

Happy New Year from Wag-N-Train Dog Rescue & Training, Inc. Here's our January Training Tips Newsletter. ENJOY!

### **COMING WHEN CALLED**

One of the most important commands you will ever teach your dog is to come when he is called. There could be a time in your dog's life that obeying or disobeying this command could mean the difference between life and death. It's THAT serious! Every member of your family should be using the same command, and your command should be just that - a command. If you casually get your dog to come when he's in the yard by blowing kissing sounds and saying, "Smooch, smooch, come here sweetheart", I guarantee that is NOT how you will sound when Rover takes off and is running towards a busy highway. You need a consistent command that will be there for you in an emergency.

A Dog, come! Gooood dog, yay, gooooooood, wonderful Y@

His name first. Then the command: "Come". Then praise and coach him in, let him know that it is the entire process of coming towards you that is just as great as getting to you, and you appreciate that the travel is the hard part. This also lets your dog know that you aren't angry at him for being away in the first place (even if you are angry!) and it also motivates your dog that you are a good target to get to.

Model what you want your dog to do: Go right up to his nose with your hands filled with a treat. Command him and lure him to turn around and come just a few steps towards you.

When he gets to you, praise, pet, hug, and give one treat. Make sure that your dog comes all the way to you before giving the treat. Close enough that if you needed to you could grab his collar in an emergency. After you've treated him, tell him "Okay" and release him to go back to what he was doing. Let your dog see your calling him as merely a delightful interruption of his fun.

Gradually get further and further away before you call. Repeat. Repeat. Repeat. Don't think that just because your 6 month old puppy comes to you every time you call, that the training is over. You need to continue to remind your dog that when he hears you call, he is to come. ALWAYS. It's very important that you not allow your dog to ignore you. Go right to him, treat in hand, and remind him that coming to you means something yummy is to follow. If you have to, go back to square one and start again.

As soon as your dog had the idea, don't give him a treat every time - vary it. You must always have the treat when you call him, at least until he is 2 years old and then he must always THINK you have something wonderful for him.

Once your dog is about two years old, You must always praise and appreciate your dog for coming and throw in an awesome treat occasionally

When you are calling him away from something distracting, like treeing a squirrel, or coming indoors from playing in the yard or park, let your dog believe that coming when called is merely an interruption: praise, treat, and then release, "Okay" and send your dog back away to play. Then when you really do need your dog to come in and stop having fun, he won't mind as much.

This is one command that can never be taken for granted. You must be willing to continue training and rewarding and motivating your dog from now till the day he dies. So he won't die early from running away and being hit by a car.

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