

Advanced Beginner

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Please let us know of any questions or problems. Also please contact me by email unless it is urgent. If I don't answer, please leave a voice-mail. Please let us know if you will be missing a class.

Goal:

The Advanced Beginner class builds on the Beginner class. Heeling should become more specific. Work on Stays to increase time, distance and consistency. We introduce the Finish, the Stand, and the Front. We work on Recall to increase the distance and improve targeting. In short we prepare for Novice work.

What is training?

Bonding to take pack drive to optimum level possible. The ultimate goals of training will vary from one team to another and they can change over time. One common goal is to have the most enjoyable life together, at home, in the outdoors and in public. (my personal opinion)

We use prey drive, play drive and food drive to build pack drive. We handlers are the leaders of our packs, and we want our pack to be thrilled to give us their all.

It's a two way street. We have to give to receive. What we give we will receive back.

Consider:

- Enthusiasm and energy versus nonchalant and lethargic.
- Agitated and unsure versus calm and confident.

Praise increases the bond. Correction should be effective and as unoffensive as possible. But the worst correction is a nagging, unsuccessful correction. After successful correction comes praise. We *praise and reward* when the behavior doesn't require correction. When correcting there is praise (with success) but *no reward*. This teaches the dog that reward comes when they do it right the first time.

Basics:

- Train on a light stomach
- If your dog is 'wound up' then exercise him before training to take the edge off, and get focus from your dog
- Play with your dog and bring play into training

- Focus on your dog to get your dog to focus on you
- Play can be casual but training should always be purposeful and focused. When training we can play between exercises and we can work in a method that will cause our dogs to expect play, as a reward, after a successful exercise.
- Think about what you're doing and how you expect your dog to respond. Be prepared for any behavior. What will you do in response to each possible behavior.
- Leash Handling is an art and a skill. It has significant impact on training. Start with the basics and make them a habit. Improve timing and smoothness as you progress.
- We will make mistakes in our training, just as our dogs make mistakes. Realize that mistakes are part of learning and don't fret over them.

Basic class structure:

1. Assessment of current status and analyze goals (first 10 minutes)
2. Working
3. Questions and homework (last 10 minutes)

You're encouraged to ask questions at any time. Depending on circumstances the answers will be immediate or at end of class.

Standard working order:

1. Heeling
2. New exercise > (Focus, Stand, Exam, Front)
3. Stays
4. 5 minute break
5. Fronts
6. Recalls
7. Stays

This is a loose estimate of working order and it will vary, but the idea is to begin with moving, then learn something new, then be still, break, repeat.

Week 1 will start with us observing your heeling. We'll make suggestions and help you to implement them. Demonstrations will be given when appropriate. Heeling is a class in itself and it's not expected to achieve perfection in this class, but we'll attempt to point you in the direction of perfection.

After heeling, as we move on to the new exercise, we will take a few moments to individually assess goals. Motivational aids and games may be demonstrated.

Training Nuggets:

- Dogs are situational and their performance will vary depending on the situation. Always train to a higher goal than what you expect to achieve in the ring, at home and in public. Train your dog in different environments to overcome distractions.
- I recommend introducing hand signals early in the training process. There are signals for
 - Down
 - Sit
 - Stand
 - Stay
 - Come
- Remember and Use the Canine Learning Curve and how to use it in making Progress - don't go too far too fast. Assess your progress based on success, not speed. Our goal is for our dog to be successful. We can't expect success if we don't give the right information at the right time.

Distance is first. Work as close to your dog as you must in order to achieve success. Especially with first success the praise should be Big. Stay at that distance and gradually increase the time that you dog is performing the correct behavior. When (not If) correction doesn't work well to fix the mistake, then decrease the amount of time to achieve success and gradually work your way back up. When your dog is consistently successful, time after time, and day after day, increase your distance by one step for a small dog or 2 - 3 steps for a big dog. When you've increased the distance, start with a shorter time. With success, gradually increase the time. This is the key to teaching canines based on how they learn. The learning is like a W with progress and setbacks.

Distance first, time second, progress based on your success. Don't expect too much too fast. Better to proceed slowly with success than to proceed too quickly and lead your dog into failure.

It is easy to see how to apply this method to Sit, Down and Stay. Stand is always done in heel position. But it is also applied to Heeling with Focus. This will be demonstrated and discussed as it is almost always everyone's goal.

I will later give you a guideline of the progress that I hope we achieve over our six weeks. We are looking forward to meeting you and having fun training.

Steve Stout