

# TRAINING TIP 1:

## *Down stay* on a mat

### HOW to train

**1** **Start by tossing treats** to get your dog interested in the mat area. When she puts any paw on the mat, mark with a word like “yes” or a click, and then toss a treat onto the mat.

**2** **Over time**, work to get the dog into a down position. Either ask for the down once she’s on the mat or wait for it to naturally happen and place treats onto the mat when she does.

**3** **Eventually add a cue** like “mat” to the behavior when your dog reliably goes to lie down in the space. Reward your dog intermittently for resting on her mat so she never anticipates how long it will be. Gradually build up distractions and duration.

### HOW it helps

The mat serves as a security blanket, going along with your dog from the home, to the car, to a waiting area and into the exam. The mat gives your dog a designated area to rest instead of pacing restlessly.

### QUICK TIP:

#### Choose the right mat

The best mats are those with an anti-slip bottom to prevent slipping on slick surfaces. You can place the mat on the floor, scale and exam table to provide a familiar and comfortable space for your dog when she’s weighed and examined.

