



The Name Game and Orientation Game

Name Game

The goals of the name game:

- Build name recognition (I know my name)
- Build value for the name (My name means good things)
- Build name response (I hear my name and respond by paying attention / coming close / waiting for a cue)
- Build value for cued focus (I orient to my handler on hearing my name and pay attention)
- Begin building a strong recall (when I hear my name, I will come to you expecting good things)

The name game starts off exactly as the offered focus exercise except that instead of waiting for the behaviour to happen spontaneously, we trigger the dog to look at us by calling the name.

1. Warm up with a few repetitions of offered focus.
2. When the dog is looking away from you (you may need to toss a treat a little way away from you), call his name. Click the moment he reorients to you. Repeat 5 or 6 times.
3. On the next repetition, toss the treat away from you and when he is just about finished with it (and before he can return to you) call his name again. Delay the click until he is on his way back to you
4. With each repetition, toss the treat slightly further away and delay the click a tiny bit more so that your dog has to come closer to you before you click.

DO NOT...use a recall word here. While this game does help build a foundation for recalls, it is premature to put a recall word on this. Using recall words too early is a common reason why dogs learn that recall is optional.

Your dog's name should be the most wonderful sound in the world to him and should always predict good things. Never call him to you to do something unpleasant or to end the fun.

Never use his name in an angry or frustrated tone of voice – you never want your dog to stop and think before he responds to his name – he should have absolute certainty that when he responds to his name, something wonderful is about to happen.

Orientation Game

The Orientation game teaches your dog to reorient to you quickly and starts building a foundation for quick recalls.

- Toss food away from you
- As soon as the dog turns back to you – click and ...
- Toss food again.
- Repeat
- Toss the food in different directions.
- DO NOT nag, coax etc. BE patient if your dog does not immediately reorient to you. He will learn better if you let him work it out for himself rather than making it easier for him. If he is having trouble – work in a smaller space, remove distractions, use higher value treats and warm up with the Name Game exercise.
- Add in distractions once your dog is an expert at the game
 - Throw food towards a distraction
 - Start with small distractions and build up to bigger distractions.