



## Teaching the "Place" Command

The place command is a simple, yet useful behavior that is well worth the time to teach to your dog. The place command can help with issues such as barging out of and barking at the door, and can also be a useful command during dinner, while relaxing and watching television, or while greeting visitors at the door.

Before you start with your dog you will want to select the place that you will be using for training. The place can be a mat, rug, or dog bed that is large enough for the dog to lie down comfortably and keep all four feet on. The place should be a different color and texture than the floor that it will be placed on.

We begin teaching the place by simply luring the dog to the place with food or treats. Once the dog is readily going to the place, we will introduce the command. The dog must go to the place and put all four paws on before being rewarded. Repeat this process until your dog fully understands what is expected.



As we are teaching the place command we begin to introduce the "release" command, we use the word "Okay". You can choose any word you would like as long as you are consistent. We introduce the command "Okay" as a release at this point in the training to develop an implied stay. Our "Okay" command is also paired with a pat on the head simultaneously and should be applied before the dog moves from place. The command doesn't mean much to the dog at this stage of training, but will gain

importance later when teaching the stay.

The stay portion of the training is implied. To teach this we simply continue to reinforce the stay on place with food or treats as we gradually move away from the dog. As the dog stays longer, we continue to reinforce the behavior to make it stronger. During this phase of the training, we will utilize our previously learned "release" command as a signal to the dog that they no longer have to remain on place. If the dog breaks the command, simply take them back to the place and repeat the command. Never pull the dog off place or force them away from place as this is extremely confusing. Instead, you can simply use your voice to interest the dog elsewhere in the room.

Once the dog has developed a consistent place and stay behavior, it's time to add in our three D's. The three D's are distance, duration and distractions. Distance refers to the distance away from the place that we can send the dog from and have them consistently go to their place. Duration refers to how long the dog will remain on the place command without breaking it. Remember that puppies will have a shorter attention span and asking them to stay for long periods of time will never lead to success. Distractions should also be introduced to "proof" the behavior. The dog should remain on place with people eating nearby, walking past them and even during a knock at the door.

The place command will take some time and effort before you begin to see consistent and reliable behaviors from your dog. Be patient and positive and you will likely find that the place commands is one of the most useful commands you can teach your dog.

Learn more at [www.highlancanine.com](http://www.highlancanine.com)