



HEEL PART ONE

Before You Begin:

You have survived beginner behaviors and now you're ready for something harder. Welcome to Advanced behaviors! In these, your dog will be pushed hard to behave during distractions (some of which are very, very distracting!). Many of our commands have been broken up into multiple parts to make it easier for our owners and dogs to learn and enjoy themselves during the training sessions.

The advanced behaviors we will be learning can be frustrating to both dog and owner, so if you find yourself getting frustrated, please **do yourself a favor and end the training session with something simple**, like sit. Ending a session on a good note will make you feel better and encourage your dog as well. By this point, your dog should be well versed in basic commands and willing to respond to them quickly without always needing a treat for their efforts.

Heel – Part One

Heel teaches your dog how to walk close to you, which is ideal for big crowds like sporting events. The AKC requirement for heel states that it should be done on the left side. If do not have the AKC Canine Good Citizenship award as a goal, you may choose to heel on whichever side you prefer.

Heel is extremely difficult for dogs to understand as it's not natural to remain so close to a moving body for so long while ignoring the world around them. Because of this, we break Heel up into three different parts to make sure that your dog learns it smoothly and with the least amount of frustration for both of you.

First, we must get our dog into the correct position to start Heel, which is called the "Finish" position:

- Take a treat and hold it in your left hand.
- Starting with the treat at your dog's nose, use the treat to lure your dog closer to you by using a tear drop shaped motion.
- As soon as your dog has **their front legs lined with yours**, give them the cue to Sit.
- Click and treat

Practice just doing the "Finish" position until you and your dog are comfortable with the movement. For those of us who have bigger dogs, you may have to take a step back then forward again, to give your dog room to complete the behavior before bringing them into the sit position.

To practice the first part of heel, you should remain indoors. Find the longest wall of your home (a hallway or a room wall) and practice your "Finish" so that your dog is sitting between you and the wall. This will help your dog pay attention to you and not wander away from your side. Some dogs feel very cramped in this position, so make sure they have enough room to feel comfortable.

- Get your dog into the "finish" position between you and the wall
- Hold your leash in your left hand, with as little slack as possible
- Holding a treat in your right hand, have your arm rest across your stomach so your dog can smell the reward
- Say "Heel" and **take only a couple of steps**, starting with your left foot first

Your dog should be rewarded after only two or three steps. The key to this is to advance slowly. You do not want your dog to push past you and pull forward, so by starting with only a couple of steps, we ensure they don't get too far. Our goal is for you to be able to walk the entire length of the wall by the end of the week without having to stop. Starting with a couple of steps at a time ensures a better result, so even if you want to go faster, take your time with this behavior.

Whenever you stop after practicing Heel, you should place your dog into a sit position. We want it to become automatic for your dog to sit when not moving forward on their leash. This keeps your dog safe when you stop at crosswalks and prevents your dog from wandering into the street, or getting in the way during a sporting event.