

Training a Recall

Amy Millward Dog Training



Top Tips for a Reliable Recall

- ★ Use a whistle or pick a special recall word. Use something like your dog's name followed by 'COME' or 'HERE'. Make sure you say it in the same way each time and use a loud, urgent voice without sounding scary or angry.
- ★ Say your recall command/sound once and ONLY ONCE. After that, run in the opposite direction and encourage with exciting cheers ("Let's Go!/PuppyPuppyPuppy") and hand clapping to encourage your dog to come.
- ★ Don't call your dog if you don't think they are going to come (they will learn they can ignore you), instead go and get them or do something so exciting they can't resist coming over.
- ★ Reward your dog well. Think of it from your dog's point of view; if your owner calls you and you are rewarded for running over with a single biscuit, would you run all that way again? However, if you came running over and were rewarded with lots of little pieces of cheese or ham, would you run faster next time? I'm sure would! If you want rubbish recalls use rubbish treats. If you want fantastic recalls use fantastic treats.
- ★ Only call your dog with their recall command for fun things, not for something they find unpleasant. Dogs can quickly learn to associate that command with negative things.
- ★ Make being caught part of recall by catching them before you give the reward. If the only time you catch the dog is to put them back on lead after a run they will associate it with the end of fun and avoid you. It needs to become a normal part of being called instead of 'oh no, I'm going to be put back on lead'.
- ★ Set your dog up to succeed by practicing away from distractions and putting them on a harness and long line if their recall isn't yet reliable. It is a good idea to make sure your dog is focused on you before you let them off lead.