

Real World Manners.

Make sure to keep the list of your dog's favourite things in mind when working on training exercises. During the initial training stages of training a new behaviour use high value rewards interspersed with kibble. Switch back to high value rewards when upping the difficulty and distraction.

Use other reinforcers to reward good behaviour such as kibble, treats, stuffed enrichment toys, toys, throw of a ball, tug of war game, verbal praise, ear scratch, access to other people, access to other dogs, access to interesting smells, access to other fun activities etc.

Focus:

This is important so as to hold your dog's attention in order to instruct him or so that he isn't looking at something you would rather he didn't.

Dogs at the beginning will have a very short attention span but this will increase as the dog begins to enjoy the training game. The idea is for the dog to make eye contact with you.

Remember, to catch your dog doing the right thing so if you notice him making eye contact with you outside of training sessions give him a big reward.

- Show your dog a treat.
- As your dog watches it hold it up to your mouth (as if you are going to eat it, but don't!) and say "WATCH ME"
- When your dog makes eye contact with you say "YES" and give him the treat.
- Repeat this exercise; as the dog gets better at it gradually extend the time he has to look at you before giving him the treat.

- Once he readily holds eye contact for ten seconds, try asking him to watch with you moving an empty hand to your mouth; when he does so deliver the treat from your other hand that was behind your back.
- Repeat and build time gradually.

- Once holding eye contact for ten seconds, ask the dog to watch with just the verbal cue and not the hand movement. Ask only for eye contact for a second or two before rewarding from your hand.
- Repeat and build the time gradually.

- When perfected, try this challenging one:
 - Hold the treat in your outstretched hand and ask the dog to watch.
 - He will probably hesitate and watch the treat in your hand.
 - Wait from him to make eye contact and as soon as he does say YES and deliver the reward.
 - Repeat and build time gradually.

- You can try other challenging routines such as hold a treat in your hand behind your back and wave your other hand out to your side; move a step back from your dog and ask him to watch etc.
- Once perfected move up the distraction levels and start again at the simplest exercise each time you go up a distraction level.

Recall:

This can be a difficult one because there are often other things more interesting around the dog than returning to their owner. Recall training is often neglected by owners because when the puppy first comes home they greet everyone and will bound towards anyone who shows any interest in them; puppies are compulsive greeters!

In fact we teach our dogs not to come back to us!

We often call our dogs and then tell them off or we call our dogs and then put them back on leash and deprive them of the fun and games - dogs quickly learn NOT to come when called!

- Only ever use your dog's name when you have something great to offer him: treats, dinner, toys, games etc. We want to condition an automatic responsive to his name.
- When your dog is engaged with something else such as playing a game with another person or dog, while playing with a toy, while sniffing in the garden (not while toileting or sniffing in his toilet area), while chewing etc. call his name in an excited voice.
- If your dog does not move toward you immediately, begin to move away until your dog responds.
- When he comes to you, take his collar and lure him into a sit and give him a treat or go back with him and join in the game
- Allow him to return to what he was doing.
- This must be practiced a lot so that your dog learns that being called away from something does not mean the end of fun.

Recall Relays is a great way to exercise your dog while teaching the dog to respond to his name when called by different people.

- Sit on the floor or ground a few yards away from the other person/s.
- Start with one person holding the dog and have another call him.
- When he gets to the other person they should take the dog's collar, lure a sit and give the dog a treat.
- The next person should call the dog and repeat.
- When the dog is very good at responding to his name in all sorts of situations you can start Distraction Recalls with him.

Distraction Recalls are carried out in the house in a long room with the help of an assistant.

- The assistant acts as the distracter and should have a little bag full of tasty treats.
- The distracter should stand at one end of the room totally ignoring the dog but keeping the bag of treats obvious.
- The other handler acts as the caller and does not have any treats.
- The caller should call the dog who will probably ignore them devoting time and energy on the distracter.
- The caller should continue to call at regular intervals, every few seconds.
- The dog will probably try a range of behaviours to get the distracter to relinquish treats – such as yelp, bark, roll over, sit-down-sit, paw, beg and all sorts of other behaviour repertoires.
- No matter how much persuasion the distracter should ignore the dog.
- Eventually the dog will be torn away and should be lavishly praised and encouraged for any signs of focusing on the handler.
- As soon as the dog returns to the caller, the caller should hold the dog by the collar and take him immediately to the distracter who should give the dog plenty of treats.

