



Four on the Floor (Using a Clicker!)

Teach your dog this behavior and he will greet everyone that comes into the house, family members and visitors alike, in a polite and controlled manner with his four paws on the floor.

If your dog should jump on you at any point during the session, simply cross your arms and turn your back. Ignore the behavior. If you are physically unable to do this, you might start working this behavior with your dog's leash tethered to an eye-hook in the wall or a piece of furniture. If you use a tether, please make sure that the leash is fastened to your dog's harness or collar and not to a Gentle Leader head collar if you are using one.

With the dog's leash tethered to the eye-hook, if your dog begins jumping, you can simply walk out of the room and ignore your dog until he quiets down. This is a version of the "Magnet game" that Paul Owens talks about in his DVD "The Dog Whisperer". Your dog's behavior of having four paws on the floor draws you closer and earns your attention, while his jumping up draws you further away.

- 1) Stand completely still. At first, do not move your arms or legs. The more calm your body stays, the more clam your dog's body will be.

- 2) Click and feed your dog only when all four of his paws remain on the floor. **You are clicking for the absence of the jumping up behavior.**

- 3) Click, even if it is only to mark a second of the desired behavior, and feed.

*Throw the treat on the floor.

Instead of dropping the treat right beside you, throw the treat away from you so that your dog has to get up and walk to the treat, and then return to you to repeat the behavior. If your dog's four paws remain on the floor as he is walking toward you, click and throw another treat.

- 4) Repeat ten times, end the session.

- 5) As you continue clicking and feeding your dog for not jumping up, gradually add the following criteria to your training sessions:

- Move your arms. Click and treat for not jumping.
- Move your legs. Click and treat for not jumping.
- Start walking slowly. Click and throw the food on the floor for each successful step.
- Begin to walk even faster.

Start to add more distracting movements; for example, do jumping jacks, march in place, or clap your hands.

- 6) Now that your dog is remaining with four paws on the floor with more distractions and for longer periods, add a visitor and repeat steps 1 through 5.

Secrets of Success:

Remember, dogs love a reaction! Jumping up on people is especially reinforcing because they always get a reaction, whether it's a pat, a push or simply yelling at them to get down. **Attention, whether positive or negative, keeps a behavior going strong.**

If visitors are coming and you don't have time to use the visit as a "Four on the Floor" teaching opportunity, put your dog in a separate room or tether him to prevent giving him the chance to jump on your visitors and reinforce the behavior.

***Another way to deal with this behavior is to teach your dog an incompatible behavior.** For example, if you have a dog that naturally retrieves, teach your dog to run to get his toy every time a visitor comes to the door. You can also teach your dog to go to his "safe place", be it a bed, a crate or a mat, when he hears a knock on the door or the ring of the doorbell.

This is easily taught by first teaching your dog to go to his bed, crate or mat *without* the presence of a visitor and subsequently adding the vocal cue and/or hand signal "bed".

Some dogs, while they hold a toy in their mouth, do not jump up. If this applies to your dog, next time you hear the door bell ring, give your dog his toy, and allow him to carry it to the door to meet the newcomers.

It's important that each time your dog begins to jump up, you do not reinforce that behavior. Instead ask him to "sit". If necessary, help him perform the behavior by luring him into the "sit" position with a treat. Click and feed him when he is successful.

When training any behavior, hold your training sessions in every area of the house. Doing so will help your dog to learn self-control no matter what room your visitors are in.

Remember, is totally normal for dogs to greet each other muzzle to muzzle. This is how canines say hello. **They aren't "disrespecting" you when they**

jump up to greet you - so there's no need to take it personally. Just teach them what you want instead!

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