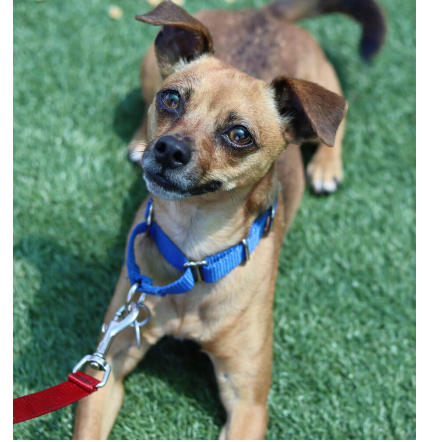


SETTLE ON A MAT

WHY TEACH YOUR DOG TO SETTLE ON A MAT?

Teaching your dog to settle - lie down quietly in a designated spot when asked, sometimes for long periods at a time - is an essential life skill! Settle on a mat prevents your dog from engaging in unwanted behaviors like jumping, counter-surfing, rushing the front door, or getting underfoot. Teaching your dog to settle on cue gives them an “off switch,” and teaches them to regulate their emotions.



HOW TO TEACH IT

- Step 1.** Find a mat that is comfortable for your dog to step on. You can simply put a towel on the floor. Position the mat in front of you.
- Step 2.** Use a treat to lure your dog onto the mat. Click as soon as they step on the mat, then release the treat.
- Step 3.** Toss a treat away from the mat to reset your dog.
- Step 4.** Pause after they eat the reset treat. Most dogs will want to return to the mat because it's close to you. This allows you to fade the lure.
- Step 5.** Click when your dog steps on the mat, then offer a treat. As they eat the treat, click, then treat 1-2 more times.
- Step 6.** Reset by tossing a treat away. Repeat the above steps, pausing between treats on the mat. Doing so gives your dog a chance to choose to sit or lie down, and also builds duration.
- Step 7.** Repeat the steps above, but position yourself away from the mat. Continue to offer a click, then a treat on the mat as a reward. Fuse your release cue or toss a treat away to reset.

ADDING A CUE

- Step 1.** Lure your dog onto the mat and into a down position.
- Step 2.** Use your release cue to reset your dog, then repeat Step 1.
- Step 3.** Toss a treat away from the mat to reset your dog.
- Step 4.** On the third repetition, use an unbaited hand. Begin to fade this into a hand signal into a finger point towards the mat. Repeat this until your dog readily follows the cue.
- Step 5.** Teach a verbal cue like “settle” or “bed” by saying your cue, pausing for one second, then using your hand signal. Repeat this until your dog readily responds after the verbal cue.

BUILDING DURATION

- Step 1.** Build duration by pausing for one second after your dog lies down on the mat before delivering the click, then treat.
- Step 2.** Continue to click-then-treat every few seconds as your dog stays in place.
- Step 3.** On each repetition, vary the length of the pause before the next click.
- Step 4.** Continue to offer click-then-treats on the mat, and use your release cue to reset.