

## **Recall Training Made Simple.**

*Please note: I have priced this book low for a limited time. The following information will enable you to effectively train any dog to come back to you, no matter what distractions might be present.*

*Note: I have alternated between 'he' and 'she' when relating to dogs of either sex.*

Your dog might sit, lie down or give a paw on command, but these things mean little if he does not come back to you when called off leash. Good recall is the single most important aspect of dog training, and the absence of this control over your dog means you can't or shouldn't (if responsible) let her off the lead. Having a dog that will return to you when called, even in the face of the heaviest of distractions, is vitally important and nothing less than this will do if you are to let 'Rover' off the leash in public places. Not only does it ensure responsibility for your dog, but also consideration for other people and other animals. Recall training may even save the life of your dog one day.

There are multiple methods to train or teach a dog anything and recall training is no different. I believe I know the ones that work, or at least work for me and I've also tried many that didn't work. I will share with you, the reader, my experiences and many of the methods I have tried and you can decide which to implement into the training program for your dog. I will also explain the psychology behind what I believe works, and what does not.

This section of the book is divided into two categories; one for puppies up to around six months old, and the other for all dogs over six months. A lot of both sections overlap and apply to dogs of any age. It's important to read everything, whether you use all of it or not, as it will deepen your understanding of dog psychology that applies to the recall. As most people will know or could guess, young puppies are more easily trained than older dogs. But do not despair if you're in the latter category, all dogs can be trained, even older dogs that have had bad experiences with recall training in the past. It just takes a bit more time with some dogs.

Many dogs have poor recall due to them having negative past experiences that they attribute to coming back to their owners. A common scenario, and one that most people have been guilty of in the past, is that the dog has wandered off and been slow to come back. The owner grows more frustrated the longer this ensues and gets angry. Then the dog comes back at his own pace and faces an angry owner who may shout at or punish the dog further by hitting him. Even if the owner doesn't shout or punish, if they're angry, the dog will almost always pick up on this and this has a negative consequence that the dog may attribute to returning to the owner.

Let's look at it from a dog's perspective for a moment; she's been happily sniffing bushes/trees, exploring new, exciting smells and places or perhaps playing with another dog. All these things have been more enticing in the moment than her owner, and she's having fun. She knows where her owner is and feels there's no danger in what she's doing, so carries on enjoying herself, and ignores her owner for some time. Then eventually, she realises that the

owner keeps calling her and her tone of voice is changing, so she comes back to the owner and is shouted at or worse. In a dog's mind, she's been penalised for coming back, not for wasting time or for being disobedient, and cannot understand why the owner is angry when she returns. If this experience happens again and again, an aversion to coming back when called is created; the dog can quickly become hand-shy and hang back from the owner in anticipation of getting a smack. You must remember that her liberty is possibly the most exhilarating thing to a dog, and even putting the lead on a dog EVERY time she returns to you is also a negative thing, as it signals the end to her fun. You must never only call your dog to you when you want to put the leash back on her as she may start to ignore you when called. If these things have already happened to your dog, don't worry, all is not lost and I will address all of these issues, and more, as we go along. Dogs are not deceitful or capable of plotting to misbehave to annoy their owners. All dogs quickly assess all situations and act according to their instincts, and where their advantage lies. Therefore, if she's in no danger and coming back to her owner is less appealing than playing, sniffing, chasing or doing whatever she's engaged in, that's what she'll continue to do. Dogs do not suffer from guilt or misbehave through choice. They're not capable of thinking "I'll just annoy my owner by not coming back". The biggest mistake dog owners make is anthropomorphising; attributing human emotions and thinking to their dog. Dogs think like dogs, and this is always in accordance with where their advantage lies. If your dog won't come back to you when off the lead, it's not because he doesn't have affection for you, but rather that there's something more appealing in that moment. When he does come back, he cannot realise why you're displeased at him. He knows you're angry, and can only attribute this displeasure to the act of his return.

Every time your dog comes back to you, regardless of your frustration at the time it took or any other aspect of the dog's behaviour prior to his return, you must receive him with goodwill and affection (THIS IS VITALLY IMPORTANT). Even if the dog has been chasing sheep, or killed a chicken just before coming to you, you must act accordingly. It is wrong of course, for the dog to chase sheep, or kill chickens and this must be addressed, but it cannot be addressed in the immediate moment of his return. Chasing sheep can only be addressed when the dog is in the act or when his attention is on the sheep, just prior to the chasing. So if an owner has been shouting at the dog to return for ten minutes while the dog is chasing sheep, the reason the dog doesn't return sooner is that chasing sheep, or killing chickens is much more fun than returning to his owner, who will probably put him on the leash and signal an end to the fun. The instinct to chase engages the hunting instinct of the dog, and he sees the sheep/chickens as prey, regardless of whether he merely chases or attacks them. The fact that animals flee only excites the dog further, and so the behaviour is self-rewarding. All dogs come with this primary instinct, hardwired in the circuitry of their brain. The intensity of this instinct will vary between breeds and individuals, but it's inherent in all dogs, from tiny lapdogs to the fiercest hunting dogs.

### **Does the breed make any difference to recall?**

Some breeds are better 'pre-wired' to coming back to you than others; Gun dog breeds like Retrievers and Spaniels, including Labradors, Springer Spaniels, and dogs bred for working closely with man including Collies, herding breeds, and guard dog breeds, like the Doberman

and Rottweiler. These dogs usually can be obedience trained to a high standard, and Retrievers in particular, are usually well disposed to returning to you upon command.

Dogs that are generally not well disposed to coming back to you and may cause problems in this regard are sight hounds (Greyhounds, Whippets, Salukis, etc.), terrier breeds and one of the most, if not *the* most, difficult dog to teach recall to is the Siberian Husky (and Alaskan Malamute, Eskimo dog etc).

