



## Say Your Prayers

### Getting the dog to rest his front legs on our arm

1. Start in a kneeling position and hold your arm parallel to the floor.
2. Use a treat to lure the dog to put his paw, near, on or over your arm. (some dogs will do this right away for other dogs you will need to gradually shape this behaviour by marking and reinforcing even small movements towards the desired behaviour).
3. Mark and reinforce with a treat. (*Not sure what marking and reinforcing is? Go to the end of the document for an explanation*).

Continue practicing till your dog is comfortable putting both paws on your arm.

**Note:** You will need to allow the dog time to get used to having your hold their forearm to steady them.

### Adding the Prayer

Once the dog is comfortable putting both paws on your arm you can add in the prayer part of this exercise

1. Start in a kneeling position with your arm parallel to the ground
2. Lure the dog to put both paws over your arm
3. Hold their foot with the same arm they are resting their legs on (so they don't leave position)
4. Mark that but... reinforce with the treat under your arm so they have to put their head between their front legs to reach the treat.

### Transferring to a Chair / Bed

Once the dog is doing the first two parts of this exercise you can then start transferring the dog on to a chair or bed.

1. Have the dog put his feet up on the chair or bed
2. Mark the behaviour



3. Reinforce with a treat below the dogs paws (you may have to hold their paw for the first few times).

### **Fading Reinforcement**

Once the dog is doing the behaviour reliably you can start to fade the reinforcement.

#### **Steps:**

1. Make the same hand motion you used to lure the dog originally the only difference is that you will not have a treat in your hand.
2. When the dog puts his feet over your arm (or on the bed) mark and reinforce with a treat (from your pouch or pocket).

### **Adding a Cue Word**

Once the dog is doing the behaviour reliably you can also start to add a cue word or phrase such as “Say your prayers”.

### **Building Distance and Duration**

At this point, we are still right next to the dog. We can now gradually start to make the hand motion (signal) slightly further away and gradually increase the distance to the dog. As the dog becomes more and more steady on the behaviour we can pause slightly before marking to require the dog to hold position longer before being rewarded. You can use a duration marker or what some people call a keep going signal like “good”. A duration marker is used to tell the dog that he is still doing the right thing but unlike our marker word it is not immediately followed by reinforcement with a treat.

**A Note on Marking and Reinforcing:** – Marking is the use of a word the such as “yes” or a click from a clicker that tells the dog that he is doing the right thing and that he has already learned will be immediately followed by a treat (reinforcement). If you haven’t already been using the marking technique you will need to charge your marker – this means you will say



your marker word “yes” and immediately give your dog a treat. After multiple repetitions, he will come to learn that this is a signal that he is doing the right thing and that he is going to be rewarded. This provides the reinforcement for the dog to learn and perform the behaviour.

TNT TRAINING CENTER