



Recall is one of the most valuable cues for your dog to learn. It ensures their safety in off-leash areas or if your dog escapes from your yard or home. It is strongly recommended that you always reward your dog generously for every successful recall while training this behaviour. Here are some recommendations for training effective recall.

Training Process

For successful recall, you need to be more enticing than everything else in your dog's environment. Rewards can be in the form of a high value treat or favourite toy.

Recall Exercise

- Get some high value treats and set them aside in your pocket or treat pouch. Seek a relatively low distraction area in your home.
- Give your verbal recall command, such as "come" in an exciting tone. Only say your verbal command once. After giving your verbal cue, you may have to further encourage your dog's attention, such as walking a few steps away from your dog.
- When your dog shows interest and comes towards you, mark your dog's behaviour (say "yes" or click if you are using a clicker) and reward. Be generous with your rewarding!
- Repeat this exercise 2-3 times a day and in different rooms of your home. Less repetition with high reward will produce the strongest possible recall response.
- When your dog is responding to your recall cue in your home, move to an outdoor environment, such as your backyard and repeat the above steps.
- Over time, progress to more distracting areas. When outdoors, it's recommended that you start by practising with your dog on a long leash or in an enclosed space. This ensures your dog's safety in case they do not respond to your recall cue. If your dog becomes does not respond to your cue, then revert to a less distracting area.

Helpful Tips

- Always reward your dog when they successfully respond to your recall cue. If you stop rewarding, your dog will lose motivation to respond. Building a strong recall response depends on a consistent history of rewards.
- Ensure you reward your dog after they come to you. Avoid pulling treats beforehand to entice your dog, as your dog may learn to only come towards you if you have treats visible. The goal is for your dog to respond to a recall cue, regardless if you have treats or not.

What to AVOID

In summary, here are some things to avoid when teaching recall:

- Punishing your dog if they do not respond. Your dog will associate you with fear, which will decrease their motivation to come towards you. Reward-based training is much more effective and humane.
- Starting in a high distraction environment. This does not set you or your dog up for success. If your dog is too aroused to pay attention to you, then you have progressed too quickly.

Additional Resources:

The Training Academy at the Edmonton Humane Society offers training classes, including Hustle Your Walk! This course helps you build reliable recall and loose-leash walking skills. For more information, visit our website:

<https://www.edmontonhumanesociety.com/sessions/hustle-your-walk/>

Did You Know?

You can also ask us behaviour questions by emailing:

askthespecialist@edmontonhumanesociety.com

It takes approximately \$7 million to keep the Edmonton Humane Society operational for one year and 40% of these funds come from generous donations made by supporters like you. Please Donate.