It is here, that an understanding of breed characteristics becomes important. Sight hounds are bred to hunt rabbits and hares primarily by sight, so are highly motivated to chasing moving objects. They are also, traditionally, quite difficult to train to a high standard of obedience and are slow to follow commands. Even when they are obedient; they do things at their own pace. Conversely, Collies (Border, Bearded, Rough, etc) and other herding breeds can also be highly motivated to chase moving objects, including cars, and many collies become confirmed car chasers if the behaviour is allowed to become a habit. Collies and herding breeds often have a high hunting instinct, which is channelled into herding ability as opposed to hunting, due to their strong inherent desire to work with man, and their tendency to easy trainability that sight hounds usually do not share. The Husky and other dogs bred to pull sleighs in arctic conditions, sometimes over one hundred miles per day are strongly predisposed to running, and often in any direction away from their owner! Many people buy these dogs for their looks alone and fail to realise that these animals have huge energy needs that, if unfulfilled, will result in destructive and problem behaviours, which unreliable recall is only one of a myriad of problems. More Huskies and Malamutes end up in re-homing shelters, and are offered 'free to a good home' than any other breed. These breeds also have a strong prey drive and instinct to hunt; many will kill and worry sheep, given the chance. Many dogs, regardless of breed, will worry sheep if the opportunity presents itself and goes unchecked, but Huskies and other sled types do worry stock on a regular basis. Many of their brethren will kill small animals also, such as cats and squirrels. Terrier breeds are bred to hunt vermin; rats, foxes, etc., and have strong scenting abilities that often lead to wandering and roaming to follow their noses. Beagles, Bloodhounds, Foxhounds also have powerful noses and it can be problematic in obtaining a reliable recall with these breeds. These are all generalisations, there are exceptions, and many of the above will achieve reliable recall and be excellent in obedience work, but they will be harder to achieve high standards with than some of the other breeds. You must remember, all breeds of dog were bred for a specific job (except some Toy breeds bred solely for companionship) and even though they may not have been used as working dogs for a hundred years (The Rough Collie and Shetland Sheepdog, to name two examples), they will retain many of the characteristics of their fore bearers.

It's the dogs that have given the best working service to man who are better disposed to reliable recall training, and are easier to train in general. These breeds include: Labradors, German shepherds, Collies, all working farm breeds, Doberman, Rottweiler's, and many of the gun dog breeds already mentioned. This doesn't mean that if you own a breed of dog that's not one of these, they can't be taught reliable recall, it just may be more difficult with some breeds than others. It also doesn't mean that all specimens of the better disposed breeds will prove easy to train. It just means that breeds that have generations of working service to,

and with mankind usually tend to be less wilful than many other breeds. Any breed of dog can be dominant and all require training to fulfil their capabilities. The advantage in a pure breed over a mongrel is that you know the common characteristics that you can expect from any particular breed, so if you're thinking of buying a puppy, bear in mind the character traits that each breed is renowned for. Some cross-bred dogs, of known parentage can make excellent dogs, every bit as good as and better in some cases, than pure breeds. I breed Lurchers using a Border Collie and a Greyhound, or Whippet; this cross produces a very trainable, clever and versatile breed of dog that can do almost anything, from hunting to obedience to superb family pet. They also have a particularly robust constitution and rude health, which ensures visits to the local vet are extremely rare. I used to breed racing greyhounds that are, of course, faster than lurchers, but lack the smarts, trainability, stamina and hardiness that the mix of collie and greyhound blood provides.

### **What equipment will you need?**

You need two long lines, one approximately 15-20 feet in length and one around 50 feet. You need a strong standard buckle type collar and/or a check collar. You should have the collar tight enough that you can just slide two fingers between it and the dogs neck it, so that it's a snug fit; not too loose or too tight. The longer of the lines can be bought cheaply from any horse tackle shop (or eBay), just ask for a lunge line and one end will clip onto the ring on the collar. You can buy a 15 or 20 foot lunge line or make one up by joining two leashes, which makes up the length, or tying a length of rope to the end of a standard leash and making the length up that way. The equipment just needs to do the job; it doesn't need to be very expensive. You can buy lunge lines made from strong PVC that works well, and is cheaper than leather. You may need a choke or check collar depending on your dog and his age, as there is an exercise that requires this, but not everyone will need it.

You need a bag of treats. I use Frankfurter hot dogs, as dogs find the smell and taste irresistible. You can buy the small/standard size of these in packs of ten and they're quite inexpensive. I cut them in half lengthways and divide each half in two, length-ways again, so you have four quarters in length sized pieces. Then cut them across horizontally into small chunks so that one hot dog makes about forty treats. If your pup is a very large breed, like a Great Dane or German Shepherd sized dog, make one hot dog into twenty treat pieces instead. Otherwise, the smaller sized treats will suffice for most dogs. Cheese is also a useful treat to use as dogs love it too, but it can be crumbly and awkward to handle unless you get a really hard cheese. You can use anything, but make it tasty for the dog and always train when the dog is a little hungry. Close to the main meal is a perfect time, if you feed twice a day.

### **Check Chains**

These are also referred to as choke chains. They can be a very useful aid in training dogs if used correctly but can be dangerous, if used incorrectly. The idea is not to choke the dog, but to create a mild shock and make the dog take notice. Chains made of quality steel and using thick links are the only type that should be used as these do not pinch or hurt the dog, which can be the case with chains made from cheap, thin steel links. The choice is yours whether or

not you wish to use one. There is one exercise that requires the use of one, which is optional as well. If you choose not to use one, use a strong standard buckle type collar.

## **Recall training for pups up to six months old**

If you've got a young puppy, 12 weeks old or younger, they will usually follow you around pretty obediently, for a while at least. You should encourage this by randomly calling the dog to you, giving him a pet and some praise every time he comes to you. You can vary this by occasionally giving the dog a treat, but not every time. To start with give the treat every second time, then after a week or two, switch to giving it every third time and so on, making the intervals longer and longer. Eventually, you can phase out the giving of the treats altogether if you wish, but giving the dog an occasional treat has no harm and keeps him guessing! If you're doing your training in a public place, always use the 15-20 foot line as it gives you control if you need to suddenly get the dog back due to danger or for any other reason. You don't need to hold the long line all the time, just have it close enough to you so you can grab it or put your foot on it if need be. If you have an enclosed garden or access to a private field with no other people or dogs, you can leave the puppy off the leash, if you're confident this will pose you no problems. You need to call the pup to you at regular intervals just to pet and praise her and let her have some freedom again. One of the biggest and simplest of mistakes that dog owners make is that they only call the dog to them when it's time to go home, so the dog quickly learns that this is the end of the fun and become resistant to it, and are reluctant to return. So when practicing calling the puppy to you, put the pup on the leash a number of times as well and simply unleash the dog immediately afterwards. By doing this, your pup will never associate the leash going on as a signal that it's time to go home and the fun is over.

When the pup is on its way to you, it's advantageous to get down on your knees to receive the pup as you become more attractive to them on their level. Tall people in particular, can appear threatening to pups when approaching, and all pups will respond better when you're on your knees.

With young pups, it's a good idea to get someone to hold the pup while you run off, calling to the puppy as you're fast moving away. Then the person lets the pup go find you and gets a great welcome from you upon arrival with praise and/or a treat.

## **Play Hide & Seek**

When pups grow in confidence, they tend to start venturing further away from you. Use this as an opportunity to hide from the pup's view and wait for him to find you. He will quickly realise you've disappeared and come looking. Receive him with the same praise, fondling and affection, which follows every time he comes to you. When you're doing this a while, start to call the puppy as soon as you hide. This can become a fun game for the pup and for you, and it's training him to come to you.

