



Long Stays are really just adding duration to a position. So, prior to beginning any work on teaching a "Stay," make sure your dog is reliable in the intended position: **Sit, Down, or Stand**. Let's go to work.

Training the Down Stay

For criteria, the dog should simply be in a down. Since he is going to be there for a while, let him pick what position is most comfortable for him.

1. Sit on the floor in front of the dog.
2. Cue the down, and rapid fire 3 treats into his mouth while his elbows stay down. Deliver the treats low to the ground.
3. While the dog is still in the Down, give your release cue and toss a treat forward.
4. Repeat with a 1 second pause between the 3 treats.
5. Repeat with a 2 second pause between the 3 treats. Then 3 seconds, etc.
6. Continue to increase the overall duration of the Down, by either increasing the number of treats or the time between treats.
7. Now do it again with you standing up.

Eventually we will need to fade the treats during the stay, and the primary reinforcer will come on the release. When doing this keep in mind:

1. Use calm reinforcement on the down. We want the dog feeling relaxed, so calm praise and food rewards will work best.
2. Increase the number and/or value of reinforcers proportional to the length of time the dog is working.

Training the Sit Stay

We need more specific criteria for the Sit Stay. The dog should be more enthusiastic, sitting, front feet still, head up and straight, chest between elbows, and preferably hips square. Sit box (ie platform) training will come in handy here, since it is precise. Deliver your reinforcers and cues over the dog and even behind the dog. Reset the dog between every sit.

1. Cue the sit. When the front paws are still, click and deliver the treat (or toy) above the dog's head. He might even jump up to get the treat – if so, that's fine.
2. Increase the duration of the time the front paws are still. Work up to a solid 30 seconds.
3. You've been rewarding up high, so there is a good chance he's holding his head up. Click it and reward overhead.
4. Continue to build duration in gradual increments. . If the dog breaks criteria (moves his feet), simply reset and start over.
5. Now, chain the behavior with the sit and a hand touch. Cue the Sit, and when you like what you see, present a hand target overhead and cue the dog to Touch or Target. The dog should jump up to touch your hand. Click and treat the Touch. Make sure the front feet are still when you cue the Touch.
6. Increase duration between the Sit and the Touch - clicking and treating the Touch.