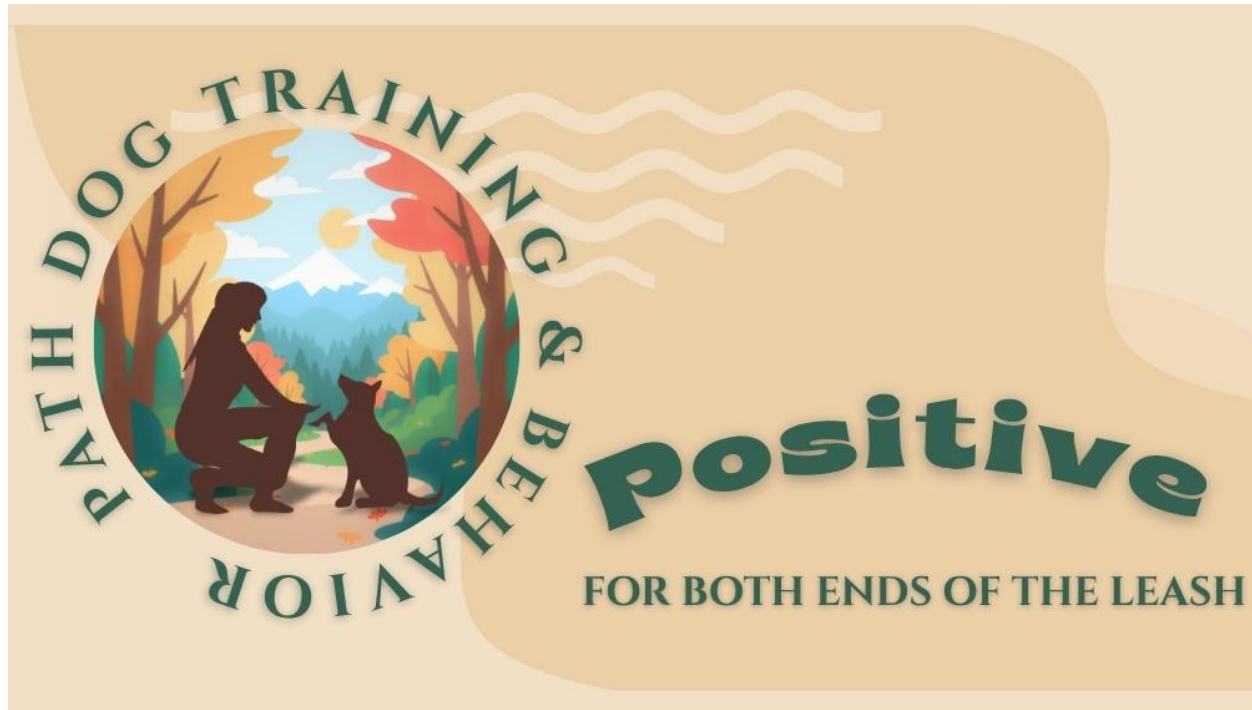


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LEVEL 2 OBEDIENCE WORKBOOK



Introduction

This Workbook includes instructions for the cues that I generally cover as Level 2 or intermediate obedience cues. I recommend these for puppies and newly-rescued dogs after completing Level 1. These cues are fabulous in their own right, but they also help dogs progress to more advanced training.

My hope is to provide my private-session clients with enough reminders in an easy-to-follow format that they can practice their homework with relative ease. If you're having trouble, you can [email me](#) for a reminder at our next session or book a Zoom session to get more specialized instructions.

1 | Auto Sit-to-Greet

Applications:

1. Finishing a recall
2. Stopping jumping up on guests/visitors/strangers/when you come home
3. CGC test item
4. Required for therapy dogs
5. “Say please” (see #8)

Instructions:

1. Ensure your dog already knows how to sit in front of you.
2. Toss a treat away to get your dog away from you.
3. Walk up to your dog without doing or saying anything else.
4. Wait for them to offer a Sit.
5. When they sit, yes/treat.
6. Toss a treat away to reset and repeat.
7. When your dog sits without pause, they understand the game. You can take a break and try again with someone else, or somewhere else, or on a walk with you (still not with strangers yet).
8. When your dog is consistent with you, you can use this as a way to get your dog to politely wait for their food bowl, treats, toys, play time, petting, etc. This is often referred to as getting a dog to “say please.”

