

How to Teach Recall

The rules

- Never call your dog for something they don't like.
- Don't call your dog to punish them for inappropriate behaviour.
- Don't call your pooch if you're leaving a fun place; go and get them instead.
- Always reward your pup when they get to you.
- Only use your recall cue once.
- Play! Your dog loves it.

How to teach recall

1. We want our dogs to see their name as a "cue" to let them know we are going to direct them in some manner. Say your dog's name, long and loud, only once. The moment your dog turns and looks at you, click (mark) and reward. Repeat this 4-5 times, practice this regularly and randomly, and always reward! Use just the dog's name once; you want to ensure the first time you call them, and every time you call them, you get attention or a response. That way, you can achieve a great recall. If your dog learns to count how many times you call them, they will eventually begin coming only when the recall is repeated that many times.
2. Say your dog's name, long and loud, only once. The moment your dog turns and looks at you, click (mark), reel them in and reward in front of you. When your pup begins actively moving towards you when you call just their name, move on to Step 3.
3. Next, say your dog's name, long and loud, only once. The moment your dog turns and looks at you, begin to move away from them; they should follow. When they catch you, have a party! Play tug, throw a ball, give lots of pats, praise and treats. This is what creates your recall. When your pooch actively chases you every time you begin call them, move to Step 4.
4. Here's where we add a cue. Repeat the step above; when your dog is just a few feet away from you, begin to add your recall cue, like "come" or "here." Begin adding this cue whenever you know for sure your dog is going to land in front of you. At this stage always party, play and reward; even grab your dog's collar, reward them and release them again! Remember the recall rules: never call your dog to end the fun. If you need to leave the park, get in the car, or go in the house, first call your dog, attach their leash and release them. Then when you're ready, go get them.
5. Begin adding distance to your recall cue, and saying your recall word a little sooner, as long as you know your dog will end up beside you. If they don't come, go get them, bring them to where you called to them, and still praise and reward.
6. Once your dog is actively recalling every time, you can start asking for more precise obedience behaviours, such as a heel or a sit. If your dog begins to forget their recall, go back to the step at which they were successful and work there before upping the ante again.

