



## Quiet Time with People

Spending time with people is one of the most important needs of our dogs as it is extremely helpful in reducing their stress. The goal for quiet time is to give dogs a chance to relax and enjoy quality time with people. Often our time with dogs is spent doing active things, such as training or playing fetch; dogs in a kennel environment tend to be over-stimulated, and lose the ability to settle. It can be easy to forget that 'down time' with people is just as important as active time.

### General Rules

- Quiet time can either take place in the dogs kennel or in a quiet, non-distracting environment, typically somewhere indoors, such as an office or training room.
- Quiet time should last 5 to 30 minutes. (The minimum time is set low to encourage people to help with this activity — recognizing everyone is busy).
- Good activities during quiet time include: relaxing, petting, grooming, massage, or doing paperwork/reading while you hang out with the dog.
- The most important thing is that what you are doing is not active.

### How to Implement Quiet Time

1. If you're spending quiet time in a room, it's best to let the dog explore the room first, but make sure you stay calm and relaxed, and there are no toys around that will excite the dog.
2. Sit on the floor or in a chair and read a book or magazine (or whatever you would like to do during quiet time); remember to keep calm and quiet.
3. Once the dog has a chance to explore (with the leash dragging), start petting the dog with long slow strokes from neck to rear end (as long as they are comfortable being petted).
4. Hold the leash gently so that the dog stays with you. If he's pulling to get away, let him go but try again in a few minutes.

### Helpful Tips

1. If the dog starts to get excited and starts jumping up, ignore the behavior; remain calm and go back to reading your magazine or book.
2. You can also give the dog a massage or simply just sit with the dog.
3. You may want to provide a mat or bed if there isn't one in the room.
4. If the dog doesn't seem to be settling in the location you choose, try a quieter room, so that the dog has a better chance of settling.
5. If the dog will not settle down for the entire session, let a manager know - this is something we would want to evaluate!

**Tony La Russa's Animal Rescue Foundation**

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Remember: the goal of the exercise is to give the dog a chance to simply relax! Quiet time is good for the dog and for you too!

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