2 | Door Manners

Applications:

1. Helps the dog learn impulse control
2. Starts a walk on a more thoughtful, handler-focused vibe, helping prevent/stop leash-pulling and overarousal.
3. Prevents/fixes door dashing
4. Reinforces stay & release with a high-level distraction
5. Reinforces Auto-Sit with a high-level distraction

Instructions:

1. Prerequisites: Sit, Stay, Release (not around a door), and Leave It.
2. Approach the door with your dog on-leash, ensuring the dog is on a side where they won't be in the way of a door opening (example: door swings left, dog on your right).
3. Wait for your dog to sit, yes/treat.
 - a. If it's too hard, you can prime them by approaching and asking the dog to sit 3-5x first.
 - b. It's ok to wait a long time. This is your dog's brain working!

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4. Open the door as if your dog is going to be perfect. Don't do it super slowly or as if they're going to fail, they can tell the difference. If they stay, yes/treat.
 - a. If they get up, close the door. Repeat this until they stay, then yes/treat.
 - b. If they get up and fix it by going back to the Sit on their own, you can still yes/treat that, too.
 5. Wait for your dog to give you eye contact, like with a default Leave It, then release to go out the door.
 - a. If your dog cannot think of giving you eye contact, this is important feedback to practice Leave It with more things besides food.
 - b. It's ok to prime the eye contact by saying Leave It 3-5x before seeing if they can do it without the cue.
 6. Once on the other side, your dog should turn to face you, sit, and wait patiently while you close/lock your door (as needed).
 - a. It is ok to prime this by asking your dog to sit 3-5x before seeing if they can offer this without assistance.
 - b. PLEASE do not skip this important step. It helps prevent forging ahead after being released.
 7. Release your dog to go on a walk, rewarding them for being next to you/looking at you almost immediately to prevent the "pulling yo-yo".
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3 | Drop It

Applications:

1. Part of teaching fetch, especially with something like a Chuck-It
2. Good for dangerous/stolen items your dog has in their mouth
3. Prerequisite for Give (drop it in my hand)
4. Good for tasks/tricks, such as putting laundry or toys in a basket and trash in a bin

Instructions:

1. While your dog has something in their mouth, offer them something in trade: a treat or a favorite toy.
 2. When your dog spits out the original object, say "yes" and give them the trade item.
 3. When that is fast and fluent, you can add the cue "Drop it" or "Drop" as you present the trade item.
 4. After several repetitions where the dog is successful, you can fade the visual of the trade item and simply say "drop it", then yes/reward when they do.
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4 | Leave It

Applications:

1. Prevent dog from picking up something toxic
2. Prevent dog from stealing another dog's toy
3. Prevent dog from being further distracted by something or someone
4. Prevent dog from investigating something off-limits, such as at a store
5. Fixing coprophagia (poop-eating) or munching on landscaping elements
6. Help dog process feelings of frustration

Instructions:

1. Begin by presenting your dog with a closed hand full of treats. Allow your dog to pester you for as long as they want to try to get the treats out. The longer they pester, the higher their drive. If it seems to take a very long time, you may want to start off with something less valuable, like their kibble perhaps.
2. When your dog stops pestering you, even for a second, mark & reward FROM SOMEWHERE ELSE as you remove your hand. Your dog is leaving your hand, so do not open your hand and let them eat one of the treats you have. Drop one on the floor, or feed from the other hand.
3. Repeat until your dog won't pester you at all. Now it's time to ask for eye contact. You can breathe loudly/strangely (but not blowing on your dog) to make your dog look at you as if to say, "Why did your face make that noise?" You do NOT want to cue a Watch Me or Look At Me behavior. We want this to be as organic from the dog's perspective as possible.
4. Repeat until you can present your fist full of treats and your dog will leave it alone AND look at you without any assistance noises. At this point, you can start to name the cue, "Leave It" as your dog looks at you.
5. To generalize this, make it harder by:
 - a. Presenting your handful of treats with an open hand. If your dog goes for it, close your hand. When they back off, open your hand. When your dog can leave your open hand alone, mark & reward.
 - b. Switching hands or switching rooms in your house.
 - c. Using both hands. Drop a treat from the hand your dog doesn't pester when you mark & reward.
 - d. Moving your hand(s) around.
 - e. Putting the treats on the floor underneath your hand.
 - f. Lifting your hand off the treats on the floor. Cover them back up if your dog goes for them.
 - g. Gently dropping a treat on the ground near, but not next to your dog.
 - h. Tossing a treat away to get their prey-chase drive engaged.
 - i. Practicing outside, using other potentially valuable objects, such as toys, sticks, rocks, etc.