## **The Backward Run**

When calling the pup to you, I've found it advantageous to move backwards (whilst facing the pup) and crouch down making yourself smaller. Use your voice to make it slightly higher pitched than usual when doing this as the dog will notice this, and will keep his attention better. I've found calling the dog with a "Hey-hey-hey-hey-hey-hey" call is very useful. This backward motion, as described, engages the chase/predatory instinct in the dog and makes you a very attractive object in that moment. It also engages the pack instinct as puppies do not like being alone. Vary your movements and speed, between running and jumping movements, and take note what the dog finds most attractive (exercises like this need to be done initially with few distractions, then gradually increase the distractions and vary the scenery, so that the dog keeps coming to you under many conditions and terrain. Running backwards, speaking in high pitched tones and random crouching might make anyone watching, phone for the nearest lunatic asylum; but it works!). Stop when the dog is fully concentrating on chasing you, and receive the dog with praise, petting and affection as always the case.

*The backward run is possibly the most important element in attracting your dog to you and is indispensable in recall training. It applies to dogs of all ages, not only puppies.*

## **Lying flat on your back**

Often, lying prostrate on your back on the ground will make a puppy come to you when all else fails. I was looking after a pup one time for a friend and foolishly let her off the lead with my own dogs - she didn't know me that well. When time came to go home, she, like many dogs that are on the nervous or sensitive side, would come up to about five feet away from me then move off when I tried to get her to come closer. This re-enactment continued for some time. I knew she wanted to come, but her sensitive nature was forbidding her from making the final commitment to doing so. I put my own dogs on the lead and tethered them to a farm gate. Then I moved off a little distance and lay down totally flat on my back, motionless and speechless. After a minute or perhaps two, the pup came over sniffing me, full of curiosity. I resisted the temptation to grab her until I was certain she wouldn't get away, and got her just as she started to lick my face.

## **Dogs and children**

Enlisting the help of a young child to get a pup or an adult dog to come to them also works when all else fails. I bought a greyhound sapling dog pup (about six months old) one time, and although he was a lovely pup with great breeding behind him, he was a bit nervous, probably due to little or inadequate handling during weaning. He was only with me a week when he managed to get out of his paddock into an open field. I had no worries about him going further afield, but I could only get to within ten feet of him, before he would put distance between us again. This continued over and over like Groundhog Day for a while, and eventually, I went and got my son who was seven at the time to stand in the middle of the



field. The pup went straight to him with no hesitation and my son was able to attach his lead without further difficulty. Dogs, particularly younger ones and puppies, have a great natural affinity with children when exposed to them from an early age. They seem to sense that children are no threat to them and trust them implicitly, even when they are strangers to them.

So, if in doubt; always attach one of the long lines when teaching the recall, as this allows you to let go of the leash but have it close to you, so you can step on it or grab it when necessary. If the puppy does not return to you, pick up the leash and give it a jerk, not hard enough to hurt, but enough to get the dog's attention. When you have the attention on you again, engage in the running backward, crouching, lying down behaviour as previously outlined until the dog is coming back to you again. The more fun your dog attributes to returning to you - the easier it becomes, and there's the opportunity to make it a fun time for the dog.

**ALWAYS, ALWAYS, RECEIVE THE PUPPY WITH AFFECTION, PRAISE AND PETTING.**

If you have a young pup that will not regularly return to you naturally (this is rare) it may be necessary to keep the puppy on the long line until he's coming back to you with regularity and reliability.

**DO NOT LET HIM ROAM FREE UNTIL HIS RECALL BECOMES MORE RELIABLE.**

## **Recall for older puppies and adult dogs**

*A little on my philosophy.*

*It is my belief that the greatest training problems exist because people like to think of their dog's as having human emotions. Dogs cannot act out of spite, nor are they capable of hate or deviousness; these emotions only exist in humans. I know a couple who have a Cairn terrier. The dog is a much loved family pet that has the run of the house. The couple had to attend a wedding, which necessitated a weekend away without the dog. While they were away, the dog defecated and urinated on the couple's bed. The couple attributed this behaviour to the dog acting out of spite, and as a punishment to them for not taking him with them. This assumption, if correct, credits the dog with a rare intelligence of human proportions; he knew exactly how to teach his owner's a lesson and made his point in the most emphatic fashion possible. This is simply not true.*

*The dog had never been separated from his owner's since his purchase as an eight week old puppy, two years previously. His act of toileting on his owner's bed was due to the anxiety caused by the separation. The reason he chose the bed for this aberration was because his anxiety was strongest in places he could smell his owner's scent. The owner's returned, initially welcomed the dog, and then shouted at him profusely upon discovering his misdemeanour, which the dog simply could not understand.*

*Dogs act according to instinct and learned behaviours. These behaviours are always in accordance with agreeable and disagreeable experiences. If a dog does something that gives him pleasure, he'll do it again. Say this activity was chasing another dog, and the dog engages this behaviour again on another day with a different dog, but the dog he's now chasing gives him a nasty bite. He will either stop this activity in future or at least think twice before he does it again. If time passes and he does chase another dog, and the same thing happens to him, he will definitely extinguish this behaviour. This is how dogs think and every experience is either agreeable or disagreeable.*

## **Using your voice**

When your dog behaves well, praise him in a soft voice that shows affection. When you're admonishing him for bad behaviour, use a stern loud voice and do not deviate from these two distinct types of voice. This way, the dog quickly and clearly understands when his behaviour is good and bad, at least as far as you're concerned.

Dogs over six months of age should have a little basic training before recall training. Your dog should at least be able to sit and lie down.

The above section on the puppy recall is also relevant for older puppies and adult dogs, as far as enticing the dog to return is concerned, but always keep the older dog on the long line until reliable recall has been achieved. Adult dogs are much less inclined to naturally obey recall commands than the young puppies.

Some young pups that have excellent recall become obstinate and their recall less reliable, when they reach 7-9 months of age and are approaching sexual maturity. This is akin to stropky teenagers, and indeed they can act quite like stropky teenagers at this age and stage of their development. If this happens to you, the following will be invaluable advice in enabling you to correct it.

