

The 'settle' cue:

Teaching your dog obedience training can be simple and fun with the correct information and some patience. Calm and well-behaved dogs make owning your dog much more enjoyable and stress-free. It can not only be more rewarding but also more convenient – for example, when in the vets waiting room or when you have guests round. **Here are some Top Tips to quickly teach the “settle” cue.**

1. The point of the settle cue is to teach the dog to relax in a calm and quiet manner. It's perfectly acceptable for him to shift around and get comfortable, as long as he remains quiet and not demanding attention.
2. Often the quickest way to teach this is to attach your dog's lead and sit comfortably in a chair with the dog by your legs. A little tip here: run the lead from the dog's collar, underneath your feet and up into your hand. The lead needs to be long enough to allow the dog to sit, lie down and shift to get comfortable but not long enough for him to walk away or jump up. It's quite important to have control over him.
3. Simply ignore the dog until he settles down; perhaps calmly sitting or laying down. It may take a few minutes for him to get bored of waiting for you to do something. When he's settled down, praise: “good, settle” and give a treat. If he gets up, simply ignore him again until the required settled behaviour happens again.
4. If your dog remains settled, keep praising and treating him to very clearly demonstrate that this is the correct behaviour you're looking for. As the dog gets better at remaining in the settle position and it becomes a learnt behaviour, you can increase the gaps between the treats.
5. It's always best to give the treats close to the floor to prevent the dog getting up and breaking the settle position you're trying to encourage. You should also try to praise and treat when the dog is looking away so that he doesn't continuously look at us and drool!
6. Be fair with when you give the command in the learning stages: it's not fair to cue a young dog or puppy to “settle” when it's just woken up or if the dog is particularly excited; remember that “fast is slow”!