5 | Give It

Applications:

1. Last part of a formal retrieve in obedience competitions
2. Great for service dogs who need to bring their owners things, such as shoes, keys, phone, medication, water bottle, etc.
3. My preferred way to play tug
4. Address mild resource guarding

Instructions:

1. Prerequisite: Make sure your dog already knows Drop It.
 2. When your dog is about to drop something, position your hand so that it lands in your hand – or you can take hold of the object before asking for Drop It.
 3. You want to pattern this a few times, so the dog starts aiming for your hand automatically.
 4. When the dog is naturally aiming for your open hand, say “Give It” or “Give” right before they drop it in your hand, then yes/reward when they do.
 5. Since I like to use this with tug, a game of tug can be the reward, or a treat, or a favorite toy.
 6. Then you can start to say “Give It” as they are returning to you, so they know in advance what to do, sort of like Leave It.
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6 | Heel

Applications:

1. Required for Rally-Obedience, Obedience, and service dogs
2. Helpful for CGC testing and therapy dogs
3. Great foundational skill for dogs who are reactive and lunge/pull on the leash
4. Handy for walking in crowded areas: farmers markets, malls, group walks, etc.

Instructions:

1. Teach Auto-Sit, Watch Me, and Loose-leash Walking first.
 2. Make sure your dog is comfortable sitting next to you, facing the way you’re facing.
 3. Have your dog get into position by luring them. If they’re off-leash, you can lure them around behind you so they sit next to you. If they’re on-leash, take a HUGE step backwards as you lure them behind you, then let them pivot towards you to step into position beside you. Ensure they can comfortably stay in this position before proceeding.
 4. When they are beside you, ask them to sit. Yes/treat.
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5. Repeat #3-4 until they will sit in position without a cue.
 6. If your dog doesn't like to be close to you, let them practice getting into position a little bit away for a few days, then try it against a wall so they can't get away from you.
 7. You want to practice this on both your right and left sides, as being able to walk on either side is a huge perk in the real world. The only exception is for obedience-based sports when the dog must walk on the left. For the left side, I say "heel"; and for the right side, I say "side". Generally, though, I do it based on a hand signal, patting the front part of my hip on the side I want the dog to heel on.
 8. Once your dog is in position, ask them for Watch Me, and encourage them to walk with you while they look at you. Reward often in the beginning, and keep it short. Ideally, next to a wall so the dog can't go far away.
 9. It's ok if the dog looks away to see where they're going, as long as they reconnect the eye contact within a couple seconds. Constant eye contact, especially in the beginning, is unusual and needs to be built up with practice.
 10. Release with "ok", so your dog knows when they're allowed to stop staring at you.
 11. When your dog is consistently walking with eye contact, you can start to put it on cue "heel" or "side", incorporating the hand signals to aid this.
 12. Gradually build up duration and distractions as your dog begins to understand.
 13. Add in speed changes: walk, jog, walk slowly, sprint, etc.
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7 | Mat

Applications:

1. Excellent to teach long Stays by providing physical, visual boundaries to stay within
2. Helps keep your dog clean from a dirty floor at a cafe or park
3. Helps keep the floor clean from your dog's treats and chews
4. Gives nervous dogs a "security blanket" that smells like home, treats, and family
5. Teaches highly-aroused dogs how to calm down and focus
6. Usually paired with Dr. Karen Overall's [Relaxation Protocol](#) to help with allowing guests into the house, separation anxiety, teaching principles, such as patience and object permanence, etc.
7. Required for service dogs training for public access

Instructions:

1. I use shaping to teach Mat work. So I mark & reward the dog putting 1 paw on, 2 paws on, 3 paws on, until all 4 paws are on. Always reward the dog by placing the treat ON THE MAT, not in their mouth directly. The mat is the source of the goodies, not us.
2. Release the dog by saying "ok" and tossing a treat away in any direction. In the beginning, toss in the same direction; but once the dog understands, it is important to vary the direction of the dog's approach to/from the mat for generalization and deeper understanding of the task to target the mat with all 4 paws.

