



## Extending the HEEL Pattern

Longer and more complex HEEL patterns are shaped according to the same reward schedules as the static exercises (SIT, DOWN, and WHOA), but HEEL patterns are best thought of in terms of pace-counts rather than seconds. Instead of using the KENNEL platform to build an implied stay, for HEEL we will teach your pup to regard the zone just to the left of your left pant-seam as “Pleasant Heaven,” the place in life where all the good things happen.

HEEL patterns are developed using a process called “back-chaining,” where the pup is encouraged to find, maintain, and return to a definite end-point, SIT, while the HEEL pattern chained to the front end of each SIT gets progressively more complex.

So far, we’ve maintained continuous reward schedules for both the moving HEEL and the SIT. To make sure your pup successfully back-chains the HEEL pattern we’re going to keep the reward ratio for SIT in Pleasant Heaven at 100% for now.

However, we can begin to extend the interval and duration schedules to allow for more complex heeling.

### Interval Rewards

Up to this point, the interval of reinforcement has been constant, with rewards available to the pup in HEEL as fast as he can eat them. Now, let’s work toward longer HEEL patterns with a reward constantly available:

- 2-3 paces
- 4-5 paces
- 6-7 paces
- 8-9 paces
- 10-12 paces
- 12-15 paces

As you move along, speak to your pup using Words of Encouragement reserving your terminal reward marker (TRM) only for the SIT at the end of each pattern. **If you say it, you pay it!**

When your pup can complete 15-step continuously rewarded straight-line HEEL patterns about 80% of the time, it’s time to start decreasing the interval schedule:

- A reward is available constantly except for 2-3 paces;
- A reward is available constantly except for 4-5 total paces;
- A reward is available only about half the time;
- A reward is only available for about 5-6 total paces (2-3 reward intervals);
- A reward is only available for the first and middle 2-3 paces (2 reward intervals);
- A reward is only available once for 2-3 paces in the middle of the 15-step pattern.

Make sure to keep on talking to your pup with Words of Encouragement as you move through the patterns.

## **Duration Rewards**

As soon as your pup is working a thin interval reward schedule, start building duration at HEEL.

5 paces should be no big deal, so we'll start from there, offering a reward after every:

- 5 paces
- 6 paces
- 7 paces
- 8 paces
- 10 paces
- 12 paces

Be sure to switch it up every now and then with a jackpot or random TRM just to keep him on his toes and the enthusiasm levels high. By the end of the week, he should be enthusiastically working in 15-step straight-line HEEL patterns anticipating that reward he has waiting for him in Pleasant Heaven.

Keep up your Words of Encouragement, don't start reducing those yet. You can also pat your left leg as you move along to draw attention to it. Over time, you can raise your hand higher along your leg. Ultimately, we are aiming for you to have your left hand planted on your belly-button, but don't move it higher if your pup is starting to forge ahead.

## **Paying Attention**

As you start to move away from continuous reward schedules, you can also start to build greater levels of attentiveness on the HEEL exercise by marking and rewarding eye-contact. To start, every time the puppy looks up into your face during a HEEL pattern give your TRM. Very quickly you should be able to work thinner interval and duration reward schedules along the same schema given above.