



Recall Skills Summary

One of the core skills our puppies need to learn is to come to us when we call them. This is known as “recall” and at PAWS we ask for the behavior with the verbal cue “Come!” A reliable recall is important as it enables us to call our puppies back to us at any time away from distractions or potential danger. It’s also important for their future lives as Assistance Dogs so their client can call their dog to them at any time to perform a task.

Phase 1 Beginners

- Article - Teaching Your Puppy Recall
- Video - “Come” Introduction

Phase 2 Improvers

- Article - Adding “Wait,” Distractions, and More Distance
- Video - Longline Recalls
- Video - Recall Past Distractions

Phase 3 More Challenging

- Article - Recall Games
- Video - Recall Games

Setting Up For Success

- The key to building a strong recall with your puppy is to always make coming to you a positive experience. If at any stage they are not successful, remain calm and set your expectations lower!
- Always be the most exciting thing in whatever environment you are working in. If you are working outside or in other high distraction environments, this might mean being somewhat squeaky and animated! Try not to worry about what your neighbors might think!
- Keep training sessions short and sweet and always end on success.
- Always start working on recall in a low distraction environment and begin with short distances.
- Make small changes in variables such as distance and distractions to aide proofing of your puppy’s recall behavior.
- Try to move through the stages slowly as that will help to build a more reliable recall in the long run.
- If the behavior is starting to break down at any stage, go back a few stages until it is reliable again.
- We do not want to “poison” the “Come” cue so try to avoid nagging. Use the verbal cue just once and try and avoid “Come, come, come, come...” as repeated cues with no reaction from your puppy quickly teaches them that the cue has no meaning.
- Keep practicing! Once your puppy has a reliable recall, don’t “tick the box” and move on. Keep practicing which will help proof, generalize, and maintain the behavior!