

Teaching Puppies Basics of Secondary Cues

- Practice in many locations before moving onto the next level.
- Puppies are ready to move to the next level when they are consistently performing behavior in various locations, with varied distractions, and have built up duration with behaviors.
- Be sure not to repeat cues when asking for a behavior or when praising the dog e.g. “Good Sit.”

Touch:

1. Hold your hand sideways and present an open palm to your puppy. They should touch your hand with their nose (no teeth, no tongue).
2. Click and treat the moment that your puppy touches your hand with a closed mouth.
3. This cue will later transfer to having the dog push buttons and light switches for a client.
4. No over the head touch. A slight raise off of the front feet is ok, but no jumping for a “Touch”.

Rest:

1. Hold out a flat palm and use a piece of kibble to lure the puppy’s chin into your palm.
2. Deliver the treat (with your other hand) while your hand is making contact.
3. As your puppy progresses with this cue it can be transferred to your lap or feet.
4. Puppy holds “Rest” until cued “All Done”, duration is built in.

Under:

1. Using a piece of kibble initially, lure the puppy into a "Down" position under your chair or legs (if sitting on a bench).
2. Fade the food lure and use "Touch" to guide your puppy into place as needed.
3. Your puppy should hold “Down” until given an “All Done” or “Let’s Go” cue, even if the raiser stands up.
4. Once the puppy is offering the desired behavior without a lure, add the verbal cue “Under” prior to the hand signal.

Fix:

1. While your puppy is standing still, gently move the leash so it is between their front legs.
2. Apply a small amount of pressure on the leash while it is making contact with the back of the puppy’s front paw.
3. Click and treat as soon as the puppy shifts their weight away from this leg or lifts the leg/paw up.
4. As you progress with this cue you can arrange it in a more organic way by allowing the leash to drag slightly while walking and encouraging the puppy to “Fix” when the leash becomes tangled between their legs.
5. Be sure to practice with both front feet!



Hup/Off:

Find a low surface (approximately 12-18") when first teaching this cue.

1. Using a small amount of leash pressure, gently pat the surface to encourage the puppy to jump onto it.
2. If necessary you can also utilize motion to help (walking toward the surface) but this should be quickly faded.
3. Once the puppy is on the surface you can apply a small amount of leash pressure to encourage the puppy to jump back to the ground.
4. Do not use food lures to teach your dog to jump onto or off of a surface.
5. Once the dog is performing the behavior, add the verbal cue "Hup" prior to applying any pressure or hand patting. Repeat 2-3 times and fade the pressure and hand pat.
6. Similarly, once the dog is performing the "Off" behavior, add the verbal cue "Off" prior to applying any pressure. Repeat 2-3 times and fade the pressure.

Paws:

Once your puppy knows "Hup" and "Off", you can begin working on "Paws".

1. Bring your dog to a low surface (approximately 12-18") and gently pat the surface while applying gentle leash pressure in the opposite direction, away from the surface.
2. Your puppy should put their paws on the surface rather than jumping with their whole body.
3. If you find that your puppy continues to jump onto the surface rather than just putting their paws up, you might need to step back slightly.
4. Eventually both the leash pressure and hand pat should fade away.
5. Once your puppy is able to perform "Paws" on a horizontal surface, begin to transfer the cue to the wall.
6. You can transfer this cue to "Paws" on the wall by asking for the behavior and patting the wall at about the height of their nose.
7. Once the dog is performing the behavior, add the verbal cue "Paws" prior to applying any pressure or hand patting. Repeat 2-3 times and fade the pressure and hand pat.

Side:

1. Using gentle leash pressure, guide your puppy from a "Heel" position to your right side by moving the leash in front of your body.
2. Move out of position from the puppy and repeat.
3. Repeat 2-3 times and use a hand motion to guide the puppy to the "Side" position.
4. Once the puppy is performing the desired behavior, add the verbal cue "Side" prior to the hand motion or leash pressure.

Utilizing a platform on your right side greatly aids in the teaching of this cue. Eventually you should be able to fade the leash pressure and your puppy should pivot in front of your body into the "Side" position.



Back:

1. Begin by bringing your dog front and rewarding 2-3 times for them standing in this position (if your puppy naturally sits you may need to take a step or two back to encourage them to stand up).
2. Once your puppy is freely maintaining a standing position in front of you, take a small step toward them while making a reverse L-shape with your right hand (pointer finger and thumb), slowly pushing your hand away from your body.
3. If the puppy backs up or even takes a single step backward, click and treat.
4. If your puppy is struggling to learn this cue you can utilize a platform or create a "chute" to have them back through.

Eventually you should be able to remain in place when cueing your puppy as opposed to moving toward them.

**With all of the above cues you should not be using the verbal cue until the behavior is established. For example, do not say "Touch" until the puppy understands that when holding a hand in a certain way, they are expected to boop it with their nose. Once they understand the behavior then begin pairing the visual cue with the verbal cue