

# Duration

## How to make it last



Duration is the dog's ability to sustain any given behaviour for an increasing period of time, and it is defined as **the time between the dog starting to do the behaviour** (e.g. lying down) **and the moment you click** (=the end of the duration).

Duration can be applied to a stationary position such as Sit, Down or Settle on the mat, or the ability to continue performing a moving skill, such as Polite Walking, for extended distance or periods of time, before requiring reinforcement.

Duration should be increased gradually and variably, and only after the dog can successfully respond to the cue.

Keep this in mind:

- Duration should be built in small increments.
- Practice initially with as few distractions as possible.
- The passage of time should be measured accurately, by using a clock or counting in your head.
- The duration should be intentionally varied so the animal doesn't come to anticipate the end of the exercise.

For when you are ready to add Distractions:

- As the dog improves his ability to sustain the behavior for longer durations, distractions can be re-introduced gradually.
- **Reward longer duration sets with many high value treats, one after the other, rather than one single treat, so that you will build your dog's desire to stay longer on the mat!**

Here is an example of a training plan for Duration. The numbers represent seconds of time:

Set #	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
Repetition																				
1	0	1	0	1	3	2	5	0	7	8	8	0	0	5	0	16	0	18	19	8
2	1	1	3	0	4	6	0	7	9	0	0	12	7	0	15	4	17	5	0	20
3	0	2	1	3	5	0	6	8	0	9	11	6	13	14	3					
4	1	0	2	4	0	5	7	2	8	10										
5	0	1	1	2	1	4	2	6	3	4										

Set #	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
Repetition										
1	5	0	0	24	0	26	0	28	29	8
2	21	22	23	8	25	4	27	5	0	30

Work on one set at a time, with breaks of at least 30-60 secs on sets 1-10, increasing to several minutes for the longer sets. Many dogs will appreciate an active play session (tug, fetch) to help them get rid of the need to move, in between these stationary exercises!

If you get 4 out of 5 repetitions correct (or better), move on to the next set.

If you get 3 out of 5 repetitions correct, stay on the same set.

If you get 2 out of 5 repetitions correct (or less), go back to the previous set.

Use the back of this sheet as a worksheet to help you keep track.

Set #	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
Rep																														
1	0	1	0	1	3	2	5	0	7	8	8	0	0	5	0	16	0	18	19	8	5	0	0	24	0	26	0	28	29	8
2	1	1	3	0	4	6	0	7	9	0	0	12	7	0	15	4	17	5	0	20	21	22	23	8	25	4	27	5	0	30
3	0	2	1	3	5	0	6	8	0	9	11	6	13	14	3															
4	1	0	2	4	0	5	7	2	8	10																				
5	0	1	1	2	1	4	2	6	3	4																				
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