



PLACE (Go to Your Bed)

What is the picture of Place? All four feet on your bed and stay there, until I tell you otherwise.

Imagine this: You have company over and your best pal is quietly and calmly staying on his dog bed chilling out with you in the same room. He is not banished to the back yard, kennel, or laundry room because of his exuberant greeting style. He's with you, but not *on* you or your guests. He is staying quietly in his own space; a boundary provided by a comfortable dog bed that we call "place". In this special spot, your dog can relax and be part of the family. Fido can't get off his "place" until released, but he can stand up, sit up, lie down, chew on a bone, stand on his head, or just snooze.

The technique of teaching the place command is simple to do. Once he understands this command, you may ask him to stay on his place for extended periods of time. During these times, it is a great idea to give him an interactive toy to chew on.

Some great times to use "place" are:

- When the door-bell rings
- When you first come home from work
- During dinner
- When the mailman walks by
- When you just want some quiet time

The "place" exercise gives you control and peace of mind while providing your dog with a boundary, social interaction, and happiness that he gets to be with you.

Place is a supervised behavior. In other words, this is a command to be used when you are in the same room with your dog and can have at least your peripheral vision on him. This is not an exercise for you to leave him alone or go out of his sight.

Teaching Place:

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You will use a dog bed sized appropriately for your dog that has clear boundaries. Using an elevated bed at first helps create a definite boundary that teaches your dog that his hind legs are actually a part of him! If you don't have an elevated bed or surface available, you can still teach the exercise on a regular dog bed or mat, it just takes a little more time and patience.

First, get your dog familiar and comfortable with getting on the bed itself. Gently guide him onto the place bed and reward and praise him when he has all four feet on the bed. Make it great fun to get on his place bed. If he needs extra help at first, throw treats on the bed or even sit on the bed with him. Once he has been rewarded, release him off the place with a "FREE" (See the Sit/Stay/Free blueprint). Repeat this step until Fido is familiar with the place command and the place bed.

Once your dog is comfortable with the place bed, start to show him the boundaries. With your body close, facing him, and acting as a physical barrier, walk slowly around the place bed. Reward and praise him when he stays on his place. Then "FREE" (release) him off the bed and repeat. If Fido should get off before receiving the release command, mark the moment immediately with a "Uh-uh" and then quickly guide him back onto the bed with his leash or a gentle collar grab (see the Grabitis blueprint) and remind him of his job, "Place".

Do not give a treat for getting back on the bed if he has broken before being released. Treats come only for initially getting on and for reaching goals as you work on the 3 D's: Distance, duration, and distraction.

Reinforcing the Place:

Slowly build the distance that you stand away from your dog. Start by walking around the place holding the leash (loose!) about 3 feet away from him. As you walk around the place bed, make sure and reward him with lots of praise and treats for making the right choice to stay on his place. If you see him thinking about breaking, don't say "uh-huh"! He hasn't broken any rules by simply *thinking* about getting off. The only thing that is against the rules is a paw actually touching the floor. If you see him thinking about it, and you will, just quickly remind him what his job is, "Place".

Give your dog the opportunity to make choices in order to reinforce right and wrong. Be patient and let him problem solve. However, be careful not to move too fast. If Fido begins to fail over and over again, you have probably moved too fast. Take a step back. You want him to win and learn what is right without getting frustrated.

The next step is to advance 6 feet away, still holding the end of the leash. Once your dog gets the idea of this picture, drop the leash to the floor and walk around him. Keep the leash on while still in the showing phase.

Remember to constantly communicate to him when he is doing it right.

Slowly build on distance but don't release your dog from a distance. Always walk all the way back to him to "Free" him.

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If your dog barks, whines, or starts to protest on the place bed, *ignore* him and reward him when he is quiet.

Generalization of Place:

- Sit in a chair.
- Walk up to Fido, praise him, and then walk away without releasing him.
- Jog past your dog, or in circles around him.
- Toss a piece of food past him.
- Ring the doorbell.
- Place toys and yummy bones just out of reach.
- Dance
- Hula hoop

Have fun and build on success. If your is having difficulty, or seems confused, look back and analyze your training. If you think he is confused, back up to the previous stage in your training. Remember that timing, consistency, and motivation are the most important components of your training. Reward or correct a behavior within 1.3 seconds (immediately) of the act that you liked or disliked. Having good timing will help your dog understand what he is being rewarded or corrected for. *Every time* your dog gets off the place without being released, you must guide him back on.

Even if he is a koo koo juvenile delinquent and tries to test you by getting off 20 times in a row, you must not give up. Your dog has all the time in the world! Be patient and fair, but don't give up!

You are teaching your dog that he must stay on his place bed until you release him, no matter what. Consistency is important because it clearly defines the rules and the rules are *always* the same. Therefore, there is no guesswork on your dog's part.

Remember, at this time, we are not training him to go to his place bed from a distance. Always guide Fido to his place bed and always go to him to release him.

Maintenance Training:

It normally takes 3-6 months for a dog's long-term memory to go into effect. If you want Fido to stay on his place bed for Big Daddy, college level distractions, you must build up to those. Do not set your dog up for failure by expecting too much too soon.

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Generalize the good behaviors that you and your dog have learned. Use your obedience in real life, everyday situations. Take your dog to the park and practice the place command on a picnic table. Practice the place command on the vet's weighing scale. Use it on the grooming table. Use it on anything that has a clear boundary. Most of all use it at home.

- While preparing his and/ or your meals.
- While eating dinner, thus making it impossible for Rover to beg at the dinner table.
- While guests are visiting.
- While watching TV, and so on....