So, no matter how old the dog is when you start recall training, and despite what negative experiences, connotations and bad habits your dog has picked up thus far, proceed as follows:

Use the long line and alternate between the 15/20 foot and 50 foot lengths. Do not let the dog run free at any time from now until reliable recall has been achieved. Any dog can get sufficient exercise on a 50 foot line, so if the dog has been used to running free prior to starting this training, the temporary loss of liberty is of no great disadvantage. You need to practice calling the dog to you, starting with the dog's name, followed by either 'Here' or 'Come'. Choose one or the other and stick to it. Many people make the simple mistake of calling to the dog to them using many different words. Again, praise the dog profusely when she comes back to you and make sure the dog comes all the way up to you, so that you can touch the dog's collar (many dogs have become hand-shy due to past experiences and will come up close, but are reluctant to come close enough to touch. This can only be eradicated by a succession of positive experiences so the dog realises that being touched upon returning is a good thing). If your dog is extremely reluctant to come up close to you, use food to initially lure her in, holding her collar first, then giving her the treat, followed by fondling



and praise, before letting go of the collar. This needs to be practiced through repetition until the dog is reliably coming up to you every time; then start to treat her every second time, then every third and so on. **THE PRAISING/FONDLING/PETTING OF THE DOG MUST BE DONE EVERY TIME THE DOG COMES TO YOU.** If you need to use food as a lure, begin by showing the dog the food when she's come as close as she's going to; it's important with a dog like this to ensure the dog is at least a little hungry. Once you've shown the food a few times, hide the food and only produce it after the dog has returned to you. If your dog has a strong attachment to a particular toy, hide the toy on your person and produce it only upon each successful recall. Do not let her see the toy until she has come back successfully and you've praised/petted her. The toy can be used in place of a food treat or alternately. Most dogs have a preference for toys or food, so use this to your advantage when rewarding successful recalls. Put the dog on the long line if there's any chance of her absconding with the toy or being possessive with it and not returning.

No matter what negative experiences your dog might have attributed to recall in the past, persistence in the above - using the long line allied with enough positive experiences, will overcome (in time) even the most horrendous of past experiences. True, we're still using the long line and reliability on the long line doesn't guarantee reliability off it, but have patience, we'll get there soon enough.

### **Using a whistle**

You can vary your recall training by alternating voice commands (Here or Come) with using a whistle. Call the dog as normal and when he's on his way to you give a blast on the whistle. After repetition of this a number of times, the dog will identify the whistle as equal to the voice command, and will soon start coming to you by using the whistle alone. It's useful to have the dog follow both voice and whistle commands, as a whistle will carry further than the voice in bad weather for example. This is entirely optional.

### **But my dog always runs off and won't come back**

The following is an exercise that is invaluable for difficult dogs that, when let off leash, will rapidly put as much distance between them and their owner as possible, and will not come back with any degree of reliability or anytime soon. Part of the problem with these dogs is that this behaviour has been allowed to become a habit over time, and the dog simply has learned not to pay attention when called, but the exercise that I'm going to outline is excellent for getting the dog to focus on you. It is not necessary to use this method for all dogs, as some will never need it; and if used on puppies, only over six months of age.

### **Getting your dog's attention**

*Very few training books address how to get your dog to pay attention to you and without this; you might as well give up immediately. You simply cannot teach a dog any type of obedience if he pays little or no attention to you.*

*Some books will tell you (quite correctly) that you need to make yourself so attractive and fun that your dog would rather focus on you than any other distraction, but fail to tell you how to*

*do that!*

*I saw a popular dog trainer tell people to hold a food treat to their nose, which was given to the dog as a reward each time his attention shifted to the owner. This will work in some situations with some dogs, but if the dog sees something more interesting, particularly something that highly excites him in that moment; well, this advice isn't worth a damn. I am about to show you a method that requires no food treats, works with every dog and is so simple to implement, it will amaze you. Furthermore, it is the first step to a new found respect and a better relationship between your dog and you.*

If you're reading this, it's possible you just want to get your dog to come back to you and train a reliable recall. We will get to that soon enough, but first it's important to lay the groundwork that will make the recall so compellingly effective. Once you embark on this training program, do not let your dog run freely off the leash until all the training is completed and directed to do so.

Equipment needed: A 15/20 foot training leash and a thick linked choke/check collar. Measure the circumference around your dog's neck and get a chain that is slightly bigger than what this measurement is. The chain should sit comfortably on the neck of the dog, neither tight, nor having an overhang due to being too loose of more than one inch. I recommend the 'Herm Sprenger' brand of collar. These are German made and top quality. You can buy them on eBay easily enough worldwide. The collar needs to be the correct size for the dog. A correctly fitting collar will naturally sit high on the neck.

Hold the leash at waist height and keep it there.

The objective of this exercise over the next week or ten days is to make the dog realise that paying attention to you and staying close to you, is the best place for him to be. By giving the dog responsibility for his own movement, teaches him to become attentive to you. This will become more apparent a little later, if not fully clear to you right now.

**Do not let your dog run free at any time until the training directs you to do so!**

**DO NOT SPEAK TO THE DOG DURING THIS TRAINING UNLESS OTHERWISE STATED.**

**For the first 2 days:**

You need to use an area that has a reasonable amount of space for this exercise. A car park, soccer pitch, public park, etc. are all ideal.

Attach the leash to dog's collar correctly and allow the dog the full slack of the leash. Pay the dog no heed and proceed to walk in any chosen direction for 40 or 50 metres. Choose a landmark or something visible ahead, and walk at a steady pace towards it, without deviation or stopping until you reach your goal. When you get there, stop for a full minute or two, and then walk again in a different direction towards another landmark for a similar distance then stop again. Keep doing this for the 20 or 30 minutes you've set aside for the lesson, alternating your direction each time, stopping for a minute or two, before carrying on. Do not speak to the dog or allow him to choose the direction.

**Key steps:**

Pay no attention to the dog when walking as directed above. Some dogs will try and jump on you or block your path, bark at you, or pull like a train in any direction, and so on. Pay him and his behaviour no attention. Your dog may take mad dashes and get a shock each time upon reaching the end of the leash. Do not react to this by speaking to him or showing sympathy. Just focus on where you're walking to each time and do not deviate from this purpose. Don't worry about hurting your dog if he receives a jolt upon reaching the end of the leash; if you're using a decent chain made from thick steel (not the thin type), there is no way your dog will hurt or injure himself. What it does is give the dog a momentary shock of surprise. Furthermore, the dog begins to realise that his own momentum is responsible for it and he cannot attribute this to you. After all, you didn't jerk the leash, all you did was walk in a calm and controlled manner, and if the dog was walking within 20 feet of you, there would've been no shock.

### **Days 3 & 4:**

By this stage you might already see a difference in your dog. If he was prone to lunging during the first two days, he'll have received a jolt or few and may already be respecting the slack in the leash. If your dog didn't make any dashes or tighten the leash during the first two days, don't worry about it. Carry on regardless as follows.

Continue your walking as per the first 2 days, but this time every so often change direction by turning left or right. If your dog purposely runs or lunges in any direction, immediately turn and calmly walk the opposite way. He will quickly reach the end of the leash and as he's not paying attention to your whereabouts, he gets a jolt. Every time he gets a jolt, he's reminded that he's not paying attention to you and HIS OWN MOMENTUM IS RESPONSIBLE FOR IT. After two days of this, maybe sooner, you'll see your dog paying attention to you and respecting the distance between you as well as the end of the leash. You'll see him watching you and staying closer to you as he realises that the slackness of the leash prevents him receiving a jolt. He starts watching you like a hawk to ensure you don't change direction without him knowing it.

