

Recall

Level 1: Introduce Recall Using Hand Targeting

Purpose:

The purpose of this exercise is to begin to develop a strong recall based on hand targeting. Unlike verbal cues (“come,” “here,” etc.), hand-target cues are not used casually in everyday life. This makes a hand-target cue especially useful when training a recall, because the dog is less likely to confuse this cue with unreinforced random calling from family and friends, as can happen with verbal cues. Handlers should pick a hand position that will be the visual cue for this behavior. A flat palm facing the dog and held beside the thigh is a common cue.

Dog Skills

Targeting
 Offer behavior
 Respond to a cue

People Skills

Shaping
 Reinforcement
 Cueing

Steps

1. Begin by shaping the dog to touch your hand. Click, and hand treats to the dog.
2. When the dog is reliably touching your hand, introduce a verbal cue and drop treats on the floor after each click to reset the dog.
3. Begin to toss treats a short distance away (a few feet or within the limits of the leash), so the dog is moving toward the target for the next touch.

Click Points

- Look at target.
- Touch target.

Tag Points

- Hand position (define a consistent hand position that the student wishes to use).
- Keep target hand still.
- Toss the treat after the click.

Good for building these other behaviors:

Recall Levels 2–4, focus in distracting situations, new behaviors started with targeting, and more.

At home fun:

Practice left and right touches, alternating hands, and varying the number of touches before the click and treat. Work off-leash at home, tossing the treat farther away at varying distances so the dog is moving a greater distance when cued to touch your hand.