



## Down

Down is a great behavior for times when you need a little extra control. It is harder for a dog to jump up from a down than from a sit or stand. Down can also make your dog less intimidating to children or people who might be nervous around dogs.

### Capturing

Mark (“yes”) and reward with a treat any time your dog lies down on his own. If you reward this behavior when it occurs naturally, your dog will begin to lie down more often.

### Luring

Get your dog to sit and then very slowly move a treat from his nose down to the floor between his front feet. As your dog's nose goes down, his body should follow. As soon as his elbows hit the ground, mark (“yes”) and give your dog the treat. Once he follows the treat easily three times in a row, try luring with your empty hand. If your dog goes down, be sure to mark (“yes”) and give him a treat so he doesn't learn to do it only when you have a treat in your hand.

### Adding the word

Once you can predict when your dog will lie down, you can begin to add the word “down.” Say “down” as your dog lies down to start with and then gradually start to say the word just before he lies down. Eventually, you can say the word and your dog should lie down. If he doesn't, avoid saying “down” again. Instead, use your hand motion to lure the dog into position. Be sure to mark and reward your dog every time he lies down on cue until he is doing it reliably.

### Troubleshooting

- If your dog stands up as you are luring, you may have the treat too far away. Make sure you are moving the treat straight down from your dog's nose so it ends up between his front feet.
- If your dog doesn't follow the treat all the way to the ground, you may have moved too fast. Move the treat very slowly so your dog can follow it all the way down.
- If your dog gets stuck with his head down, but his body doesn't go down, try moving the treat down the side of one of his front legs instead of straight down in front.
- Some dogs are easier to lure from a stand. To do this, move the treat down and back toward the dog's chest. The dog should put his elbows down and then his backside will follow. Mark (“yes”) and give your dog a treat when he gets all the way down.
- Another way to lure down is to sit on the floor and bend one knee up to make an arch. Lure your dog under your knee and he may lie down to get to the treat.
- You may need to shape the down by rewarding small steps in the process. First mark and reward your dog for lowering his head to the ground a few times. Then mark and reward when one front foot moves slightly forward. Gradually wait a little longer each time until your dog goes all the way down.
- Sometimes it is helpful to hold several treats in your hand so you can reward your dog along the way and continue to lure without having to start over again.