

Settle 1

Purpose:

The **Settle** exercise teaches your dog to lie down on a mat or rug. This exercise is useful in managing your dog's behavior both at home and away. A mat can be taken with you wherever you go and it provides your dog a comfortable and familiar place on which to lie. Choose a mat or rug that is the right size for your dog. The mat should be easy to fold up and carry.

Verbal Signal: Yes

Non-Verbal Signal: Optional

Steps for Teaching Settle:

Step 1 – Place the mat on the floor. Lure your dog across the mat with some food in your hand. **Click** your dog when any foot touches the mat.

Training Tip

After you **Click** your dog for stepping on the mat, feed her the **Treat** so she must walk off the mat to eat it. By doing this, your dog is off the mat and you are ready to repeat Step 1.

Step 2 – Repeat Step 1 a few times until your dog stands with all four feet on the mat.

Step 3 – Once your dog consistently walks onto the mat using a food lure, it is time not to use a lure. Instead, hold the food in your hand while keeping your hand close to your waist. **Click/Treat** any attempt to walk onto the mat. Repeat until your dog will walk onto the mat with all four feet.

Step 4 – The next step is to have your dog walk onto the mat and sit. As in the previous step, have your dog walk onto the mat. Do not click for standing on the mat. Instead, see if your dog offers a **Sit**. Do not give the signal for **Sit**. Be patient and wait for your dog to offer the behavior. When she sits, **Click/Treat**.

If your dog walks off the mat before sitting, repeat Step 3 a few more times.

Step 5 – Once your dog consistently sits on the mat, you will teach her to lie down on the mat. Get your dog to walk onto the mat and **Sit**. When she sits, do not **Click/Treat**. Instead, verbally praise her. Then lure her into a **Down** position. When she lies down on the mat, **Click/Treat**.

Settle 1 continued

Training Tip

If at first your dog does not go all the way into the **Down** position, **Click/Treat** for any movement towards the ground. Examples are a dip of the head, the legs starting to bend, etc. Continue to lure toward the ground until your dog lies completely on the mat.

If it is difficult to bend over and lure your dog into a down position, bring your dog up to your level by putting the mat and dog on a bed, a couch, or a sturdy table.

- Step 6 – Once your dog easily lures into a **Down**, see if she understands to lie down without the lure. Have your dog walk onto the mat. Wait to see if she will offer the **Down**. When she lies down, **Click/Treat**. If she walks off the mat before lying down, repeat Step 5 a few more times.

Savvy Helpful Hint

Each time you **Click**, feed your dog the **Treat** so she must walk off the mat to eat it. Additionally, move around the mat each time so that you stand on a different side of the mat for each repetition.

- Step 7 – When your dog moves onto the mat and lies down without being lured, it is time to add a signal to the behavior. Examples of signals are Settle, Rug, Mat, Relax, Chill Out, Siesta, Park It, etc. Do not use the signal **Down**.

Pair the signal with the action of lying down. Do not say anything when your dog walks onto the mat. Wait until your dog begins to lie down and then say the signal. When your dog completely lies down on the mat, **Click/Treat**. Pair the signal with the behavior for a few training sessions.

- Step 8 – Next, test the signal to see if your dog understands what to do. With your dog standing next you and not on the mat, give your signal. If your dog walks onto the mat and lies down – **Click, Jackpot**, and end the training session.

After giving the signal, if your dog remains next to you instead of walking on the mat be patient. As long as she is paying attention to you, wait to see if she can figure out what to do. If she walks away from the mat or lies down beside the mat, repeat Step 7 a few more times.