

POSITIVE NAME ASSOCIATION

(This lesson was given to the puppy class by Brandy Schmid, professional trainer.)

Your dog must learn to give you its attention when you say his name. His name should not mean come; it means ***“Look at me and pay attention.”***

Teaching this is fun and simple.

In a quiet location, put a leash on your dog and step on it. Leave room for him or her to move around. This is so he cannot decide to walk off for another activity. Puppies have a short attention span. You can start this sitting down but you must move to standing up at some point in the training.

Have your training treats hidden somewhere on your body. I always have a toy on my body also. I use a toy as a reward with play at some point in the exercise.

Say your dog's call name, happily and excitedly. When he looks at you, hold the food at your face level and praise him for looking up at you, then bring the food down to him. Remember, jumping up, or jumping on you is not the correct response, so don't praise and reward it. Just tell him "off," disconnect, and when all four feet are on the ground, start over.

Soon, each time you say his name, he will lock his attention on you. At this point, use something or someone to draw his attention off of you. I step on a squeaker under my foot and get him to look away. When he does, I say his name; when he looks back at me, I praise and treat the behavior.

Never use the dog's call name in a negative tone or manner. Do not say his name over and over. He will learn to tune it out. You will need to teach this to everyone in the household also. Children especially love to say a dog's name over and over. There must always be some positive response from you when he responds to his name.

I will play this game with a toy and use play as a reward for looking at me. If he looks, he gets the toy, or gets to chase the toy, tug on the toy, etc. Whatever pushes his buttons.

When calling your dog to you, from this point on, you will say his name followed by the word "come." As you say the word "come" you will move away from the dog. Do not repeat his name over and over as you back or move away. Do not say "come" over and over as you back away. Simply praise him for moving toward you, and lots of it. Move your body excitedly; remember, dogs are visual animals. They communicate more with body language than with sound.

Reminders:

- Don't overuse your dog's name.
- Always say it in a happy excited tone.
- **The second his/her eyes touch your eyes, PRAISE!!!** "Yes!" "Good boy!" etc.
- NEVER use the dog's name to correct him.
- Don't substitute saying his name for "come." The name means "Look at me." You must add "come" after you say his name if that is what you want.