### **Day 5: Distraction testing:**

This time go to a different place for your training session and attach the leash as before, but hold with both hands. We are going to give your dog a distraction. It will be something that appeals to your dog. If he likes to run off to other dogs to play or fight, you can arrange another dog to appear. If he likes to chase cyclists or other fast moving objects, you can arrange for this to happen. You can even get someone to throw a stick or a tennis ball if the dog likes to chase these things. An open car door or gate might be enticing to some dogs. It might even be the introduction of another person that the dog will run to. The list is endless, so have a think about what is most attractive to your dog.

The distraction must be arranged so that the dog has no prior warning it is about to occur.

I did one of the above; I arranged that as I turned a corner, a cyclist would fly past the minute I turned, which the dog immediately chased after. The second the dog began his chase, I raised my hands from waist height to chest height and abruptly turned to the right and jogged away at a reasonable pace in the opposite direction. The slack in the leash quickly

disappeared and the dog got a heavy jolt whilst in the act of chasing. I kept going in the direction I had chosen and the dog followed soon after. I then stopped and received the dog with the usual praise and affection that must follow every successful recall.

What happened here is very simple: The dog was distracted and forgot about me and the leash in that moment. He learned more emphatically than before that he must respect the slackness of the leash and his failure to do so will bring an unpleasant shock, even in the most distracting and exciting situations. Your dog will not like this, but it will have an amazingly positive effect on his paying attention to you from this moment on.

Now you must set up more distractions over the next couple of days. You can try the same distraction that worked previously and may already find that he's watching you and doesn't take off chasing as before. Try the same distraction in a different place than before and see how he reacts. If he takes off chasing as before, you must react exactly the same as before. Do a sharp right turn and jog away with the leash at chest height, held with both hands. If he chased a cyclist, he might well chase cars, which is a useful distraction for some dogs in itself. You know your dog better than anyone else; know what motivates and excites him. Have a think about distractions, come up with a few and set them up accordingly over the next couple of days.

Sometimes, just one shocking distraction is enough for the dog to pay attention to you (regardless of whatever distractions you present), at least while he's on the 20 foot leash, but set up a few different distractions in different places and test him. I guarantee, if you act as instructed above, he won't get caught out many times before he pays attention to you and the slackness of the leash, no matter how attractive the distraction. **From a dog psychology perspective - the dog attributes his shock, not to you, but rather to the act of chasing whatever the distraction was. This ensures (when conditioned enough) that if chasing the cyclist was the distraction; chasing cyclists becomes distasteful to the dog as a result of his experience of doing so, and he will no longer chase cyclists, regardless whether he's on or off the leash. One or two emphatic shocks will usually overcome any distraction and create a strong aversion to this.**

Once this alertness has been gained, you will see a difference in your dog. You'll find he pays attention to you almost all the time and you'll see him moving closer to you to ensure the slack of the leash is maintained at all times. He's learned that by watching your movements and staying close to you, it keeps the leash slack and there's no chance of him being shocked. He's no longer lunging, screaming to get free or running around like a headless chicken if he did that before.

It's not nice to see the dog getting a shock, particularly if he yelps loudly and looks distressed, but he's not yelping in pain. This is, purely due to the shock effect, confusion and possibly frustration in his momentum being interrupted. You will understand this exercise in greater detail as the training continues, later on. It's the first step in developing a recall that becomes bulletproof. If you feel you're being cruel to your dog by this exercise, ask yourself this: If your dog runs away from you chasing a cat and ignores your calling him, then gets killed by a car, which is crueller? Is training him to come back to you now not worth a little discomfort, knowing he's going to come back to you in the future, despite the danger and saving his life? This exercise is all about teaching the dog to keep his attention on you, and that he's responsible for his own movement. If he strays too far from you; he gets a jolt from

the leash and collar. If he runs away and ignores you; he gets a heavier jolt. The dog cannot attribute this to you, but only to himself.

### **Problems:**

If you carried out the exercise as directed and the dog gets a heavy jolt under distracting conditions, it cannot fail to work. One heavy jolt is worth 100 ineffectual tugs that have no effect on the dog. You need a distraction that makes the dog run after something that's more appealing to him than you in that moment. This can be a person, dog, car, open door, gate, cat, etc. As soon as he takes flight and cannot see you, you simply turn to the right, two hands holding the leash at chest height and jog away in the opposite direction. You then need to test the same distraction in different places, to the point where he will not chase it or react to it. Then try out other distractions that he finds appealing and do the same. Most dogs learn after one or two times. The effect has to be quick so that it comes as a surprise and a shock to the dog.

The only way this cannot work is if you mess up in your timing or the distraction is not distracting enough.

### **Conclusion of the week**

The first time I saw a dog getting a shock of this kind, I felt sorry for the dog. I had to strongly resist the urge to console and pet him. Do not do this!

You might find the dog is quiet afterwards and seems a little withdrawn. However he seems afterwards; put him in his crate/ kennel and give him time to himself for at least an hour.

Your dog has learned that bolting from you and not paying attention to you has consequences. By staying close to you and keeping the leash slack, there is no discomfort, therefore he must keep his eye on you to ensure the distance of the leash is maintained. He has learned that his movement and that alone, dictates where he is, where you are and the slackness of the leash must be maintained. He has to pay attention to you; it's as simple as that!

Furthermore, you haven't had to use treats, pleading, coaxing, toys or anything else. Using this technique is optional, but you will find it very useful for difficult and wilful dogs in particular.

*Sidebar: The above method not only assists in recall training, but is an absolutely brilliant way to train a dog not to chase livestock or cars.*

As said before, this week of training is an excellent starting point if your dog is already so unreliable off leash that you simply cannot risk letting him off. It will work for any dog if carried out as directed.

Assuming you've used the previous training exercise, proceed as follows:

From this point on, carry on using the chain, but substitute strong fishing line in place of your long line. Tie one end of this to his chain collar and the other to a stick, or onto a conventional leash so you can grip it easily. Some dogs will mistake the use of fishing line as

having total freedom and will make a break for it when you call them back, attempting to run off. If this happens, turn and walk the other way holding the end of the line. The dog quickly realises that despite the appearances, he has no more freedom than before. Carry on with this for a week. By this time the recall should be very good, albeit on the long line. If still shaky, take another week and practice more. Once you're happy that the recall is as good as it can be on a long line; you're ready to let the dog off and test it. Do not let the dog off in a high distraction area, where there are other dogs, people and animals. You must get reliability with no distractions, before stepping up and providing them. The first time you let the dog off; only do so if you can carry out the next exercise outlined below.

## **The secrets of recall training and what few books will tell you**

Whether or not you used the preceding exercise with the choke collar is immaterial now. The following training applies to improving the recall of all dogs over the age of six months.

In the first couple of pages of this book - running backwards, crouching down, using inflection in your voice is about making you more attractive or enticing to your dog, in terms of him returning to you. By doing so, your body movements are engaging the chasing or predatory instinct of your dog. Every dog has this instinct, from Chihuahuas to Greyhounds, but it is stronger in some dogs than others.

