

## Beginner Obedience Class

For the dog just getting started in obedience, exercises include:

- Heel on Leash.
- Heel and hand signals
- Stand for Examination
- Recall
- Stay, Sit, Down
- Long Sit (3 minute)
- Long Down (3 minute)
- Greet dogs safely
- Be approached by a woman and a man.



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### Getting Started

To start off on the right foot (and paw!) with your pup, he'll need to know what you expect from him. This will make him feel secure in his ability to meet the goals laid out for him going forward.

The foundation of training should be based on positive reinforcement. Positive reinforcement is the process of giving a dog (or person!) a reward to encourage the behavior you want, like getting a pay check for going to work. The idea is not to bribe the behavior but to train it using something your dog values. Avoid using punishment such as leash corrections or yelling. Punishment can cause a dog to become confused and unsure about what is being asked of him. It is important to remember that we can't expect dogs to know what they don't know – just like you wouldn't expect a 2-year-old child to know how to tie his shoes. Patience will go a long way in helping your new puppy learn how to behave.

Reinforcement can be anything your dog likes. Most people use small pieces of a "high value" food for [training treats](#) — something special — such as dried liver or even just their kibble. Lavish praise or the chance to play with a favorite toy can also be used as a reward. Dogs must be taught to like praise. If you give the dog a treat while saying "Good dog!" in a happy voice, he will learn that praise is a good thing and can be a reward. Some dogs also enjoy petting. Food is often the most convenient way to reinforce behavior.

[Puppies](#) can begin very simple training starting as soon as they come home, usually around 8 weeks old. Always keep [training sessions brief](#) — just 5 to 10 minutes — and always end on a positive note. If your puppy is having trouble learning a new behavior, end the session by reviewing something he already knows and give him plenty of praise and a big reward for his success. If your puppy gets bored or frustrated, it will ultimately be counterproductive to learning.