

Come/Recall



TIPS **The rules of recall**

1. **Never call your dog for anything unpleasant.** Like nail clipping, bathing or having his lead put back on to go home from the park. In short, anything that might make him think twice the next time you call him.
2. **Never call your dog if you are not sure he will come.** If you aren't willing to bet £50 that your dog will come back when you call—don't call, go and get him. All recalls should be successful recalls. Work at your dog's level. If he has a nursery level recall, don't give him a degree level assignment like being called away from running deer.
3. **If you broke rule 2 and you call your dog and he doesn't come, you need to find a way to make it happen.** Run over to him and put a treat right in front of his nose, backing up as you get his attention so he follows you.
4. **Never repeat the cue.** Resist the urge to call over and over and over. Don't be *that* person. Your dog will just tune you out and learn that the cue doesn't really mean anything. Call once and if necessary use rule 3.
5. **Fabulous rewards gets fabulous recalls.** If you want your dog to stop whatever interesting doggie thing he is doing and come speeding back to you, you need to make it worth the effort. Use extra yummy treats—no boring dry food here! Or if your dog prefers toys throw a ball or Frisbee for an excellent recall.
6. **Use management when needed.** It isn't cheating. If your dog is unlikely to come back when you call in a certain area use a long line (or short lead) so he doesn't learn to ignore you.
7. **Use every opportunity** to build positive associations with you. Any time your dog looks at you, heads towards you, flicks an eye in your general direction—reward it! If your dog is paying attention to you and wants to be near you that's half the work of recall training done.
8. **1 in 3 rule.** Don't let your dog run up to every dog and person you come across. Instead reward him for staying with you a third or the time, allow a quick sniff for one third and only occasionally let him play (if it's OK with the other dog and/or person). Letting him run up to everybody is a sure fire way to teach him that the fun happens away from you.



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Train it

Step 1: Spend time teaching your dog that the cue means awesome treats/games. Stand with your dog right in front of you, say your recall cue, then give him 5 treats one after the other (or have a big fun game if that is your dog's preference). Repeat several times a day for 2 weeks. No cheating!

Step 2: Test your cue in the house, when your dog is not expecting it say your cue. As your dog comes running over give the 5 treats or play your game as before.

On walks, add your recall cue when your dog is already on the way back. That way you can get in training reps without fear of failing.

Step 3: Increase the distance—slowly. Gradually call your dog to you when he is further away. When you see him on his way back you can make yourself more interesting by clapping, squatting down, throwing your arms out or cheering your dog in. When he arrives pay him handsomely with the multiple treats one after the other telling him how awesome he is the whole time.

Start to test the cue out on walks—but only when you're pretty sure it's going to work. Don't waste all that effort you've gone to training it to have it fail repeatedly. Build the level of difficulty gradually and throw in easy ones too.

Remember to keep up the rewards for your dog automatically checking in with you without you calling. It's so much less effort to teach your dog to check in with you, rather than you have to keep calling him.

Extra Training Tip:

Find an extra yummy treat your dog has never had before but you think he will go crazy for (squeazy cheese or liver paste are normally good options) and hide it somewhere in the house. When your dog is not expecting it, call him and reward him with the special treat.

You can even go the extra mile a hide a special cache on your walking route before you take your dog out. Hide a hamburger or something equally special (where the wildlife won't get it) then when you get to that place call your dog and reward him with the extra special surprise!

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