

# Cues – Part One

## What is a Cue and Picking a Winner

*Understanding what a cue should be and why it is important to choose wisely will make training your dog more successful.*

### What is a Cue?

A cue, whether verbal or physical, is like the green light on a traffic signal. When the light changes to green, your foot reflexively moves from the brake to gas pedal. Another example is walking. When your left foot completes a step, your right automatically starts to rise.

A cue signals to the dog what his body should do next. Examples are sit, down, stay, come.

### Words, Words, WORDS!

Words traditionally used for training are descriptions of what the dog is expected to do – easier for us to remember and for friends and family to use. The words you choose can be anything. Your cue for “sit” could be “apple”. If you are fluent in a language beside English you could choose a word that means the same thing as “sit”.

Choose words that you can remember, say easily in different tones of voice and under various circumstances. To increase the effectiveness of cues, they should only be used for one behavior.

An example of a confusing cue is “down”. Usually “down” signals a dog to lie on the ground. But sometimes when a dog jumps on the couch, you may say “get down”. Hmm should your dog lay on the couch? In this example, “off” may be the better word to use when Fido is on the couch.

### Commands

A cue is a signal to your dog to do something. If your dog doesn't do it, the “punishment” is that the treat isn't delivered. The treat can be food, play, praise, petting or other something your dog **likes**.

Commands are a threat. Do it or else something bad will happen. It's like saying to a child, clean your room or you'll get a spanking.



**Vikki Hiroto**  
**Dog Training**

(626) 233-3200

WoofJoy.com

Group Classes • Private Training  
Day Training • Board & Train

### Your Dog's Dictionary

- ✓ Make a list of what you want your dog to learn. Write a description of what your dog looks like when they have done it.
- ✓ Pick a cue. Choose a word that will signal you dog to do “that” thing.
- ✓ It can be helpful to also have a list of other words you can use as an alternative to your chosen cue.

### My Dog's Daily Dictionary

- Sit
- Down
- Stay
- Transaction
- Around
- Let's Go
- Back
- Languid
- Dinner
- Breakfast
- Cookie
- Medicine
- Knead
- Crate
- Hey
- Jackson
- Stop
- Up



Vikki Hiroto  
Dog Training

(626) 233-3200

WoofJoy.com

Group Classes • Private Training  
Day Training • Board & Train

## Cue Worksheet

The word I use when my dog does something I like: \_\_\_\_\_

The word I use when my dog does something I do not like: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>When I say</b>	<b><i>My dog will</i></b>
(dog's name)	look at my face
	sit
	lie down
	not pick up food/item from floor
	stay where he/she is
	move toward me and sit/lay down in front of me