



Intermediate • Week 4

Heather James, CPDT-KA

Call Front

I love this little command and I use it all the time. No matter where your dog is, if you say “front!” they’ll come running and seat themselves directly in front of you. To begin, with your dog on a leash, simply say “front” and lure them to sit directly and square in front of you. If your dog is already sitting and staring up at you devotedly, turn 90 degrees and then ask them to “front”. Lure them to line up correctly with your body, include the sit in the lure, then say “yes!” and reward. Since this will be easy to lure, you can start using the verbal right away. Practice lots and see how fast your dog learns to love the “front!” command.

Heel in All Positions

Practice heel when changing directions and positions. If your dog gets out of heel utilize the flip finish we’ve learned to return your dog to the correct position. Practice making 90 degree turns to both the left and the right. You may find turning into your dog is more difficult than turning away. Be careful not to step on your dog, but don’t be afraid to gently nudge them with your body while turning to encourage them to move with you. Your dog should be able to heel in reverse as well. With your dog in that heel position, and a treat right on their nose, lure them just one or two steps backwards at a time and reward them for their efforts. If your dog lies down when attempting this, just assist them back into a standing position and try again.

See if you can also practice turning in a circle both turning towards the right (away from your dog) and also turning towards the left (into your dog). It is easier to turn right, as you can lure your pup with you, but practice both directions to both encourage heeling and assist your dog in understanding that it means to be right with you, no matter which direction you are going.

Stay

We’ve really been proofing our stays through this class, and now we’re going to add some distracted distance. Request your dog stay in any position and move away from them. See if you can get 15 steps away and do something distracting. Bend down to touch the ground, turn in a circle, do a jumping jack, etc., then return to your dog to “yes!” and treat – then release. If your dog struggles, lessen the distance as well as the distraction and try again.

Back Up

Different than backing up with you when in the heel position, “back up” indicates your dog is to back away from where you are standing. This is also one where you can usually begin using the verbal right away. With your dog in the front position, take a few steps directly towards them while saying “back” and gesturing a waving signal with your hand. When your dog hops up to move out of the way and moves even a single step back say “yes!” and reward. Keep practicing in this way until your dog seems to understand he is to move away from you when you walk towards him in this manner. Start reducing the size of your steps and waiting until you get a few steps from your dog before rewarding. Eventually, you should be able to stand still while indicating with “back” and the hand signal and have your dog scoot away from you. Have fun with this one! It can be useful if you just need to tie your shoes or otherwise get your dog out from underfoot or a fun way to get them to move away to catch a toy or Frisbee.

Recalls

Keep practicing and working on those recalls. Remember to keep it fun and positive, and avoid calling your dog when you aren't either able to make them come, or if they aren't going to come. Example, your dog is chasing a squirrel that's teasing them while racing around a tree at the park. Do you think your dog is going to come away from that teasing squirrel and return to you? If not, you'll want to go and collect your dog. Recall is a very important skill for your dog to have, so it should be the most fun game they play! Lots of treats and praise should be rewarded to your dog every time they come when called. Try to get out in the world and practice back-away recalls in 3 different places this week.

*****Graduation is Next Week! Bring all your Lucky Bones*****