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3. I repeat this until the dog consistently targets the mat with all 4 paws.
 4. Then I will wait for the dog to relax, giving a yes/treat for looking down, sitting, lying down, and ultimately settling on one hip.
 5. Repeat until the dog will both target the mat with all 4 paws and lie down, ideally in a Settle position on one hip.
 6. Then begin introducing Stay by rewarding every 1-2 seconds for maintaining position. Do this just a few times before releasing.
 7. Add further duration using near distractions. Move your body without leaving your dog, lift a foot, then the other, raise an arm, then the other, twist from your hips, clap your hands gently once or twice, look left and right, etc. Do a handful of these challenges, rewarding on the mat after each one, before releasing.
 8. Finally, add duration by adding distance and beginning to lean left, right, and behind you, then turning around, then starting to walk away, taking steps backward, left, and right, etc.
 9. If at any point your dog gets up, immediately stand in front of the mat and wait for your dog to fix it. DO NOT GIVE A CUE.
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8 | On or Off

Applications:

1. Getting a dog off a person, chair, table, sofa, bed, etc. (teach Release in advance)
2. Getting a dog to stop counter-surfing (teach Leave It in advance)
3. Getting a dog on a scale, a grooming table, in the car, etc.

Instructions:

1. Lure your dog onto the object with food.
 - a. If your dog is reluctant or if your puppy is incapable of hopping up, you can gently place them here, or walk them up/over a few times to get over their fear.
 - b. For taller things, such as SUVs, grooming/exam tables, human beds, etc, I recommend providing a stool or some stairs if the puppy is unable to make the jump yet. Practice the stairs without the object first – combining two novel items at once is often overwhelming.
2. As they jump on, say “on” and yes/treat
3. Release them with “ok”; and as they jump off, say “off” and yes/treat
4. Depending on what the issue is, you can create higher drive to solve an issue.
 - a. For example, if your dog is afraid of the weight scale at the vet, reward them with frequent jackpots for even putting 1 foot on, then 2, then all 4, etc. Reward them for staying a few times in a row, then release and don’t reward while they’re off at all.

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- b. If you want your dog not to counter-surf, you can entice your dog to get on (put their front paws up on the counter), then be very quiet and boring until they lose interest and get off on their own, then jackpot heartily. If you repeat this a few times, they usually stop being willing to put their paws up anymore, because they only get rewarded for staying off. You can practice with the food items that were tempting them, but I recommend putting away everything tempting/edible for at least 3 weeks. With practice, over time, the dog will stop trying to counter-surf altogether, IF the rewards are removed.
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9 | Settle

Applications:

1. Can be used for long Downs in any situation
2. Can be automatic (dog settles after no other cues are given within 30 seconds of holding still)
3. Great for pets and service dogs in public places like cafes
4. Great for teaching easily-aroused dogs to relax and enjoy it

Instructions:

1. Get your dog at least somewhat tired, so they will want to lie down naturally. Panting from physical and/or mental exertion is a great sign.
 2. Sit down somewhere and wait. Don't say "settle" or "down" or anything else. You may want to keep your dog on-leash, so they don't quit and walk away.
 3. After a while, the dog may sit, or stretch, or look at the floor, implying they are on their way to relaxing. Mark & reward each of these until, ultimately, your dog will lie down of their own accord.
 4. JACKPOT that first success, and possibly the next few, if the first attempt was slow in coming and hard to get.
 5. Stand up, walk away a few steps, and return to exactly the same spot to repeat.
 6. Your dog understands what to do (in this place) when you sit down and they immediately lie down.
 7. Now a Settle is different from a Down in that the dog will rotate onto one hip. If your dog does this naturally, you're all set. If your dog is lying straight on its back feet, you will need to tilt them onto one hip by luring their nose with a treat toward the hip closest to you. They will naturally lean away from you as part of the stretch this makes.
 8. Once your dog automatically settles, you can call the session done, or you can put it on cue by saying "settle" just as the dog leans onto one hip, then mark & reward.
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10 | Watch Me

Applications:

1. Redirect your dog's focus to you
2. Counter-condition sustained eye contact. (Dogs find this rude, at best; and nervous dogs find it terrifyingly threatening.)
3. Great for teaching a competition-level heel position, which can be VERY handy for reactive dogs who are set off by sight of their triggers
4. Very handy for proofing Stay and getting dogs to ignore sounds as distractions
5. Helpful in a vet or groomer setting to help the dog hold still for an exam or treatment

Instructions:

1. Teach Leave It first.
2. Put treats in both hands.
3. Align both hands on either side of your head.
4. Your dog will look back and forth between the treat hands, then eventually look at your eyes. Mark, bring both hands down, and reward.
5. Repeat until the dog can sustain eye contact for a second or two before you mark & reward.
6. Put it on cue. I like to say "Watch Me", but some people say "Eyes" or "Focus", etc.
 - a. Once it's on cue with your hands, then you can fade using your hands and keep them down/neutral.
7. Then begin proofing it. See if you can move your hands away, and your dog can come back to your eyes. See if your dog can do it in new environments (low-level distraction first), etc.