

# THE RELIABLE RECALL

There are a lot of training steps your dog needs to understand in order to come when called! Your dog needs to be taught each step and then be able to put all those steps together, one after the other.

Your dog must: 1. Hear you calling; 2. Respond to that call; 3. Leave whatever was interesting; 4. Choose you over whatever was interesting; 5. Move towards you; 6. Allow you to touch him; 7. Remain with you until released.

Each exercise described below must be practiced separately and everywhere! If you only train in your yard, you will have a well-trained dog, but only in your yard...if you want a well-trained dog everywhere, help your dog to understand by training each step everywhere! Training is short, easy, and fun – no more than a minute and with high value rewards.

1. **A word or sound to get your dog's attention:** start by teaching your dog that his name is the best sound in the world! Say your dog's name, drop or deliver a treat. Whistle or clap and drop a treat.
2. **A target to come to:** I use wiggly fingers in front of my knees. Palms are facing outward, fingers are making a ticklish motion. The target is dog's collar in your hand. Put the first two steps together then say your dog's name, move back a step or two, place hand on collar, deliver a treat with the other hand.
3. **Hand on collar is a safe and fun thing!** It is not a safe and fun thing if you grab or drag. That tickly motion you are making with your fingers is a perfect motion for scratching under the collar. Your dog has probably come into your front so you can tickle and turn slightly and straighten up slightly while also telling your dog how brilliant he is.
4. **Duration:** as you are straightening, say "follow" as you gently release the collar and keep wiggling your fingers and Keep Moving!! You now have a dog that has come into your space, allowed you to touch the collar (confinement) and follows you for a step or two (duration).
5. **Say "Free!"** when your dog no longer has to follow you or stay in your space and is permitted to go back to playing or sniffing.

Variations: instead of giving food, give verbal praise and the under the collar scratch but say "are you ready, let's go see!" and run with your dog back to the distraction he just came away from. For more information on this, google Premack Principal or ask me about it during a lesson.

## Other skills that help with the recall:

"What's this" where you point to a treat that you have dropped on the ground. Keep your hand there so your dog still has a hand target to go to.

"Leave it" is a cue that means your dog should turn his nose away from whatever it was turned towards.

"This way" or "let's go" means you are changing directions now and your dog should follow you.

Drop a treat and run away, your dog will get the treat but will follow your movement. Rinse, Repeat.

Each time your dog runs past you, say "good" just as they are beside you and then you immediately turn in the opposite direction. Don't say anything, just turn and keep moving. You will see your dog will lessen the distance it runs from you. This exercise is best done in a confined space such as the Black Creek Dog Park or beach when the tide is out.

**A couple of "rules":** Never yell "come" to a bum! Wait until you get your dog's attention before recalling him. Never, ever punish a dog that you have finally caught...the number one rule is that it is always, always safe to come into your space. Hold your ground, as in, do not start moving in circles calling your dog as this is a sure way to teach dogs how to run circles around you. A dragging long-line is a good idea at the beginning of training; then a dragging leash; then off-leash. You must smell better (high value treats) and be more fun (running/playing) than anything else out there!

