

Class 4 – Stay, Wait, & Recall

Building Self-Confidence

Does your dog follow you to the bathroom and sit outside the door waiting for you?

If so, your dog is very attached to you. This is not necessarily a bad thing, but it is too much of an attachment.

We need the dog to be more comfortable sitting or lying down alone for a period of time until we return to them.

This is why the dog needs confidence – if they are confident enough within themselves, they do not feel the need to follow you everywhere.

Keep in mind that this also connects to the idea that dogs are more than likely to complete the task if:

- 1) The environment is considered to be safe in the dog's eyes.
- 2) The reward is worth their while to complete the task.

Teaching Stay - "Return to the Dog"

- 1) Have the dog sit.
- 2) Show the dog the lure and hold your hand in a flat position and give the command "Stay!"

Do not push hand into dog's face. It is a gentle, flat handed push that does not fall below your waist level, as though you are preparing to pat your dog on the head.

- 3) Take one quick step back and immediately return to the dog. Reward upon returning to the dog.

Hesitating before returning to the dog may cause them to get up to come to you.

- 4) Repeat, while gradually increasing the number of steps by one step upon each successful completion of the stay.

Eventually, you can work your way to stepping briefly out of sight (around corners, behind doors, etc.). However, do not take things too quickly! If the dog gets up before you return, walk up towards the dog and place into a sit to retry. If the dog gets up twice, stop training and let them take a break.

The key to successfully doing stay is to gradually add one step at a time. Patience is key.

Teaching Wait - "Release the dog to come to you"

1) Have the dog sit.

2) Wave your hand in front of the dog one time and give the command "Wait!"

Do not move your hand too fast, as this will cause the dog to get up and chase your hand or make them too excited. Also do not hold the lure in this hand, as the dog will get up to follow the smell.

3) Take a few steps back and then use the release word from class 1. If the dog does not get up and come to you, squat down and move your hands a bit. They should come right up to you.

4) As the dog comes up to you, stand up (if squatting) and put them back into a sit. Give dog reward afterwards.

This will build a habit in the dog to immediately sit as they approach you, rather than jump or sniff around.

5) Repeat while gradually increasing distance from dog and eventually making it around corners.

Teaching Recall - The MOST Important Command for Any Dog

Does your dog come when called?

What happens if your dog is off leash and he sees a bunny or squirrel and goes chasing after it? Will he leave the distraction and come to you when you call them? What if there is a car coming?

What can you do?

Are you fun to come to?

You have to train, train, train for a good recall!! This is not something to slack on or ignore – your dog's life may depend on this exact command someday!

NEVER, ever call your dog when he is in trouble, if you're mad, or if you are going to do something bad to him! Their name and the word "Come" or "Here" should never mean something bad, so if he is in trouble, go and

get them. If you are going to crate them or trim their nails, go to them, but do not call them.

Imagine your dog and the bunnies – If “come” means something bad or even remotely negative, then there is NO WAY he is going to leave those super exciting bunnies for you.

The word “COME” or “HERE” needs to **FOOD, FUN, & PARTIES!!**

Does your dog drop everything and come running to you when he hears the cookie jar rattle or the treat bag crumple? Why is it that he listens so well to the rattle of the treat bag or a word that means treat?

Because he knows that 100% of the time, those sounds mean that you are going to give him a treat. If these sounds were not paired with something good or a treat, he would stop coming and then they would stop being meaningful cues.

Make sure that your command to “come” = something meaningful and good almost 100% of the time

Pair the word “come” with treats, games, jackpots of chicken breast, etc. Don’t call your dog and then take for granted the fact that he actually came to you. Keep in mind that the praise we give him is still not the same excitement as chasing a speedy squirrel.

However, the knowledge that FOR SURE you are going to be rewarded and you might get some chicken breast is often worth the gamble for your dog.

Being fun + Training = Fast Recall

Look at it from your dog’s perspective... Dogs want to fulfill their own needs, what is important is to pair what he likes with what you want!

A great way to teach your dog to come is to play **hide and seek!**

Have someone hold the dog’s leash or collar as you show him some treats and dash away to hide. First hid in easy to find places and as he gets better, you can truly “hide” and make him find you behind doors, in his crate, or other silly places.

As you call him, praise him. This is critical – even though you can’t see him coming, you must assume that he is scampering after you, so continue your praise.

Once he is finding you excitedly all over your home, take it to your backyard. Get a line of 25-50 feet and play the same game, dashing behind trees and bushes. Hide in places like under your car or behind trashcans. Make this game the most fun thing your dog has ever done!

The imprinting of FUN, FUN, FUN along with reliable treats means your dog will be more likely to automatically leave the bunny, squirrel, deer, etc., to rush to your side when you call him.

It is not enough to teach this or play this once or twice, you MUST continue to play this game throughout your dog's life. Once it is imprinted and he is enjoying it, you can play it less, but keep playing it occasionally to keep it sharp and reliable.

What NOT to do...

- Do not call him if he won't come!
- Do not call your dog when he is in trouble or you're going to do something negative to him. I know it was stated earlier, but it is incredibly important. This will RUIN this command's reliability!
- Do not be boring! If you are boring, your dog will be less likely to listen. Dogs often mirror our behavior, so the more animated and excited you are, the more likely your dog will be to listen and enjoy himself. Even if it is out of your comfort zone, get animated and have fun!
- NEVER, EVER call your dog if you think he won't come and you have no physical control over him (unless it is an emergency)
- If your dog ignores you, don't give him the opportunity to ignore your commands! This goes for any command, but especially the COME command. If your dog ignores you and doesn't come, this means the command means nothing to your dog and nothing happens to him to make him come.
- The more often you call him and he ignores you, the more the command loses its meaning and the less likely he is to ever come.
 - Instead put him on a leash and work on the command by playing games OR at least put him on a leash, so that if he ignores you, you can then make him listen by reeling him in

You may have to slowly work on the command, so that he listens off leash in a safe area, like your yard or a fenced in area. When he doesn't listen, go to him, clip on the leash,

and encourage him to listen to you by restricting his ability to run away and by encouraging him with treats, toys, and fun.

It is much easier to teach him this is fun, than to rely on force!

As always have as much fun as possible – this is what bonds you to your dog and vice versa! Work hard, so that if a moment comes and your dog's life hangs in the balance, he has a desire to play and please you and to leave any distraction behind!