Envision the following common scenario: Your dog is exercising freely in the park and a cat suddenly appears. Dog sees the cat and the cat immediately bolts from the dog, which makes the dogs ears prick up and off he chases. The dog is now fully engaged in predatory mode. Feral dogs living off the land, wolves, coyotes, foxes, etc., all still hunt for their food. Dogs are not wolves, but have evolved from them and still share many (but not all!) of their behaviours. The dog is not merely chasing a cat here; he's hunting it and this predatory/chasing instinct is in full flow. Whether he would kill the cat or not is immaterial to his instinct (but many dogs do become serial cat and sheep killers with little persuasion). The same instinct is engaged in the previous exercise, when using a cyclist as a distraction for the dog to chase. This instinct is still very strong in today's dogs, and when a dog does not come back on recall; it's usually down to this instinct being stronger than his interest in you or being obedient in that moment. He doesn't need to see a cat, rabbit or anything else. For many dogs, just the exhilaration of being free to explore exciting scents and new places is enough to keep away from you.

Fortunately for us dog owners; there is another instinct inherent in our dog's that we can use to aid in reliable recall. This is the pack instinct, or the instinct to belong. This instinct is strongest when a dog receives a shock or a fright of some kind, which leads him to seek the safety and reassurance of the pack, which is ultimately 'YOU'.

Envision another scenario: Your dog is loose in the woods two hundred feet away from you and totally ignores you when called as he's exploring a rabbit hole. Suddenly, a stranger appears and shouts loudly at the dog, frightening him so that he takes flight. A 'here' or a 'come' call from you at this moment will have magical results, and the dog will return to you



with the utmost eagerness and reliability. Even if you didn't call the dog at this moment, he would seek you out anyway, but a call from you at this point is definitely advantageous.

Why?

The fright that the dog receives becomes stronger than whatever behaviour the dog was engaged in beforehand. Every dog knows his owner is a source of food, exercise and ultimately safety. The minute his safety is threatened through a shock or sudden fright, he needs security and returns to the safety of his owner. He comes back to the owner and is received with affection and petting. If this happens with any degree of consistency or regularity, the dog will consistently and rapidly return to you, and will quickly realise that staying close to his owner is the best place for him to be. Crucially, the dog knows that his owner is not the cause of his fright!

For ultimate recall reliability, it's necessary to engage this pack instinct as often as required to ensure the recall is solid and reliable under various conditions. This means that you need to engineer situations to make this possible. I will give you a few that are easily carried out, but once you fully understand how the dog's mind works in relation to these principles, you can devise your own.

The easiest way to engineer this is to enlist the help of a friend, but make sure the dog has no attachment to this person and preferably is a stranger to the dog. Have this person in position someplace you know the dog will pass by. When the dog's back is to the person, suddenly have the person emerge and shout at the dog in a threatening manner (note that not all dogs will be alarmed at this scenario. Some guard/protection type breeds might show aggression and the person you've enlisted must run towards the dog and never away. You know your own dog and will set up the situations as you feel best). Another way, and possibly a better one for most dogs, is to have the person throw a stick or metal can with coins or anything noisy in it, so that when the object lands close to the dog, the noise and movement startles him as it's completely unexpected. At this moment, you call the dog to return to you, and he will with complete obedience as long as the exercise has been carried out correctly. When you receive the dog, it is always with affection, praise and touch. Obviously, it should go without saying that nothing with the potential of injuring or hurting the dog should be used in case it accidentally hit him. The reason why objects should be thrown when the dog's back/rear end is facing the thrower is so that if it does accidentally hit the dog, it will most likely hit his rear end where it can do least damage (and won't hit his head). It is also ideal as the dog cannot see it coming, so the mild shock factor is strongest. Some trainers will purposely strike the dog on the rump to ensure the shock factor is strongest, but this is unnecessary in my view. Throwing an object to land loudly nearby when the dog isn't expecting it and can't see it coming is just as good. The idea is to provoke a mild shock factor in the dog that impels him to return to your side, not to hurt him in any way. Typical throwing objects can be sticks and a chain (of appropriate weight), which can be useful for throwing both for distance and reliability of aim. I know some trainers who carry a catapult and will hit the dog with something undamaging to create the shock, as the dog doesn't see it coming. Obviously this dispenses the need of third party help, but I cannot recommend it due to the

accuracy needed and possible dangers that may occur. I'm merely listing it for you to understand as fully as possible, the principles of the training, and the psychology as it applies to the dog.

Another variation to engage the pack instinct in dogs is suggested by Jean Donaldson in her book "The Culture Clash", where she enlists a helper to entice the dog with goodies in the form of tasty food. Naturally, the dog is drawn to the food, but the helper ignores the dog's attentions. Donaldson advocates that eventually the dog will return to the owner, frustrated at being ignored by the helper, at which point the helper rushes over and rewards the dog with the food for returning to its owner (see the Premack principle described later on). I cannot recommend this. It would be a very, very clever dog indeed to attribute the receiving of the food to coming back to the owner. It would take too much time in my view to be effective, apart from anything else.

Sometimes things happen naturally that you can use to your advantage in recall exercises. A sudden gust of wind one winter day blew a farm gate that swung viciously towards my Border collie, which narrowly missed, but greatly unsettled her. I saw this and immediately called her whilst walking rapidly in the opposite direction to her. She bolted over to me and sought reassurance, which she received with praise, handling and attention.

Some people will think that eliciting fear is unethical or immoral, but only those who fail to understand how dogs think and behave will believe that. We are only guilty of using the dog's natural instincts to our own advantage. It's more unethical and immoral (in my view) to permit a dog to run loose when the owner has no control over the animal, and all the possible dangers that can result in injury or death to the dog and/or other animals. There was a case in Scotland in the 1990's where a King Charles spaniel on holiday with his owner's ran amok in a field beside their caravan that resulted in over fifty sheep either dying or having to be put down as a result. The dog didn't actually attack any of the sheep, but his continuous chasing of them over the rocky and hilly terrain led to broken necks and other injuries by default. Food for thought!

