



## Coming When Called

Teaching your dog to come when called gives your dog more freedom, and could quite literally save his life.

### The recall word

Choose a word that will mean run to me as fast as you can. It can be any word at all, such as come, here, or cookie.

### Recall rules

- Reward your dog with lots of praise and several tasty treats or a fun game every time he comes to you.
- Never use your recall word for something your dog doesn't like. If your dog hates baths, or having his nails trimmed, do not use your recall word and then bathe him or trim his nails.
- Never punish your dog for coming to you. Even if you have to chase him around the neighborhood for 20 minutes, do not punish him when you catch him. Punishing your dog when he gets back actually punishes him coming to you, rather than him running away in the first place.
- Use your recall word only when you are sure that your dog will come to you. If you have any doubts, do not use your word. Say something else, or just go get your dog.
- If your dog does not come when you call, go to him, get his attention, and call him again as you move back to the spot where you originally called him. Consider using a 20-30 foot leash to give your dog more freedom while maintaining your ability to stop him from running away until he masters the recall.

The following games will help to build a reliable recall. Always start out with as few distractions as possible and build distractions gradually for each exercise. If your dog does not come to you, get closer to make it easier.

- **In Your Face Recalls** – Get your dog's attention and have him sit or stand right in front of you. Say your recall word, and then praise and feed your dog tasty treats for 15 seconds.
- **Restrained Recalls** – Have a helper hold your dog by the collar while you tease your dog with tasty treats or a fun toy. As you tease, back up a few steps and call your dog. Have your helper release your dog when you call. Have a party when your dog gets to you.
- **Drop the Cookie and Run** – Throw a treat away from you, and let your dog go get it. As he finishes the treat, run away from him, and call him to come. Have a party when he gets to you, then toss another treat to start the game over again.
- **Hide and Seek** – Ask your dog to stay, or have someone hold him while you hide and then call him. Once your dog gets the idea of the game, you can get more creative with your hiding places: going behind furniture, in closets, under beds, etc.
- **Run Away Recalls** – ask your dog to wait and walk a few steps away from him. Call him to come and immediately run away. Praise and reward your dog when he catches you.