

Session Summary

In this session, we'll work on several behaviors critical to a well-mannered dog (sit, anti-jumping/ sit to greet, and down), and then apply those to real life situations dealing with visitors at home. The culminating Company For Coffee challenge activity gives students an opportunity to apply the session's behaviors and concepts to a real-life set up, including greeting visitors at the door and enjoying a relaxed dog while chatting with friends. Students will also be challenged to think about how to apply what they've learned to other real-life situations. The concepts of working at the dog's level and say please are stressed throughout.

Materials

- Dog beds, mats, or towels at each sitting area (Or require students to bring them.)
- Tape recorded barking and tape player, if using
- Blue painter's tape
- Bell to simulate a doorbell
- Paper cups or coffee mugs, real coffee or tea if you like
- Homework Handouts for each dog
 - Sit
 - Jumping
 - Down
 - Company For Coffee

Reminders**1. Prep for Anti-jump/ Sit to greet lesson**

Place two-foot strips of blue painter's tape on the floor to simulate doorways, one for each student, spread around the room.

2. Prep for Company for Coffee Challenge activity

If desired, brew coffee or tea or set up a pitcher of water to add some real-life authenticity to the exercise.

3. Working at Their Dogs' Levels

A main focus of this class is on students working at their dogs' levels. This includes catching their dog getting things right before they have a chance to get it wrong and reinforcing behavior they like often enough to keep it.

Toward this end, be sure during the times that students are in their seats to prompt students to reinforce their dogs whenever distractions occur (such as barking, noises outside, new people entering the room, etc.). Heavily reinforce any unprompted action.

Also be sure during the times that students are in their seats, especially the first 10 minutes of class, to prompt students to and reinforce them for offering enough reinforcement for desired behavior, particularly dogs settling on their mats.

4. Say Please

Say Please is also a central focus of the course. Take advantage of any opportunity to prompt and reinforce students practicing the Say Please policy.

Pre-Class Warm Up: Monitor the classroom door and bring students and dogs in one at a time. If you have assistants, assign this task to them. Walk students to their seats and either show them how or remind them to lure their dog onto its mat and then either continually reinforce them for being on the mat or give them a Kong or bone to occupy their dog on the mat. If they have been in previous classes and are able, they can also practice Sit or Down-Stay on their mat, focusing on duration rather than distance.

Check In: If you have assistants, use this time to check in with students as they come in.

Lesson Title: Review Classroom Protocols 5 Min.

COURSE GOALS: HANDLING & FOCUS, SITUATIONAL AWARENESS

Lesson Title: Setting the Scene: Company For Coffee 5 Min.

COURSE GOAL: PROBLEM SOLVING & REAL WORLD APPLICATION

Lesson Title: Obedience #1: Sit 10 Min.

COURSE GOAL: WORK AT DOG'S LEVEL; HOW DOGS LEARN

Lesson Title: Anti-Jump /Sit to Greet 10 Min.

COURSE GOALS: HOW DOGS LEARN; REINFORCEMENT & MOTIVATION

Lesson Title: Down 10 Min.

COURSE GOALS: WORK AT DOG'S LEVEL; HOW DOGS LEARN

Lesson Title: Challenge Company for Coffee 15 Min.

COURSE GOAL: WORK AT DOG'S LEVEL; PROBLEM SOLVING & REAL WORLD APPLICATION

Graduation & Homework Review 5 Min.

Lesson Plan: Company For Coffee 15 Min.

COURSE GOALS: WORK AT DOG'S LEVEL; PROBLEM SOLVING & REAL WORLD APPLICATION

Behaviors/Skills/Concepts: Catching dogs getting it right; sit; down; anti-jump/ sit to greet; reward removal; working at the dog's level; real life application

What to Reinforce: Catching their dogs getting it right; working at their dog's level; unprompted adjustments as needed; timing of reinforcement and reward removal

Step 1: Intro Discussion

Our challenge today is to have a guest or two over for coffee. We have to get them through the door with a minimum of barking and a polite greeting, then enjoy their company while our dogs relax.

Let's review what we've done today to get ready.

Discussion Questions:

- What will you do to help keep your dog from barking when the doorbell rings?
(Answers might include: Treating him, catching him getting it right before he barks, etc.)
Remember that if your dog starts to bark, we have to get his attention back right away. You can't treat him once he's started barking, because you risk teaching him to bark to get you to give him a treat. So you'll have to get his attention and focus first. Try saying his name once. Wave your hand in front of his face to see if you can draw him back to you. Once you've got that attention, praise him and continue to talk to him to keep it. Ask him to practice a couple of sits and downs. After he's stayed focused on you for 10 seconds or so, thank him with a treat. Then reinforce him several more times for staying focused in your direction. If you treat only once, he'll learn to focus for a second to get his treat, and then turn to other things. We want to show him that it's worthwhile to *stay* focused, so we want to make sure we say thank you often enough to get that point across.
- Thinking about your dog and working at her level, what will you do to help keep your dog from jumping on your guests, and to impress them with a nice dog greeting?
(Answers might include: Asking for a sit, luring a sit, treating heavily while the guest says hello, even choosing to leave her behind while answering the door—you can give students the option of tying their dog to their chair or having you or an assistant or an extra family member stay with the dog while they invite the guest in.)
- And what will you do to help your dog lie down successfully while you visit?
(Answers might include: High rate of reinforcement, high value treats. Students who have been in class longer may also suggest the use of stays and mental stimulation toys. If not, make the suggestion yourself: Those of you who have been in class for a couple of weeks might also want to practice your stays and/or use a mental stimulation toy to help keep your dogs focused.)

Explain the challenge. (See Challenge, Step 2.)



Step 2: Challenge

Have students take their mats, their chair, and one extra chair and set them a few feet away from their strip of blue painter's tape from the earlier Sit to Greet exercise. These chairs will make up students' "living rooms." You can also provide an extra chair or small garden table or milk crate to stand in as a coffee table. Distribute cups or mugs with or without an actual beverage.

Instruct any assistants and extra students to play visitors—one visitor per "living room." Have them stand on the outside of the blue painter's tape "door." Once everyone is set, ring the doorbell. Students are to work to keep their dogs from barking, then answer the door and let their guest in for the visit, working with their dogs to help them settle on their mats while they chat. To help the exercise along, give students a topic to discuss. You might ask them, for example, to tell each other the story of how they each got their dogs.

Reinforce students for unprompted actions and prompt where needed.



Step 3: Debrief Discussion

Discussion Questions:

- What was the most difficult aspect of this challenge for you?
- How did you handle that difficulty, and with what results?
- Did you see anyone else approach that problem differently, and to what end?
- What did you or your dog do most successfully?
- What did you do to help your dog be successful?
- What did you learn that you could apply to a second visitor?



Step 4: Challenge, continued

Have people playing visitors go to a different "house." Repeat the challenge.



Step 5: Debrief Discussion

Discussion Questions:

- What did you do differently this time than last?
- Was this approach more successful?
- Why do you think that it helped or did not help?
- How was this second round different from the first, and why?
- What new ideas do you have for when visitors stop by your home?
- In what other sorts of situations could you use what you learned and practiced today?

Remember to share observations you made as well, using opportunities to reinforce and to point out any concepts or ideas you wish to emphasize.