## **Training the recall from a down position**

This is an old, traditional method that first teaches the 'Down' usually using mild force. The trainer says the word 'Down' and manually places the dog in the down position. Any attempt on the dog's part to rise is met by the trainer pushing the dog back into the down position and repeating the 'Down' command. A few minutes of this a day quickly results in the dog learning the 'Down' and staying in the position for longer periods. The trainer will then attach the long lead, and increase the distance between himself and the dog. He will continue to get the dog to lie down for longer periods whilst increasing distances between himself and the dog. Any time the dog gets up prematurely, she is physically put back in position by the trainer. The dog learns through repetition to stay down for longer and longer periods. Then the trainer starts to release the dog from the down position by calling the dog to him, utilising the backward run and receiving the dog with all the praise, handling and affection that we know must accompany each time the dog returns to us. It requires patience, and many short

training sessions work best. The reason the method works and is useful in conjunction with training the recall is as follows:

Lying down for long periods (under duress) is not natural or enjoyable to a dog. He naturally wants to follow and accompany his owner, yet is made to perform this unpalatable feat first before being allowed to do so. This engages what is known as “The Premack Principle”. Premack was a scientist who did studies with monkeys and found that they would do a less desirable activity in order to be able to do a more desirable one. An example of this would be children; getting a child to eat her vegetables in order to receive ice-cream afterwards. Successful application of this can strengthen the recall as returning to his owner is more appealing and enjoyable than having to lie down in a submissive position.

Another variation of this method without using force is to train a ‘Down’ and a ‘Down stay’ through using food treats. When this has progressed to a good standard, you can initiate the recall back to you by the backward run and ‘Here’ command, giving the treat at the end of the sequence. You can then reduce the treating to an occasional treat over time.

## **Using Shock or Remote Trainers**

Remote training collars can be used in conjunction or separately from the above methods. In extreme cases, they can work when all else fails. Apart from providing a shock stimulus, the better collars also have tone, vibration and variable levels of intensity. It’s the variable levels of intensity that are most useful in dog training. There are however, many cheap and nasty collars from China that do not give this variable range and only give high intensity shock levels.

Understanding the levels of stimulus:

Think of these collars as an invisible leash. You can use these training aids whilst the dog is off the lead, and it negates the need of using the long line as long as the user has some degree of competence.

The better collars are capable of giving the dog as little stimulus as a tickle on the skin and as much as a high shock sensation. The lower levels of intensity have many uses in dog training, including the recall. It’s highly useful in getting your dog’s attention, and can be used in conjunction with tone and/or vibration.

## **Training with the remote trainer**

My collar of choice is the Mini Educator from Ecollar Technologies. It has one hundred levels of intensity, a variable dial that allows rapid adjustment of intensity and it sends the stimulus directly into the muscle; similarly to the way that a Tens unit works with people in hospitals. In addition, it has both - tone and a vibrate function. It also has a light built into the collar for working in the dark, which is useful. The mini-educator works for all sizes and breeds of dog, in my experience, and the word ‘Mini’ only refers to the size of the controller, which is about the size of a stopwatch. You can get other manufacturers of quality collars too, such as Dogtra and Garmin/Tritronics. You can expect to pay 150-200 dollars or euros for a

quality collar. You can buy a cheap Chinese collar for as little as 20 dollars or euros, but they will not be reliable and they do not give you the low levels of stimulus that are needed. They deliver too high a shock for anything other than stopping the dog's behaviour. Don't get me wrong, you will want a high level to stop a dog chasing sheep, cars or stopping aggression, but these levels of stimulus are only capable of punishing the dog, and cannot give you the benefits of conditioning and training that low-level stimuli of the better collars can. Some Chinese made collars give unreliable levels of shock too, I believe. You might have it at level 2, but the dog is getting a much higher dose through faulty manufacture.

There's a book's worth of instruction in using the remote collar for many things, but I'm just going to give instruction here in creating an effective recall. I have another book coming out shortly that will divulge all the secrets of the e-collar.

You need to first acclimatise the dog to the collar. If the dog is long haired, use the long prongs that come with the device (most have two sets for long or short hair) and use the shorter ones for short haired dogs. Put the collar on the dog so that you can just about slide two fingers under it; it's tight enough when that's the case. Have the dog wear the collar all day for about five days (taking it off at night) before you use it. This is important as you don't want the dog to attribute the collar to the stimulus, which he's certain to do if you simply put it on him and start using the collar right away. Also, when using the controller, put it in your hand or behind you so it's not blatantly obvious to the dog that you're doing something peculiar immediately before the sensation.

### **Finding the right levels**

Next step is finding the dog's comfort level; the level necessary for the dog to feel it. What you want to see is typically a slight startle or an ear movement, like you'd see when a fly lands on the dog. Start on level 1 and work up until you see a reaction. Say for example, this is level 3 of 100. I'd then move it up to level 4 or 5. Then I'd press the constant button on the controller and call the dog using the backward run and all the same inducements as previously described. I would then alternate this with calling the dog and then pressing the stimulus button, so it works two ways, before and after the command. The moment the dog starts in your direction, release the button, receive the dog with the usual praise, affection and a treat of your want. Continue to use this for calling the dog to you in this way for a number of days. You will probably find he becomes accustomed to it and you have to turn it up a level or two after a while, as he realises it's not unpleasant - that's fine. You then want to go to places where there are distractions that usually make him not want to come back to you. This could be woodland, a public park, places where there's rabbits, cyclists, other dogs and anything that typically distracts your dog.

With the distraction in place, continue to alternate between calling the dog/ then stimulus and stimulus first/then call the dog. With strong distractions, you'll find that you need a higher level to make him respond as his excitement will overcome the funny sensation he's felt up until this point. You can then turn the intensity dial up slowly until he reacts and again, once he starts in your direction, release it or you can pre-set the collar you have. On the

Mini-educator there's a lock-in feature that allows you to pre-set it to a level 5 or 10 higher than the comfort level of the dog on a separate button. You will have to experiment and see what your dog needs as all dogs are different; start off low and work upwards only to the level necessary to enable the dog to refocus on you and start to come back. Obviously, if you release the stimulus, and the dog breaks off from returning and goes back to whatever the distraction was, you need to apply it again immediately at a slightly higher level than before.

Now that you have this much accomplished and know not only the comfort level, but also the high distraction level for your dog, it's time to introduce the tone. Take your dog out to an area of low or minimal distraction and let him play around for a bit. When he's not paying you any heed, press the tone button and call him to you. He'll probably be startled at the noise and return to you without issue. Praise him heavily as usual and alternate between pressing the tone/calling the dog and calling the dog/pressing the tone for a number of times.

Now introduce some distractions again and you'll find a time when he'll ignore the tone due to something more interesting. Now use the stimulus button at the same distraction level as before the use of the tone. The dog will return to you and you can praise/reward as always. What you've done now is made the tone a warning and from this point forward you can use the tone first/stimulus second. In time, the tone is all that's required and the dog will come back to you.

Obviously, you need to acclimatise yourself to whatever brand of collar you've chosen to use, but the good ones I listed previously are all similar. You can substitute the tone for a vibration function, but I prefer the tone. Not all collar systems have both vibrate and tone. Some highly sensitive dogs will never need the stimulus function, and will achieve a successful recall with only tone or vibrate being necessary. If you feel your dog is sensitive, you can begin by using tone or vibration only and see how you get on. You can always move towards stimulation later if need be.

