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## Quiet Time

**Why do you need to teach your dog how to be quiet sometimes?** Anxious and high-energy dogs can have a difficult time calming and settling themselves down. Having a specific time and place for them to be quiet and calm is very important for their overall wellbeing. Teaching your dog to have quiet time allows them to learn how to calm down. This gives you and them a constructive break from any anxiety or excess energy.

### Level 1: Going to their Quiet Time spot

**Step 1.** Determine where you want your dog to have quiet time. Place their bed or blanket on the floor right in front of yourself in the quiet time spot.

**Step 2.** Mark (by using a clicker or saying 'yes') your dog's first movement toward the blanket or bed. Deliver a treat to the dog.

**Step 3.** Continue to mark any contact or interaction with the bed. Vary treat delivery to reset the dog for another repetition, such as, placing the treat on one of the corners so your dog has to interact with the bed.

**Step 4.** Reposition the blanket slightly or move your body so you're slightly off to the side and continue to mark and treat any interaction.

**Step 5.** When the dog is reliably going over and standing on the bed, you are ready to move forward.

**Training Tip:** Pick a bed that has a clear on and off boundary. Elevated/platform dog beds are the best, like the bed used in Training Tip Tuesday's [Promoting Calm](#) episode. You can place a towel or blanket over the bed, that way as you and your dog advance, you can just use the towel or blanket.

### Level 2: Training laying down in the Quiet Time spot

**Step 1.** When your dog is reliably going over and standing on the mat, begin working on training the dog to lie down.

**Step 2.** Start by marking and treating your dog for sitting on the mat. If they are standing or sitting on the mat, start to reward when they look down at the mat or when their elbows bend towards the mat.

**Step 3.** Continue to slowly increase how much they need to lower before you mark and reward until your dog lies down on the mat.

**Step 4.** Once your dog lies down on the mat, deliver your treat so they have to get out of the down position to eat it. That way you can restart the down again, rewarding them when they return to lying down on the mat.

**Step 5.** When your dog is reliably going to their mat and lying down right away, you are ready for the next level.

### **Level 3: Relaxed Down**

**Step 1.** Now that your dog is lying down in his Quiet Time spot, it is time to teach them how to relax.

**Step 2.** Wait for your dog to go to their Quiet Time spot and lay down. Mark and reward your dog.

**Step 3.** Then wait for them to relax onto one hip, lay their head down, or roll to lay completely on their side. These are all versions of a relaxed down. Mark and reward them for any of these behaviors.

**Step 4.** Once you get to the point where they go to their Quiet Time spot and go into a relaxed down, you are ready for the next level.

**Training Tip:** It is very important to reward your dog for calm and relaxed behavior. Avoid giving anxious dogs attention or comforting them while they are showing anxiety. Avoid giving an excited dog attention or treats when they are overly energetic or displaying inappropriate behaviors. Rewarding calm behavior on and off their bed will make training Quiet Time much easier.

### **Level 4: Quiet Time with Duration**

**Step 1.** Have your dog go to their Quiet Time spot, lay down, and relax. Mark and reward your dog.

**Step 2.** As long as your dog remains relaxed, you can pet them or continue to treat them. For an anxious dog, this would be the appropriate time for petting them. They are relaxed and you will not be reinforcing anxious behaviors if you pet them. For a high-energy dog, pets may rile them up and bring them out of their relaxed down. It may be best to use treats as rewards until they can relax during Quiet Time for a longer duration.

**Step 3.** After the duration is up, you can release your dog with a cue such as “free”. Do a short duration, around 30 seconds to a minute, and then slowly increase the duration every week.

**Step 4.** If your dog ever stops relaxing during the duration of Quiet Time, cut back the time for a week or two and then start increasing duration again. Eventually your dog’s Quiet Time can last anywhere from 10 to 30 minutes a day.

**Training Tip:** For an anxious or high-energy dog, teaching them to be relaxed for longer amounts of times can be challenging. Start with short periods of time and work up from there. You can include an enrichment toy or treat, such as a stuffed and frozen Kong, to help distract your dog as you slowly build their Quiet Time duration.