

The Place Command

Shaping Method:

- Get a towel or an old mat that your dog has never seen before. Place it in a spot in the house you'd like your dog to go to. It can also be placed over their bed.
- When your dog goes over to investigate and stands on the towel, reward with a low value reward (kibble if they eat that, or if they're on raw or cooked, then a dry plain cookie)
- Your dog may then offer a sit, especially if you stand up at this point, since they know there's food. Sitting on the towel earns a better reward (a cookie, or a piece of liver)
- Now if your dog offers a lie down on the towel, they get the BEST reward (piece of cooked meat or cheese). The idea is to get the dog to realize that lying down on this towel gets them the best reward so that they will continue to offer a down.
- If they go back to sit or stand, reward with the lower value treat.
- Always reward on the towel and not directly in the dog's mouth.
- You can start to add the verbal command by standing a bit away from the towel, pointing to it and saying "go to your mat/bed/towel/place" slowly increase your distance from the place and give the command. Always return and reward the dog on the towel for holding position.

Alternative Method:

- Same as above except instead of waiting for the dog to offer the behaviour, you ask for it.
- If you find your dog on the towel throughout the day (they will start to gravitate there on their own soon enough), reward that behaviour. Also encourage them staying in that place by giving them busy toys or chews there.
- You can use this command to keep your dog out of the way when you are eating dinner or when you have company. You can also use it to keep your dog from running to greet your guests before you do. You just have to practice it in the different scenarios you would like to use it for. Make sure the initial command is solid before adding distractions.