I know of a case with an Alaskan Malamute who didn't respond to anything but the use of strong stimulus. He responded so well that his recall became perfect and rock solid after just two uses. There's a right solution for every dog. You just have to find it.

## **Problems with Electronic Collars**

The biggest problems are those of improper use. Many people will simply use the electronic collars through being too lazy to train the dog by the other means outlined, and will abuse their use usually by using cheap collars or using too high a level. I am covering these collars here as I have covered everything else to do with recall, and any book on recall training wouldn't be complete if it didn't mention them as they can be useful. It's important to acclimatise the collar to the dog by having him wear it for a few days prior to training as earlier stated. This can't be overstressed and it's a serious fault not to do this. Otherwise, many dogs quickly realise that the shock is coming from the collar and are clever enough to realise if they see their owner pressing a button on a controller that immediately precedes a shock; the owner is responsible for it, which of course is true. Even if you hide the controller from the dog, they can still pick up the minutest change in your body language and some

dogs will be able to attribute this to you. There's also the fact that the dog knows you put the collar on her, so can attribute the stimulus to you from this. These collars run on batteries and if they run flat, as anything battery operated - they don't work. If the dog has had no recall training as outlined here, you're leaving a lot to chance as that battery is the only control you have. The better collars have rechargeable batteries that will last a few days to a week.

Misuse of collars can cause problem behaviours in some sensitive and highly-strung dogs. These behaviours can be fear biting, increased nervousness and peeing uncontrollably during, and sometimes after, the event due to the inability of the dog's nervous system to cope with the stress of the shock. Electronic collars used wrongly can turn some sensitive dogs into nervous wrecks.

If you're going to use one, use as low a level as necessary. You can test the levels out on yourself first. You're reluctant to do so? If you're not willing to subject yourself to it, should you have the right to subject your dog to it?

99% of dogs can be taught successful recall without resorting to electronic collars. These collars do have other uses with some highly aggressive dogs and will stop a fight that's in full swing, when physically forcing the dogs apart would waste time and possibly cause injury. They can also be effectively used for confirmed sheep killers/chasers and for stopping any aggressive response at a high enough level. Once a dog has killed, he will do so again and must be stopped. If you can shock the dog when he's about to give chase or attack, with a strong shock in time; it will stop him, when nothing else will. In these cases, the use is justified as the animal will be put down otherwise.

## **A funny recall story**

*I witnessed the following a couple of years ago:*

*I was at a car boot sale and noticed this man berating someone or something, which I couldn't see. By the language and the tone of voice this man was using, I thought it might be a child he was speaking to. This is what I heard as best as I can remember it:*

*"I'm going now and I won't tell you again. Will ya come on for God's sake? Right that's it, I'm going and you can bloody well stay here you little b\*\*tard!"*

*The man then jumped into his car and drove for maybe 70 feet. Shortly after he drove off, a Jack Russell ran out from behind a wall and chased after his owner's car. The man stopped the car, opened the passenger door and the little dog jumped into the car, whilst his owner continued to berate and scold him for keeping him late.*

*This story contains a lot of what this book is all about. The man was speaking to the dog as he would a human and clearly thought the dog was being deliberately disobedient, which wasn't the case. The dog was likely sniffing around, enjoying himself and ignored the owner as he knew it meant the end of his activity. When the owner drove off, the dog panicked and*



*chased the car as he didn't want to be separated from his owner, despite being shouted at. The way that the dog chased after the car, no doubt convinced the owner that he was right to act as he did!*

## **Recall Training Summary**

1. Always praise, pet and receive your dog with affection when he returns to you, **NO MATTER WHAT**, even if he's just been rolling in cow shit, chasing cars or killed the neighbour's cat.
2. Never punish, scold or use the recall to engage in a behaviour the dog doesn't want, like ending his fun or putting him to bed, or into the bath when he returns. You can always engage the dog in a short play session in between his return to you and putting him to bed or bathing him. This way he will not associate the unwanted activity to coming back to you.
3. If the dog will not come to you, do not show displeasure, remain calm and carry on as if everything's fine. If on the long line, give the line a jerk to get his attention on you and entice him again. If this fails, start to reel in the line until the dog is back beside you and make a fuss of him as if he had done it himself. Keep with the training until he starts returning to you of his own accord.
4. Remember - your dog can read your body language much better than you can in others, you should undertake all training in a calm, steady frame of mind and do not lose your temper no matter what. Always appear and act confident and in control, even if you don't feel it.
5. Always vary the terrain, train in different places and build up distractions. Training requires effort and time, but it's well worth it. Use the time you use to exercise the dog teaching the recall, so it takes no extra time.
6. Use the dog's natural instincts as much as possible. If he's highly motivated to chase a ball, withhold the ball until he comes back successfully, then let him play with it as a reward. You can do the same if the dog is more food orientated, lure the dog if necessary to get him to come back, and then refrain from luring, until he's returning without seeing the food first. Only treat on perfect recalls, then every second one and so on to keep the dog guessing.
7. Get into the habit of attaching/removing the leash several times during an exercise session to ensure the leash doesn't mean he's going home every time.
8. All training requires being refreshed every now and again. If you train a dog to sit every time he's asked, then don't ask him to sit for six months, he may not comply and you would need to retrain him to consistently sit again. Behaviours extinguish over time and lack of use. Recall is no exception; you need to keep it current and maintain it, so that it remains sharp.
9. All dogs can be taught recall training, no matter what breed or inclination is; some dogs just need more work than others. If your dog is unreliable off the lead, do not let her off the long line until you're confident she's trained. If this turns out not to be the case, don't panic and continue to work with the dog until reliability improves.

10. You have all the tools and information you need to train effective recall in this short book. Do not underestimate any of the information. Just practice until perfect.

## **Trouble shooting**

If you're not succeeding, you're not applying the principles properly or are not emphatic enough in your training. If you think your dog is ready to be let off the leash and he doesn't come back, go back to the long line and recover the ground again until this improves. The exercise using the check collar cannot be underestimated for difficult dogs and if you're having training problems and haven't yet implemented this, now is the time to do so. If any step isn't working, go back and work some more on the previous one before attempting again. You now have the psychology and the methodology needed to train any dog in successful recall. You will not find any information anywhere else that is not contained here to do with recall. I have written this as sparsely as possible to give you the facts and tools to start training right away, without any padding or nonsense that is found elsewhere. All successful dog training requires patience and regular application. Frequent, short training sessions work best and need not be any longer than ten minutes. Good luck in all your training endeavours and in strengthening the bond between you and your dog.

The dispensing of this training is when the dog realises that not coming when called has consequences. Dog's that come when called out of a sense of duty to their owner are few and far between. Once the dog is reliably coming back to you in the face of distractions, you've done a good job and can end the training. Just refresh it every now and again at random intervals, and it will stand the test of time.

Please leave me positive feedback after reading.

Regards,

*Mark Telford*