows you to get your hand back far enough for your dog to have room to circle around and also to keep the lure at nose level.
4. Bring your luring hand toward your body and then to your side while you bring your left leg back next to your right leg.
5. Lift the luring hand up slightly and over your dog's nose to guide your dog into a sitting position.
6. Once your dog is sitting, say your reward marker and reward your dog.
7. Once your dog easily and consistently follows the lure and gets to your side facing forward in a sit, add the verbal cue, "Finish"
8. Begin phasing out the lure (now food no longer is in the hand guiding the dog around to your side). Food rewards come after the completion of the cue.
9. Slowly begin to minimize the hand guiding/luring until you can do a smaller hand signal for the cue. This may take some time, so be patient!

### Review Basics and Work in the Heel Position

#### Work on basic obedience cues and practice training sequence for reliability.

1. Give verbal cue
2. Follow verbal cue with hand signal (don't do verbal and visual cues simultaneously)
3. Wait and give your dog time to respond (max 5 seconds)
4. Follow any non-compliance with a verbal no reward marker
5. Use lure if needed (first non-baited hand, then baited if needed but never give reward from baited hand)
6. Use your body: movement or tactile reminders to help you dog and for follow through.

#### Work Basic Obedience Cues in the Heel Position

- Begin practicing sit, look, down, stay, and touch with your dog in the heel position.
- You may need to use luring until your dog gets the idea that the cues are still the same, even with the "different picture." Be sure to fade the lure out as soon as possible.
- Use a hallway or wall to help your dog to use good positioning and not kick the rear end out.
- When out on walks, use a wall or fence to help with positioning.

#### Checklist for Proofing:

1. Don't repeat cues:
  - 1) This includes your dog's name!!! Your dog's name is a cue.
  - 2) Use other sounds and body movement/gestures to help you get and maintain your dog's attention.
  - 3) Use your No Reward Marker - your dog knows the cue, don't let him/her learn to blow it off.

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- 4) Fall back on luring or molding when needed. Or, step away and remove attention for a second or two to reset, then begin again.
  - a. Never give your dog food from a luring hand for known cues.
  - b. If your dog is distracted, getting him to move, or move away from the distraction will be helpful in gaining your dog's attention.
2. Be very clear with your verbal cues and especially with your hand signals.
  - 1) Don't do both at the same time. Say the cue and then follow it with the visual cue.
  - 2) Practice also with just the verbal cue and just the visual cue.
3. Do not use the leash for prompting. This is paramount for off-leash control.
  - 1) Don't pull or yank the leash to get your dog's attention.
  - 2) Don't use the leash to steer your dog.
  - 3) If you want off-leash control, the leash can not be part of the "cue equation." The leash is merely a tool to prevent your dog from leaving.
4. Provide proper motivation.
  - 1) This includes rewards that your dog likes: food (not just dog treats), toys, praise, affection/petting, freedom, play... other dogs, sniffing, etc.
  - 2) Motivation (Rewards and YOU) need to be better than distractions. Take note of your dog's surroundings and know your dog's weaknesses. Be the cookie!

### Rules for Rewards

**Use random schedule of reinforcement or a hierarchy of rewards to build drive and reliability for basic obedience cues (this is for known cues, not new ones).**

No to very Low-Level Distractions:

1. Only give food rewards for great responses. Include praise and affection with high value rewards.
2. For moderate to less than desired responses, reward with praise and/or affection only.
3. To improve response time, use high value rewards for excellent responses, lower value rewards for good responses, and praise for less than desired responses but still compliance.

Low to Moderate Distractions:

1. Give high value rewards for good responses, excellent responses get a jackpot of rewards.
2. Give lower level rewards for good to less than desired responses. Immediately repeat cue if given at this level and give higher rewards for a better response than before.
3. Don't expect too much too soon with distractions. Your dog is young and you need practice being better (more interesting and more rewarding) than the distraction to your dog.

### Set Criteria for Your Reward Marker

You can use your Reward Marker to help build better responses for known cues. Remember, your Reward Marker is just that - a word (or click from clicker) that is followed by a reward. If you have been diligent about using your Reward Marker, use it to your advantage:

1. Designate what response you want from your dog in order to hear the reward marker.

## **Finish**

- 1) For example: a sit within 5 seconds of the cue will get a reward marker and a treat reward. Any response longer than that gets no RM, but does get praise.
2. Once your dog is 90% reliable with that criteria, raise it.
  - 1) Now, instead of allowing 5 seconds, response time for sit is 3 seconds.
3. When you first begin, when a response deserves a RM, the reward is high value. As your dog builds momentum and drive in training, you can use lower value rewards more often, but don't forget to put in high value ones every once in a while as well - your dog is still "in training."