

RECALL

TEACHING YOUR DOG TO “COME”

Never punish your dog for returning to even if it took him longer than you wanted or he was “bad.” Punishment will teach him to avoid you.

RULES FOR TEACHING RECALL:

- 1) Work in a safe area that is fenced in or use a long leash/line.
- 2) When you are calling him to you, use your **excited voice** to encourage him towards you. **Kneel** down to look less intimidating and more inviting.
- 3) **You’re the party!** Coming to you should include a **happy voice with praise, petting and treats!**
This is **very important in the beginning to establish a good recall. Be sure to use an extra yummy treat when working on recall – a plain dry biscuit is not motivating to most dogs.*
- 4) In the beginning, **ONLY** say the word “**COME**” when you are **100% sure** he is going to come to you. You can tell by his body language (he’s focused on you). You do not want to repeat the work over and over; it will make the word meaningless.
- 5) Always grab his collar so it becomes a habit and he gets used to it. This will be important if you need to catch your dog in an emergency!
- 6) It’s useless to chase your dog, get him to chase you instead! Catch and release the majority of the time.
- 7) If you need to do something that he doesn’t like (bath, nail trim, etc.), avoid calling him to you. It’s best to go to his spot and put the leash on (or even pick him up, if he’s small enough).

Integrate practicing recall into your daily life. A great time to practice the word “Come” or saying his name (Name Recognition) is when he will naturally come to you for a treat after potty time or during meal times. Make a good association to the cue word “Come” and to his name.

Recall practice done daily will strengthen the behavior you desire – your dog to return to you when called. Make it fun and enjoy this bonding time with your dog!

Fun Recall Games

Doggie Ping Pong: Two people sit at a distance and call her name, when she comes to you, give a treat, and then the other person calls her name, then treats. You want to say “come” when she is running in your direction. Continue this exercise, but stop before she loses interest. In other words... you say when the game is over, not her.

Hide n Seek: Start off when she can see you and say her name ... as she is running towards you say “come” and reward when she is sitting in front of you. Continue to make this exercise more difficult by actually hiding and saying her name ...when she finds you ... Reward with treats and praise!

Long Line Recall: Practice in a quiet area. Use a 20 or 30 ft. leash (for smaller dogs, use a shorter leash). Start off with a short distance.

1. Say “come” in an excited and inviting voice, use the leash to reel in if needed, once she has “come” to you, praise heavily and treat. Crouching down helps to gain your dog’s attention.
2. Continue to do this by giving more leash, so she is at a greater distance to “come” to you!
3. You can let go of the leash once you are confident she will come. Practice this in a safe area. Never chase your dog when you are trying to get her - it’s a game to her. If anything, run away so she chases you!

Running Backwards: You can run backwards with the leash to encourage her towards you! When you stop, ask for your dog to Sit. Then release the sit.

Puppy out the Gate: One person holds your dog and the other takes off running while calling the puppy. Once you know your dog is charged up, let her go! Once she catches the running person, they grab the collar and reward lavishly.

Keep in mind . . .

When you call your dog, it is a matter of whether the motivation to obey you outweighs what has his interest at that time.

Provide a motivation for your dog to find YOU more interesting than whatever else he may be doing at that time. Example: if you know your dog likes chicken, associate that coming to you is better than chasing a squirrel because he will get chicken when he comes to you. You can give the chicken treat a special name like “Yummy,” or another word you don’t use often. If you say that word, you have to give that special treat. This is called Reliable Recall and can work in an emergency situation.