

# Coming When Called

## Arguably the most important behavior you will ever teach your dog!

### You will have to learn to play with your dog!

- 1) Find food, toys, and games that your dog REALLY loves.
- 2) **Most dogs find it extremely reinforcing to be sent back out to play after coming to you.** *Make sure when you call your dog to you it doesn't always mean that fun time is over.* Recalls should be paired with having fun, especially in the beginning.
- 3) Start your play with your pup in an area with very low distractions and not too much space for them to run if they decide to blow you off.
- 4) Use a 20-50 foot long-line if they tend to gravitate away from you because of distractions. If it is safe, let the line drag. When it is in our hands, we tend to move the dog with the leash. *We want the dog to choose to come to you!* If they start to wander,
  - a) step on the long- line to stop them (make sure they are on equipment that won't hurt their neck),
  - b) reel them in while running away and calling them (Keep the line as loose as possible. Sometimes this means you have to be silly),
  - c) then reward when they come to you.
- 5) **Make sure to grab their collar before you send them back out to play!** They should come completely up to you without you having to reach far for them!
- 6) Throw commands into your play... "Sit," "Wait," "Go!," "Bring-it" or "Come," "Drop-it," "Tug," etc. *Learning commands during play can be more rewarding than a food treat to some dogs.*

### Is your reward reinforcing?

Make sure what you are doing for a reward is something your dog likes. If they are moving closer to you, they are probably having fun. If they are backing away, they may not find what you are doing reinforcing. **OR are the distractions too high?**

### Tips for slowly raising the bar.

- 1) Slowly raise the distance, then raise the distractions. Only make one thing harder at a time so they have the chance to learn it. ***If they are not paying attention, you went too far too fast!***
- 2) Use a long-line to keep them safe. Over time you will start to test them off the line in safe areas, but first we need them to have the muscle memory of coming back to you.
- 3) Make sure to change up the length of the long-line so they don't start to realize, "I am outside of my usual distance! I'm outta here"!
- 4) Play hide-and-seek games with two people. One person can hide and call them, then the second can find a different hiding place and call them. Remember to reward when they find you!
- 5) Don't forget to use rewards other than food. If they love ropes or a Kong, tug or play fetch when they come to you.
- 6) They must think you are the most fun thing in the world. Most importantly, you should be having fun too!

### Emergency Recall Word!

As you practice your everyday recalls you will need to randomly throw in your *Emergency Word*. **Make sure this word is always practiced on a line!** This is a special word that means they have no choice but to spin around and come to you. Make sure you are not repeating yourself and that you "back it up." If they don't come to you, reel them in! You just may need this one special word later in a real-life emergency!



**PRECIOUSK9s<sup>LLC</sup>**  
DOG TRAINING & BEHAVIOR  
**(417) 207-3215**

PreciousK9s.com