

Quick guide to...

Recall

A recall cue is only as strong as your dog's desire to come back.

Recall cues include:

- Voice: words e.g. "Here!"
- Voice: excited talking/ high pitched noises etc
- Whistle
- Body language: crouch down/ arms outstretched/ slapping legs or ground with hands/ holding a treat in your hand
- Clapping hands (as if applauding)

Remember that they need to *want* to come back!

Rewards for recall:

- Food...tasty food, not boring kibble that they get all the time!
- Toys...fun toys!
- 'Silly time' with you – run around, be daft for a bit and have some fun.
- Freedom/ playtime with other dogs
- Praise and fuss ... but only if this gets your dog excited. Otherwise it's not a reward!

Telling a dog off when they're coming back makes things WORSE.

Don't tell your dog off once they've come back, however annoyed you are – who wants to approach an angry person? BUT... you can tell them off if they're actively being naughty (sniffing the ground and ignoring you/ rolling in something horrible/ about to eat something they shouldn't/ about to run into a road etc)...but once they're responding, be happy! They're coming, and that's good...even if you wish they'd done it ages ago!

If they can't be trusted...prevent mistakes.

Use an extendable lead or long training line. Insist they come back when you call them. Practise 'leave' training with food rewards. The better they respond, the more freedom they can have. Remember that dogs will respond differently in different environments... a good recall on your usual playing fields does not immediately mean you'll get a good recall in a wood. Be aware of potential safety issues (for your dog, other people/ dogs/ local wildlife)... and keep your dog on lead if necessary.

Recall training can't be rushed.

You and your dog need plenty of practise, in many different places and levels of distractions, for it to become a reliable habit.