

Homeward Bound Golden Retriever Rescue

Golden Rule Dog Training

Teaching Wait

Teaching your dog to “wait” is used as a part of the leadership building blocks as well as an easy way for your dog to pause until you are ready for him/her to enter an area. For example, if you are going in out or out of your front door, you should go through the door first, which allows you to manage the dog and the door easily.

It is also useful when opening a car door to let the dog out of the car. He/she will jump out only when you are ready. The benefit of “wait” is no more bolting, pushing or trampling, just “wait” until I am ready to release you, then you can manage the dog and the car door every time!

You can also use this with other thresholds, like the garage door, a backyard gate, etc.

How to teach “Wait”:

- Set up a threshold, about 3 feet from the door (inside the house to start), use a rug by the door or you can use an imaginary line where the dog needs to hang back. You can also use tape to mark a line.
- Put a 6 foot leash on your dog, as if you are going to go out the door for a walk. There are no treats used, the reward is to go outside!

Note: the dog does not need to “sit” and wait, just hang back, so sniffing something or walking by the threshold is fine as long as he is BEHIND the threshold.

Step 1: Wait

With the dog on a leash in front of you, start at the threshold and begin backing up into the door (your back to the door); when the dog tries to go past you and go out the door before you, you “walk into” your dog and say the cue “wait” in a calm manner. At this point you are backing the dog to the threshold and holding him there with your body.

Start again with your back to the door, start to reach for the door knob, if the dog moves in, say "wait" and walk into him again backing him up to the threshold. The goal is to have the dog wait for 3 seconds.

Try this about 5 times, if the dog is not learning the cue, take a break and try again in a few hours.

Step 2: The release

Once you have backed up and started to open the door and the dog waits, you say "okay" or "release", to release your dog and the two of you go out the front door.

- 1) Keep doing this over and over, only letting the dog go out once they "wait" successfully. There are no treats used with this cue, going outside is the reward!
- 2) Practice at every opportunity and soon the dog will learn his/her place is behind you at a door way, car door, or any other threshold you choose.

Once he is behind the line consistently and stays there until you give the release word, such as "okay" or "release", and then he follows you out the door, he has learned the cue!

Teach Your Dog to Wait Longer

1. Give the "Wait" cue
2. Slowly open the door, just like you did before, until it's open about a foot.
3. Increase the time from 3 seconds to 4 seconds. If she moves forward, walk into her and say "wait" and try again.
4. When your dog waits without moving forward for 4 seconds, give the release word and give her a treat (optional). The treat is an extra motivator for her to know this is what you want.
5. Say "Okay," or "release" and then walk though the doorway with your dog.

Repeat the steps above for a few days, gradually increasing the time that you ask your dog to wait. As you increase the time, vary in different duration (time). Start with 4 seconds, and then increase to 5 or 6. Try 8 seconds, and then go back to 5 and so on. This will teach your dog to wait until you release her.