Tips for recall training:

- only call the dog using his name when you have something tasty to give him
- if you call the dog and take him away from something he enjoys you must provide something more enjoyable and allow him access to the enjoyable situation again (otherwise the dog associates the recall with being deprived access to fun) – obviously this can only be done where safe
- While out on walks recall the dog, treat him and put him back on the lead for a couple of minutes. Providing he is behaving calmly and it is safe to do so let him off the lead again. This must be done randomly on all walks and not just when approaching the gate of the park.
- you must make yourself the most attractive thing to the dog – so provide tasty treats and plenty of fun games

Sit, Down & Stand:

1. SIT

- Take one treat in the palm of your hand and cover it with your thumb so that it doesn't fall.
- Show the dog your hand with the treat
- Draw the dog's head up with your hand right at the dog's nose
- You should think of the sit exercise as a way of getting the head raised; do that and the back end will follow.
- Once the dog is sitting enthusiastically with the guiding treat and probably automatically at other times too, you can move onto the next stage.

- Keep all of the treats in your pocket and use the opposite hand to deliver the same hand movement (as if you were using a treat to guide the dog's head into position)
- Once the dog sits deliver a treat from your other hand. As the dog progresses you can give the hand signal and treat the dog once he sits by throwing the treat a short distance so the dog has to stand up so that the exercise can be repeated.
- When the dog sits to the hand signal you can move onto the next level.

- Say the cue 'SIT' just before using the hand signal.
- As soon as the dog sits, deliver a treat from the other hand. As the dog progresses you can give the hand signal and treat the dog once he sits by throwing the treat a short distance so the dog has to stand up so that the exercise can be repeated.

- Remember reward the dog while he is in position only, not when he stands up.
- Move up the distraction levels and practice sits in all sorts of places.

2. DOWN

Lying down is a natural position for dogs and they will readily lie down in the absence of cues from humans. So the first step is to treat the dog any time he lies down without any interference from people; this is important because when the dog lies down itself it usually settling so remember to reward this calm behaviour.

- Holding a treat in your fist, palm down, guide the dog into a sit.
- Move your hand, palm down, down by the dog's nose to his front feet and out from his body.
- Some dogs get it straight away and some have to be worked a little harder.
- You can start by rewarding the head down, then the feet out, then the back end lowered.
- As soon as the dog lies down open your hand and release the treat.
- Guide him back into a sit and repeat the above steps.
- This is called 'push-ups' and helps the dog to learn the difference between positions.
- Repeat this until the dog enthusiastically moves into position.
- Now you can use an empty hand to guide the dog into position and deliver treats from the other hand.
- Say the cue 'DOWN' before using the hand signal.
- As soon as the dog lies down, deliver a treat from the other hand.
- Remember reward the dog while he is in position only, not when he stands up.
- Practice smooth, quick push-ups at different distraction levels.

3. STAND

- Hold a treat in your palm, under your thumb.
- From a sitting position, guide your puppy by moving your hand straight out from his nose.
- When he stands deliver the treat and repeat.
- As you progress, hold the treat a little tighter in your hand so that the dog spends some time nibbling the treat in your hand and therefore in standing position.

- While he stands, use your other hand to put gentle pressure on his back – this creates some resistance so the dog becomes aware of his position.
- When he's readily standing from a sitting position, use an empty hand to signal him and deliver the treat from your other hand.
- Once the dog is readily standing to the hand signal, introduce the cue "STAND" before the hand signal and reward from your other hand.
- Practice this exercise but ask for a stand from a lying down position.
- Practice the stand exercise up through the distraction levels.

Position Changes:

- When the dog has mastered all three positions to verbal cues start mixing up your combinations of position changes:

SIT - DOWN - SIT - STAND - DOWN - STAND

- Practice this exercise up through the distraction levels.
- Practice this exercise while you sit or lie on the sofa; practice this exercise while you lie on the floor; practice this exercise from the other side of the door; practice this exercise while the dog is in a stationary car; practice this exercise while you stand behind the dog

Stays:

The cue word 'STAY' is not required but a thorough understanding of the position cues is essential for your dog to be able to stay in position until you release him. So if you ask your dog to sit, you are asking him to stay in sit position until you offer a release cue.

You can choose to train the dog to stay in position in a stand, a sit and a down. I usually start with down-stay training as the dog is probably less likely to break position and is unable to break position too quickly. But if you find that your dog is likely to sit up from a down position start with sit stay training.

For stay exercises we are going to introduce a 'no reward' marker' to be used if the dog breaks position and to let the dog know that the reward is not available if you break position.

Not only will you move up distraction levels with this exercise but also you will build on duration. Each time you move up a distraction level start again at the smallest increment of duration and build again before moving on. You will not only use distraction levels but you will also play 'devil's advocate' by providing distractions.

