

# Dog: Go to Your Bed Command



## Benefit

Teaching your dog to go to his bed (or crate) is relatively easy and very useful. Not only can you direct your dog to go lie down in situations when it's nice to have him out from underfoot, for example during mealtimes or when visitors are at the door, but your dog will learn to settle at times when he might otherwise get over-excited.

## What You Need

- High-value treats like chicken or cheese, or a favorite toy.
- A quiet area without distractions for practicing.
- A dog bed or mat.

## How to Train It

### PHASE 1: THROW A TREAT

**Step 1.** Stand about 3 feet away from a mat (or crate) with your dog beside you. Have a handful of tasty treats ready. Start by luring your dog into a 360-degree circle around you to get his interest.

**Step 2.** Toss a treat onto the mat and say “go to your bed.” Before your dog finishes the first treat, toss another on the mat and say “go to your bed.” Then call your dog back to you and praise him. Repeat several times.

### PHASE 2: INTRODUCE THE HAND SIGNAL

**Step 3.** Now, as you say “go to your bed,” direct your dog to the mat with your hand. Hopefully he will look at and move toward the bed, but either way, toss a second treat onto the bed. Repeat this several times.

**Step 4.** Next, say “go to your bed” and give the hand signal without tossing the treat until your dog goes to the mat. When he does, say “yes!” and throw the treat. Repeat the exercise from different angles. Stick with this exercise for a few days before moving on to phase 3.

### PHASE 3: ADD DISTANCE

**Step 5.** Begin with a few trials of the step 4 exercise from 3 feet away to warm up your dog.

**Step 6.** When your dog gets it right 9 out of 10 times, begin adding distance. Try from 4 feet away, then gradually increase the distance a few feet a time. Go slowly and if your dog has trouble, go back to an easier distance—or an easier step, if necessary.

## Tip

- The occasional need to go back a step is business-as-usual with dogs. It doesn't mean your dog is a slow learner, just that all dogs need a lot of repetition to learn a behavior well.