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## The 4D's

The 4D's are

- Distraction
- Duration
- Distance
- Difficulty

Initially for an exercise you may be adding **Duration**. This is a longer time in a position such as a sit or a down or hand touch. As your dog gains confidence in the ability to understand the marker word or click means that good things are coming and maintains position then they will be able to learn that they stay in position longer.

When you are asking for a sit and a longer time, it is vital that the time is varied. From 1 second, to 3, to 2, to 3, to 5, to 2 and so on. Your click or marker word is used to state that they have maintained position for that length of time and treat delivery is 2 seconds after that.

So, you now have a building duration. Now you may want to add **distance** additional criteria.

You add 3 feet away to a fragile 10 seconds in position and you may have failure. You have set your dog up to fail.

When adding another **D**, **lower the D** that you have been working on. In the above example you need to lower the duration, whilst adding distance. As with duration, you mix up the distance and it may be 1 step in either direction first.

Adding **distraction** such as asking the dog to do training in a park or in a village out on a walk, or down the pub, you will need to drop the previous 2D's again and set up your dog for success.

**Difficulty** is looking at the exercise generally - is this going to be too difficult for my dog to do so that it leads to frustration or is it that the dog finds it too easy and gets bored or loses interest.

This is also part of **Criteria setting**.

***Set your dog up to succeed rather than to fail as it is harder to retrain a dog, that to train a solid behaviour from new!***

