

Random Down

Purpose:

The **Random Down** teaches your dog to go into a **Down** position when your dog is not paying attention to you. You will use this behavior when you need your dog immediately in a controlled position and she is not near you.

An example would be if your dog is off sniffing a bush and a car is approaching. It is not safe to call your dog because she could run into the path of the car. Instead, you will put your dog in a **Random Down** until the danger has passed.

Several things distinguish the **Random Down** from the **Down**.

1. You will not say your dog's name first.
2. Your dog will not be looking at you when you say "Down".
3. Your dog will not be by your side.

The goal is to have your dog do a **Random Down** at a distance of 15 or more feet.

Verbal Signal: Yes
Non-Verbal Signal: No
Need to Know: Down on a verbal signal.

Steps for Teaching Random Down:

Step 1 – Make sure your dog will do a **Down** with only a verbal signal before you begin teaching the **Random Down**.

Step 2 – The next step is to teach your dog to respond to the **Down** signal when she is not looking at you. Your dog will be near you during this step. When your dog is not looking at you say, "Down". Do not use your dog's name. If your dog goes down where she was standing, **Click/Treat**.

After giving the **Down** signal, if your dog does not go down, but remains in the same place, do not repeat the signal. Wait to see if she will eventually go down without walking. If she does, **Jackpot** and end the training session.

If your dog begins walking after you say "Down", give your **Try Again Signal**.

- a) If she is not looking at you, you may give the **Down** signal again.
– OR –
- b) If she is looking at you, wait for her not to look at you, and then give the **Down** signal again.

Random Down continued

Savvy Helpful Hint

If after hearing the **Down** signal, your dog turns around and then goes down, **Click/Treat** her. If after hearing the **Down** signal, your dog turns around and then starts walking forward say your **Try Again** signal and follow the directions in Step 2.

If your dog always seems to walk after you say “Down” try this. Wait for a time when your dog is not looking at you and is standing still. Then give the **Down** signal.

Step 3 – Repeat Step 2 for several training sessions. Keep your dog near you, but practice with your dog in different places around you – for example, in front of you, by your side, and behind you.

Step 4 – Your dog must be successful in the previous Steps before moving to this step. Your dog should respond to the **Down** signal when she is not looking at you and when she is in different places around you. If your dog does this, the next step is to add distance between you and your dog. Increase the distance gradually – a foot or less at a time.

If your dog does not go down at the new distance, shorten the distance until she is successful. Then train at a new distance. To get greater distances, occasionally **Click/Treat** at shorter distances to keep the exercise fun for your dog.

Remember, your dog should not be looking at you when you say “Down”.

Training Tip

At first, practice this exercise inside your home. When you practice indoors sometimes practice with the leash on your dog. When you begin training the **Random Down** outdoors, for safety, have a leash or a long-line on your dog unless you are in an enclosed area.

Savvy Helpful Hint

It is important that your dog is not looking at you when you tell her “Down”. Remember if you use your **Try Again** signal, you must wait for your dog to look away from you before you say “Down”.

Step 5 – Once your dog will do a **Random Down** at distance of 6 feet, the next step is to add a **Stay**. Give your dog the **Random Down** signal. After she lies down tell her to **Stay**. Wait several seconds. If your dog is still in the **Down** position, **Click/Treat**. Gradually increase the time your dog remains on a **Stay**.

Random Down continued

Training Tip

There are two different ways to release your dog from the **Random Down Stay**. You should practice each of these methods separately. Your dog should be able to do both.

- a) While your dog is several feet from you on a **Stay**, you may **Click/Treat** and allow her to return to you.
– OR –
- b) While your dog is on a **Stay**, you may walk towards her. Once you are next to her and she is still in the **Down** position you may **Click/Treat**. This is the safest way to end the **Stay** and the method you might use the most in a real life situation.