



Prerequisite: Your dog should already know the DOWN command. What this trick looks like: The dog is laying down, with one paw crossed over the other in an elegant fashion.

Begin with your dog in the DOWN position. If your dog knows how to give you his paw on command, ask him to do this, and hold out your hand right in front of him. Click and treat each time he gives you his paw, while remaining in the DOWN position. Be sure to focus on just clicking and treating your dog for raising THE SAME PAW EACH TIME, either the right paw OR the left.

If your dog doesn't know how to give you his paw on command, hold a treat in your closed hand, and wiggle it around on the ground right in front of one of his paws while the dog is in the DOWN position. After a bit of time, most dogs will try to paw at your hand, hoping to get you to release the treat. As soon as his paw touches your hand, click and then give him the treat.

When the dog is reliably targeting your hand with only one of his paws, you are ready for the next challenge. Gradually move your hand closer to the dog's other front leg, so he must now lift his paw and move it sideways in order to place it in your hand. Continue to click and treat good responses. You may notice that as you place your hand closer to the other leg, many dogs will try giving you that paw instead. Just pull your hand away and ignore these responses.

When your dog can easily target your hand when it is on the far side of his other leg, start pulling your hand away at the last second. Now his paw will land on top of the other leg in a crossed position. Click and treat promptly. Gradually fade your hand signal so it is further away from the dog. When he is performing this behavior reliably, add your COMMAND. You may choose to say CROSS, or come up with your own unique command.

Practice until your dog can easily cross his paws on cue even when you are a distance away.