Remember, only to reward your dog while he is in position not once he stands up or changes position himself.

- Lure or cue your dog into position and stand in front of him.
- Offer him a treat every 2-4 seconds. Only ask him to remain in position for about 10 seconds and as he gets it gradually increase this duration.
- If he breaks position say "TOO BAD" and cue him back into position. Withhold a treat for at least 3 seconds.
- After a ten second stay say "OK" and toss a treat or toy forward so that dog has to get up to get it.
- Practice at distraction level 1 until you can achieve a one minute stay, without breaks with you standing in front of the dog.
- Still at distraction level 1, now work on distance. Begin by moving two steps away and build up to a one minute stay.

- Then move four steps, six, eight etc. starting at a couple of seconds and regular returns to treat the dog while he is in position and then build duration.
- Move up through the Distraction Levels.

Try these exercises:

- Put your dog in position and walk in circles around him - vary the duration and the number of circles (don't get dizzy!)
- Put your dog in position, and have an assistant roll a ball several feet/yards from the dog - vary the distance between ball and dog. Give the release cue and then allow the dog to chase the ball.
- Put your dog in position and jump up and down on the spot a few steps away from him.
- Put your dog in position and move out of sight - build duration as your dog becomes more comfortable.
- Practice these exercises at different Distraction Levels.

Loose Leash Walking:

Leash pulling is one of the most common complaints people have about their dogs but it should be understood that we actually train dogs to pull!

Pet dogs do not necessarily need to walk in a 'glued to the leg' position seen in obedience competitions but the dog should walk with slack on the leash and be responsive to their handler.

So loose leash walking is different to tradition 'heeling' which is far more formal and not really practical for every day walking.

Consistency is the most important factor - do not reward your dog for pulling!

Follow Me!

- Start this exercise in a low distraction area such as the back garden. You do not need to use a leash. If you are moving up the distraction levels and are out and about leash your dog. Do not hold the leash but fasten it to your belt.
- Use your dog's favourite treats or toy and hold them hidden from the dog's view.
- Call the dog and walk briskly away from him, encouraging him verbally to catch up.
- The very second he is in good walking position say "YES" and give him a treat or the chance to play tug or fetch with the toy.
- Continue moving and start the exercise again.
- Repeat until you can achieve a full circle with the dog in good walking position, looking at you waiting for something nice.

Red Light Green Light:

- Using your chosen walking device (flat collar, harness or head collar) fit it on your dog and then let the dog relax.
- Do not proceed with the 'go for a walk' routine until the dog is calm.
- When the dog calms, cue a sit and take out his leash, wait for him to calm. Once calm, fasten the leash and again wait for calmness before proceeding.
- Practice this exercise in low distraction areas too not just when going for an actual walk. Getting out for a walk is going to be difficult the first couple of times but as soon as the dog begins to understand this game you will make fast progress.
- Take one step, as soon as there is any tension on the lead STOP dead and be very boring.
- Do not pay any attention to the dog until he loosens the leash and sits.
- When he does offer him a treat and take another step.
- Repeat and wait for him to loosen and sit.
- Repeat on your entire walk and through practice exercises in low distraction areas.

It is essential that you are consistent and **never** give the dog the opportunity to get where he wants to go by pulling.

As we move through this program we will talk about how to wean your dog off any training devices.

Positions on the move:

If you have worked hard on training positions in all sorts of situations this exercise should be no problem. Again, the cue "WAIT" is not necessary but instead you will ask your dog to take up a cued position as he moves away or towards you.

- Start with the dog leashed as you practice walking exercises.
- Cue the dog into a position (sit) as you walk him.
- Give him a treat and continue walking.
- Practice this exercise using different positions and at different distraction levels.

- Try this exercise when the dog is loose in a low distraction area but walking close to you.
- Cue a position and reward the dog and then release him to play or sniff around.
- Vary the distance from which you cue the dog, starting close by and gradually increasing distance.
- Once you can cue the dog into anyone of the three positions from several feet/yards you can move up distraction levels; each time you move up a level start again with simplest exercise.

- This exercise is very important so it really requires much work so that the dog is reliable in even the most distracting situations. Can you cue your dog into position as it runs towards another dog or runs towards that group of children or runs after a squirrel or run towards a busy street....?

