

## Mastering the STAY using the 3 D's

Every position command (sit/down/stand) should be practiced with an automatic STAY. A good stay makes life with your dog SO much more pleasant and facilitates good behavior in numerous ways.

So, every time you practice a position command, be certain to remind the dog to "stay" and to calmly release the dog (OK, free, break, release, whatever word works for you) when you are ready. Remember, the release is always calm....no big deal. ALL REWARDS (PRAISE, FOOD) ARE DELIVERED WHILE THE DOG IS STAYING. The release command is like the military "at ease."

The way you get a solid stay in all positions is by carefully adding the 3 D's.....

Distance.....gradually increasing how far away from your dog you can go without him breaking his stay. Btw, be sure to stand up straight.

Duration.....gradually increasing how long you ask the dog to hold the position

Distraction.....adding something like a rolling tennis ball, or you doing jumping jacks, etc as the dog continues to hold the stay.

Two things to remember.....

1. Go slowly! When you add any of the D's do it in tiny increments.
2. Add only one "D" at a time.

One last hint.....I like to return all the way to my dog, give him a treat and a "good stay" before I release him. This is personal preference, but I think it creates a more solid stay if he never anticipates a call out of a stay.