

Tie-Down & Settling

A **tie-down** is a temporary management tool used to manage your dog's unwanted behavior while teaching good behaviors. It also helps them relax. The tie-down is a 2 to 3 foot long leash, rope, or plastic coated cable (that has clips on one or both ends) and is normally attached to a sturdy object (such as a piece of heavy furniture or an eyehook that is placed directly into the baseboard or wall stud).



Why Use a Tie-Down?

The goal is to teach your dog to settle in any environment. Settling means the dog is laying down quietly in a relaxed manner. It is to help your dog stay relaxed even with lots of movement and sound happening. Some dogs will fall asleep, while others might lay there happily.

The tie-down is used to teach a dog to calmly stay in one place. It can be helpful in several situations and environments:

- Office, workplace, or classroom setting
- Meal preparation time
- Quiet time
- When guests are visiting
- Managing animal interactions and unwanted behaviors

You can start introducing the tie-down in short increments during the first couple weeks of bringing the dog home. Some dogs can be resistant to a tie-down because it is unfamiliar and feels restricting. Follow the guidelines below to help your dog become comfortable on a tie-down.

Placement

Look for a room that the family spends a lot of time in. Suggestions include the kitchen, living room, den, or office. Multiple tie-downs can be set up so the dog can be moved when you change locations.

You need to be able to watch your dog while teaching tie-down, so make sure you put it in a visible location.

If you choose to use an eyehook, it should be screwed securely at an angle into a stud in the wall just above the baseboard (about 5" from the floor). The tie down can be attached either with a clip or by pushing the loop of the tie down through the eye, then thread the clip through the loop. Place at a safe distance from furniture, bookcases, and electrical outlets so the dog cannot chew or become destructive (about 3 feet of 'blank' wall space on both sides of the tie down works well).



Tie-Down Guidelines

- Tie-downs are kept short to prevent tangling but should allow your dog to comfortably lay down.
- If your dog is prone to chewing, you can purchase a cable leash so that they will not be able to chew through it.
- Start teaching settling and acclimation to the tie-down while you're watching TV, eating meals, reading, or any other time you're sitting and can observe the pup in the same room.
- **Never** leave a dog unattended on a tie-down for an extended period of time.
- Once the dog is acclimated on tie-down and you can trust him to behave, you can leave the room for brief periods (3-5 minutes) to test their settling behavior.

How to Teach Tie-Down

1. Set up the tie-down location according to the tips on the previous page.
2. Once you have the tie-down secure, bring your dog and an interactive toy (like a stuffed kong) to the area.
3. Attach the dog's collar to the tie down in a calm, positive way while staying close to where the tie-down is attached so that there isn't tension on the tie-down.
4. Give the toy to your dog and let him start chewing on it. Once he's focused on the toy, let go of the tie-down and slowly move away.
5. Sit down nearby and ignore your dog.
6. Once your dog is calm and relaxed, give him some praise and treats. Some dogs will relax immediately and others may take more time.
7. If your dog won't relax, keep ignoring him. Stay patient and wait for him to be quiet before giving him attention, otherwise you might be accidentally rewarding bad behavior. Ignore the bad, reward the good.
8. Continue offering praise, petting, and treats every so often. This will help your dog remain calm and relaxed.
9. After your dog is relaxed, release him from the tie-down. Repeat the exercise for short periods of time (3-5 minutes if he took a long time to relax) and then slowly increase the time.
10. Keep offering a toy each time you use the tie-down until your dog has started to get a hang of it and you know he won't start chewing on the furniture.

Now it's time to start using the tie down with higher distractions.

- You can start using the tie-down while you're in the same room, but while you're farther away from the pup.
- The dog is on tie-down at the kitchen table while you're preparing dinner. You can still watch the dog and reward their good behavior, but you are not right next to the pup.
- The pup is on tie-down at the dresser while you are folding and putting clothes away. You're moving around the room putting clothes away, leaving the room for several minutes at a time to put clothes away in various rooms, and the pup calmly remains on tie-down. This is great practice!