Leave it:

- Hide a tasty, smelly treat in your closed fist and show it to your dog - do not let him have it.
- He will probably paw, lick and nibble at your closed fist but do not let him get even a taste of the hidden treat.
- As soon as he looks away open your fist and say "TAKE IT".
- Practice the exercise until the dog no longer paws or fusses at your closed fist when introduced but waits for you open it.
- At this stage you can introduce the "LEAVE IT" cue when you show your dog your fist.
- Toss a treat onto the floor near your dog and as soon as he approaches it cover it with your foot. Make sure you are wearing strong shoes for this exercise.
- Your dog will probably try to fight your foot to get at the hidden treat.
- As soon as he looks away, offer him a really tasty treat from your hand saying "TAKE IT".
- Uncover the treat and tap the floor to encourage him to look for the treat under your foot again and repeat the exercise.
- When he no longer fights at your foot introduce the "LEAVE IT" cue and reward him from your hand saying "TAKE IT".
- Call your dog to you and show him a treat.
- Toss the treat a little behind and to your side.
- Your dog will try to get to the treat but you must use your body to block his progress. **Do not** move into your puppy or use your knees or feet – this can seriously injure a dog.
- Wait for your puppy to stop and sit and then offer a really tasty treat from your hand saying "TAKE IT"
- Do not let your dog have the treat off the floor - pick it up and toss again so as to repeat the exercise.
- Soon your dog will sit upon seeing you toss the treat, at this stage introduce the "LEAVE IT" cue before tossing the treat.
- Once perfected, say LEAVE IT, toss the treat and wait for the dog to sit. When he does give him a treat from your hand saying "TAKE IT".

Object Exchanges:

- Give your dog something that is low down on his favourites list. Perhaps a latex squeaky toy.
- Let him take it and play with it for a few seconds, in effect taking possession of it.
- Approach your dog and hold a really tasty treat (something high up the list) close to his nose.
- As soon as he leaves the first object hold out your hand offer him the treat saying "TAKE IT". With your other hand remove the first object.
- When he has taken the treat, offer him the first object again.
- Repeat the exercise until the dog will happily leave the object when you approach. At this stage use the cue "LEAVE IT" before showing him the treat.
- When the dog happily leaves this low value object on cue you can move up to the next thing on his favourites list.

A **word of warning** here - many dogs are resource guarders and we will discuss this issue before starting these exercises. If this is an issue for your dog we will discuss way that we can work on this common issue.

Settle and Be Calm:

This is a useful exercise for all dogs and there are several different approaches to teaching dogs how to settle down and be calm.

For the most part we tend to ignore our dog when they are calm and pay them lots of attention (albeit giving out) when they are being crazy.

- Catch your dog doing the RIGHT thing: when your dog is settled lying on his bed or calmly staring into space – toss him a treat or sit down beside him and scratch his favourite spot. Do this regularly and very quickly your dog will realise that being calm is way more fun than jumping up or chewing the furniture or chasing the cat or digging the roses or barking at nothing etc. etc. Most dogs will naturally become more relaxed when in a lying down position so it is important to get this behaviour on cue. This way you can ask the dog to lie down when required.
- From the time you get your dog routinely confine him to his bed area with a tasty chew or stuffed Kong toy. Do not leave the dog there with nothing to do and remember to supervise the dog when not confined. The idea is to informally teach the dog that being alone is ok; chewing and working on an enrichment toy help to relieve dogs of anxiety too.
- While out on walks, stop every few minutes or fifty or so yards. Do so at first only in low distraction, boring areas. Bring a book or newspaper with you. You could also bring your dog's favourite chew or a half stuffed Kong to help him settle. If you don't have a chew with you wait for him to settle and then toss a couple of treats every few seconds as a reward for calmness. When the dog has been calm and settled for a few minutes resume your walk.
- Teaching your dog to go to his den/bed on cue should never be used as a punisher but a positive experience for your pet and a valuable exercise for you. Play 'hide n' seek' with your dog and his favourite treats by hiding a couple in or under his bed. Guide your dog to 'go to bed' and once he is there and eating the treats, toss him another couple while he is there to keep him on the bed. Any time your dog goes to his bed himself toss a couple of treats. Very soon your dog will realise that being on the bed is a good place to be. Regularly hide treats or chews there and ask your dog to 'go to bed'.
- Teach your dog to go crazy and then to settle on cue so that you can control your dog more effectively. Say "GO CRAZY" and get your dog riled up by jumping up and down, wagging his favourite toy and speaking excitedly. As soon as he gets worked up allow him a minute or so of crazy and then lure/cue him into a down. Feed him treats while he is in the down position to keep him there longer. After a few seconds repeat – ask the dog to 'go crazy' and then settle again. Repeat until you can have the dog settled again within three seconds. This is a fun exercise that will help you to control your dog and allow him to let off steam when you think it is ok to do so.