



Recall:

Teaching your dog obedience training can be simple and fun with the correct information and some patience. Having your dog return to you when you call it is one of the most important behaviours to train – and the most common problem presented to me by dog owners. **These Top Tips will make teaching recall fun, enhance the bond you have with your dog and effectively teach a secure recall which could well save its life.**

- 1.** You must have – or find – patience. If the dog is busy sniffing another dogs bottom or having fun chasing a squirrel, you're just not going to get a look in! In the dog world, you're way more uninteresting than a dog bum or a ball being thrown at the other end of the park! Good recall takes time to gradually build up and during this time we slowly teach the dog that we are much more fun to come back to when called.
- 2.** The recall should be taught as early as possible – 8 weeks is not too early to start embedding components of the recall.
- 3.** Put your dog's collar and lead on and start training in a quiet area free of distractions. Hold a really yummy treat in front of his nose (try pieces of frankfurter or cheese or Trainers Secret, the excellent liver training treat from www.dog-and-bone.co.uk) and run backwards holding the lead loosely, giving the cue ("come") as you do so. The dog will follow you willingly to chase the treat. This is how we begin to associate the cue ("come") with the yummy treat.
- 4.** If the dog gets distracted, show him the treat again and give the cue as he is running towards you, encouraging him ("good, come"). Start with a small distance and build up the amount of running backwards.
- 5.** Keep a positive, happy tone when calling him (who'd want to go running to someone shouting at them?!?) and open your arms wide in a welcoming gesture all the time encouraging the dog ("good boy!").
- 6.** If your dog is motivated by toys, take his favourite toy away from casual play and keep it just for rewarding him with the treat and a quick play session when he comes back to you.
- 7.** Vary the treats so he doesn't always get the same treat to keep his interest. Pieces of cheese, frankfurter sausage, dried liver and garlic sausage are all great motivators!

Keep the "come" command short, simple and use only when you intend to reward him. Don't use it if you need to get your dog to come to you for medication or to be shut away otherwise he'll quickly learn coming back isn't quite as fun as they first thought!

It's really important that you have your dog's attention (use their name) before you give the command. If you keep repeating "come" while they're busy playing with another dog, you will simply reduce their compliance by reducing the impact of the command.

When the recall on a lead is good, progress to a long line to increase the distance. When this is good, let go of the long line so it trails behind the dog and use it to gently reel them in when they ignore the command.

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Never, ever reprimand the dog for not listening to you or disobeying you when he returns, no matter what they've done. They won't associate your punishment with the crime, only with the last thing they've done (coming back to you!).

Call your dog 5 times every time you take them out to get lots of practice, in different locations and with different distractions. It's also really important to sometimes put the dog back on its lead, even if you're not going home. This will ensure he doesn't always associate the lead with ending the walk and therefore not coming back!

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