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The Difference between the Down and Off Commands

Learning commands can be an excellent way for your dog to behave better and have a more enjoyable interaction with you and your family. While **commands can be beneficial**, many people have a tendency to confuse two particular commands. Those **commands are 'down' and 'off.'** Learning to use these commands appropriately can make a big difference in how well your dog responds in certain situations.

The Down Command

Now that your **dog knows the "sit" command, the down command** will be a snap! Start by luring your dog into the "sit" position. Hold a treat in your right hand between your thumb and index finger, with your palm facing down towards the floor. Your hand will be in front of your dog's nose.

Lower your hand slowly to the floor behind your dog's right paw and then back towards his buttocks. When you lower the food on at an angle to the floor, keep it close to your dog's body. Your dog will follow the lure and he will lie down on his hip. (This is called a "**relaxed down**" which is a safe and stable position for the dog's body.)

Once he is lowered all the way to the floor, give him the treat. Repeat this several times until you are confident that he will go down every time.

Once he does, **start adding his name and the command**, such as "Rover down." Once he is lying down, reward him with the treat and give him words of praise such as "Yes, Rover, good boy!"

Repeat this exercise several times at different locations throughout the house and in the backyard. Make sure there are plenty of distractions around so you can work on his concentration too.

Once he has **mastered the "down" command**, put him on the [leash and practice it while walking](#) for the best benefits.

The "Off" Command

The "**off**" command differs from the "**down**" command in that you use "off" when you want your [dog to get off of a person or piece of furniture](#). Be sure to keep this in mind when you are trying to **determine which command**

is best in certain situations.

This **command is especially useful** for when you or visitors walk through the front door. Your dog may get so excited that he stands on his two hind legs, with his two front legs up on you or the visitor.

To **practice this command**, have a treat in your right hand and hold it up high and close to your body. Your dog will try to reach up for it, so move your right arm with the treat to the right and down.

When your dog has all four legs on the ground, verbally praise him and give him the treat. Once you are confident that he will get down every time, **start saying "Rover, off" right before he is down**. Then praise him and give him a treat to **encourage correct behavior**.

Repeat this exercise several times at different locations throughout the house, especially at all of the doors, where this behavior will most likely happen.

Keep in mind that **using the down and off commands** appropriately and in the right circumstances can make a big difference in how your dog responds. Need help with **applying the down and off commands**? Good [quality dog training resources](#) can make the process much easier.

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