

Part Three: Your Dog's Work and Behavior – Hints and Reminders

1. Obedience

Obedience forms the basis of all dog training. Regular obedience exercises help to maintain the dog's respect for his/her handler. This level of respect is vital to the efficient performance of your dog, both as a Guide Dog and when off duty in social situations. For these reasons, it is important to continue at home the obedience exercises learned in training. Just a few minutes every day in the yard or driveway can make all the difference.

When carrying out an exercise, remember to give only one initial command to your dog. If he/she does not respond, you must not go on repeating the command but rather use appropriate physical correction and one repetition of the command. Always bear in mind that the degree of physical control required is governed by your particular dog's sensitivity.

Do not overdo the obedience exercises. Five minutes is long enough for a session. Do not do the exercises if you are feeling unwell or upset. If your dog keeps lying down during the session, he/she is probably showing signs of boredom. Try varying your routine, shortening the length of "stay" commands, and cutting the sessions to two or three minutes every other day.

The exercises should include the following actions:

- Sit
- Stay in sit position
- Sit to down
- Stay in down position
- Recall
- Heel to left side to finish