

## The Name Game

Your dog can't have a good recall if he doesn't recognize his name and respond to it immediately. Teach your dog to turn and look at you whenever you say his name. You will do this by stating his name clearly, marking his first response, rewarding heavily, and practicing. Begin this in a quiet place, just as the kitchen or living room. Be sure there are no/low distractions to compete for the dog's attention.

Decide on the marker you will use, i.e. clicker or YES!

- Charge up your marker
  - click - treat up to 20 times
  - YES! – treat up to 20 times
- Grab several small treats
  - GOOD treats about the size of ½ a Tic Tac or ¼ M & M
- Have your dog on leash, handle loop draped over your wrist.
- Start very close and in a lower distraction area.
- Say his name **ONE TIME ONLY** in a clear voice.
- **If he turns to look at you**, immediately say “Yes!” and pull out his favorite toy or tasty treat. Encourage him to come get his prize using praise and enthusiasm. Pay attention to him for 30 seconds - lots of praise and tiny bits of treats. Remember; fine dining vs. fast food
- Then do nothing. Look away – keeping him in sight.
- Wait until he starts to lose interest in you. Be careful not to wait until he is totally distracted from you.

**Remember SUCCESS is the key to a training program. Set all your exercises up to BE successful! Don't TEST in the training phase.**

- Then repeat the sequence.
- **If he doesn't turn and look** when you say his name, don't repeat it. Instead, turn and leave the room for a few seconds, or run to a corner and play with the toy yourself, or make a display of eating his treat yourself (choose the treats wisely – cheese or wieners are good!). Have this PLAN thought out ahead of time so your timing and spontaneity will have an impact. If you stand around to think about what you'll do the opportunity will be lost. He will learn that when you say his name, something fun is going to happen, and that if he doesn't pay attention to his name; he's going to miss out.
- Do this 3-5 times at any one time, but practice it daily up to a few times a day. **We are looking for a MINIMUM of 100 correct responses.**
- **Gradually** introduce distractions: practice in different rooms in the house, in the yard, on walks, and at the park; practice while the dog is engaged in various activities, such as playing, chewing, grooming, sleeping, etc.
  - **If your success rate diminishes** decrease the distraction level a bit. This will often happen when you take too large a step in your training.