



Recall - Phase 2 More Challenging - Playing Recall Games

Introduction

Once you have a reliable recall with your puppy in a variety of environments and up to 10 -15 feet away, you can try some of these fun exercises to help proof and generalize the behavior.

As before, remember that as puppies go through developmental stages, or you make change with variables such as environment, they may regress with their training. When this happens, there is no harm in going back a stage or two, or even a phase or two, until they are back on track!

Off Leash Recalls in an Enclosed Area

Please do not try this exercise outside unless you have a securely fenced yard!! If you do not have a fenced yard, you can do this exercise indoors.

Up until now, we have done all our recall training with our puppies still attached to us by a leash or a longline, so if our recall fails, we can still reel them in and try again. Now we are going to test our puppy's skills by asking them to come to us when they are not on a leash or longline. Even if you have a fenced yard, set up for success by trying this in the house first. As before, start with very short distances and gradually build up the distance and distraction level. Once you have a good level of success in the house, move into the yard, but again start with very short distances.

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f being off leash is a step too far for your puppy, go back and do further proofing on the leash or longline.

To and Fro Game

You will need two people for this, and you can play indoors or outdoors (in a securely fenced area of course!) once your puppy has a reliable recall off leash.

Start by standing around 6 feet apart. One person calls the puppy to them. When they arrive at person 1 reward, and then person 2 calls them, and so on. Stick to 2 or 3 calls per person each time you play so your puppy stays focused.

Gradually build up the distance between you and your partner.

Hide and Go Seek

Once your puppy has a reliable, off-leash recall, this is a great game to play indoors when the weather is too hot or too cold to be outside.

If your puppy has a good “Wait” you can tell them wait, move out of their sight, and then call them to you. Or you can place a small pile of kibble on the floor to occupy them while you hide.

To begin with, don’t go too far away. Maybe just around a corner, or behind a door. When your puppy finds you, give them lots of praise and a food reward.

As your puppy becomes more familiar with this game, you can get further away and more creative with your hiding places!

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!