

ELEMENT DOG TRAINING

Stay

- Definition
 - Teaches a dog to maintain a selected position until released
- Purpose
 - Stationing behaviors are safety behaviors to prevent dogs to approaching items or locations they shouldn't
- Process
 - Position yourself in front of the dog
 - Request a Sit or a Down
 - Wait to reward the behavior – perform a sit stay/down stay. Start with just 1 second and build slowly, as little as 1 additional second at a time.
 - It can help to provide a hand signal, like a “stop” hand sign – hand open, palm forward facing the dog
 - Once you are able to get a 5-10 second stay, start adding in the command “Stay” and a release word to end the behavior like “Free” or “Break”. Continue to slowly increase the duration.
 - It's key that the command is not introduced until the dog will reliably stay long enough to be able to implement a release cue or the dog may learn they can decide when the behavior ends.
 - Remember to **mark and reward** in the “stay” position and not for the release
 - Build up to at least a one-minute stay before adding in distance and distractions.
 - Keep the criteria simple and attempt to change only one variable at a time when increasing the difficulty
- [YouTube video Stay](https://www.youtube.com/watch?index=2&t=0s&list=PLkS7NozLMajtRrn6Z6j27kEhF4gj0f0PW&v=DPNz6reMVXY&app=desktop)
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- Common mistakes when teaching a stay:
 - Pushing the criteria to fast (time, duration, or distractions). Every time the dog breaks when not being released they are learning they can decide to break stay.
 - Not implementing a release word. If the dog doesn't know how the behavior ends, they will learn they get to decide when it ends.
 - Attempting to teach this when the dog is in a very high energy state. Stays are best taught after the dog has had the opportunity to burn mental and physical energy first.

