

## TEST 1 : PHYSICAL EFFORT

Take a chair, sit and stand up (without help from your hands). Repeat 5 times.

Outcome: do you feel your shoulders your neck, your joints (ankles, knees and hips) and your muscles all over your body working?

**WHEN A DOG REFUSES TO SIT, IT MAY BE BECAUSE HE IS IN PAIN**

## TEST 2 : LET'S COUNT!

1. Take any 24 hours and **write down how many times and the reason you ask your dog to sit**. Ask a family member to observe, as you will no doubt forget to count some.
2. **Add them up**. How many times did you ask your dog to sit? To dry his paws? To ask him to wait? To put the lead on? To open the front or car door? Was it really necessary? Does the dog really need to sit why not just let him choose the position he feels most comfortable in?

**DO NOT ASK YOUR DOG TO SIT, GIVE HIM THE CHOICE**

## RECOMMENDED BOOK AND DVD

- 🐾 *On Talking Terms with Dogs: Calming Signals* by Turid RUGAAS (book)
- 🐾 *The wee signs of the dog* by Turid RUGAAS (DVD)



**Older dogs and puppies often have insufficient core strength and balance to sit or stand up in full control of the movement.**

## FOR INFORMATION

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# TO SIT OR



# NOT TO SIT?

## A DOG MAY CHOOSE TO SIT TO

- 🐾 **respond to someone's request** (learned behaviour)
- 🐾 **take a treat**, the offering hand being positioned too high
- 🐾 **change position**: for instance it might be easier to go from lying down to sit and then to standing
- 🐾 **watch the world go by**: the dog may be more comfortable in that position at that moment (a question of choice)

Sitting to observe



- 🐾 **scratch**: a question of efficiency and ergonomics
- 🐾 **communicate**: to sit is one of many calming signals (please refer to "Recommended book and DVD")

## ANATOMICAL CONSEQUENCES

- 🐾 the hind quarter **joints** are compressed under the dog's weight
- 🐾 the **sacrum** is under pressure
- 🐾 **blood circulation is less efficient**
- 🐾 a number of **muscles** are put to work both to sit and stand up: a puppy's musculature is not sufficiently developed and an old dog's one is declining. Any dog with an injury or muscular weakness is confronted with sitting issues



## SOLUTIONS AND ALTERNATIVES

- 🐾 **never ask** a puppy, an old, injured or weakened dog to sit
- 🐾 **do not ask** even a healthy dog to sit and stand up repetitively
- 🐾 **lower your hand to offer the treat**



Lower the hand to treat

- 🐾 **allow the dog to choose his own position**: he can for instance stay standing whilst waiting
- 🐾 **osteopath**: annual check up for a healthy adult dog, 2 to 4 times a year for an older or sick dog or one still growing (especially large breeds)
- 🐾 **Body awareness (proprioception)**: varying the activities allows for a full development of the muscle structure (both the short/deep muscles and the long/superficial ones)