

Training Tip Tuesday: Back to Basics

No matter how advanced you are, no matter how much training you've done; taking time to go back to basics will help your overall performance and ensure your dog understands your requests. It's been awfully rainy here the last few days. It's muddy, cold and wet outside. What better time for a review?

Set up away from distractions. This is time for just you and your dog. Get his favorite treats. Let go of any stress.

Is your dog happy and enthusiastic to work? If your routine has gotten hum-drum; that's where you want to start! Get your dog excited. Bounce around. Training time = happy hour!

Pretend you just taught your dog to sit for the first time yesterday. Be excited and enthusiastic! Lure, and reward to make sure you don't have any gaps. Even if you can normally get a sit from hand signal alone at 100 paces; pretend you can't. It's a great way to find any little issues or gaps in your dog's understanding, and fix them in a fun and positive way.

Is your sit straight? Will your dog sit at the front, or either side? Will your dog sit just off a verbal or a hand signal? How about your down? Does your dog stay focused on you, or does his attention shift the floor when he's down? How's your heel position? Does your dog understand that it's a position? Does he stay focused when he moves around you? You shouldn't be moving a lot; it just takes a few steps to work on the position.

It can also be very helpful to work in front of a mirror, or video yourself. You will be surprised at what you see! (There have been many times ive done the Tuesday video, and when I sit down to review it, chastise myself for doing something ridiculous... "What am I looking at? What in the world is my left hand doing over there...?")

All these little things are easily fixable; but if you ignore them they will turn into bigger issues. If you lose your dog's attention to the floor; it won't be long before you lose his attention to other things in the environment...

<https://youtu.be/jURJOH5t4Oc>