

TEAMWORKS DOG TRAINING ® DISTRACTION PROOFING CLASS

COURSE PHILOSOPHY

OBJECTIVES OF THE COURSE:

- **To introduce proofing of the basic exercises with practical, everyday distractions.**
- **To further improve the reliability of the basic Canine Good Citizen objectives: Sit-stay and down-stay on command, come when called, walk on a loose leash around distractions and without pulling, politely greeting a person, accepting handling and supervised separation.**

POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT TRAINING: While there are many different dog training methods published in books, we will use a method based on positive reinforcement. This means that something good is given to the dog to make a desired behavior stronger. Positive reinforcement can be praise, treats, or toys. We will use a combination of all of these things in class. We use this method because it strengthens the relationship between dog and owner – we believe the training experience should be *enjoyable* for both the dog and the person.

WORK-TO-EAT/WORK-TO-PLAY: Often handlers are worried about using toys or food in training; thinking the dog will only respond if the motivators are present. If used correctly, toys and treats are like a “paycheck” to the dog. .they satisfy basic needs and natural drives. While praise is also a very useful tool in communicating with your dog, ask yourself how long you would go to work, day after day, doing exactly what the boss told you, without a paycheck? On the other hand, if you won the lottery, how motivated would you be to still go to work for a paycheck? The idea is for you to **make toys and food (things your dog desires) only available in return for obedient behavior.** If your dog has been leading the “good life” of a lottery winner (getting all the food, toys and praise he desires without working for them), you must first change the rules so that your dog has to “earn a living”. Only then will he be motivated to work for you -- because working for you will have real value to him. For this reason, **you should not feed your dog 6 hours before coming to class.** You should also begin asking your dog to do something (like sit) to earn his meals and his walks.

GENERAL COMMUNICATION: There is a similarity between our language and dog language in tone of voice. A **pleasant, higher pitched tone** is associated with praise, and a lower, gruff tone is associated with a reprimand. We will use a lot of praise in this class while the dog is learning new things. **Praise will always come before a treat or a toy.** You should choose a verbal praise word that is different from what you say to your dog on an every day basis. For instance, many people tell their dog “good dog” on a regular basis. For training purposes, choose a word like “**smart!**” or “**yes!**” or “**perfect!**”. We will discuss the appropriate uses of reprimand feedback communication, but it will not be used to when we teach the dog brand new things. Also, when we give a command, it will actually be **neutral and matter-of-fact**, not threatening, like a reprimand.

PRAISE VS. PETTING: In “dog language” (especially for young dogs) enthusiastically petting your dog usually means “let’s get up and play!”. During a stationary exercise, try very hard not to absentmindedly pet your dog, or you may be giving the dog mixed messages. **Use petting as a reward after the release word.** When your dog approaches you at home for petting in between training sessions, ask him do something to earn the petting first, such as “Sit,” or “Come”.

USE OF A RELEASE WORD: In our CGC class, we emphasize the use of a “release word”. This is a word that tells your dog the “stay” has ended and it is all right to get up. If you have not taught your dog a release word, it is important to do so – or your dog will believe that he can get up from a stationary position when he feels like it. We want the release to be your idea, not your dogs. You can teach your dog a release by putting food on the floor in front of him while he’s on leash. Don’t allow him to have the food. When he looks up at you, say “free!” or “release!” or “o.k.” and allow him to have the food. Repeat this exercise with a sit/stay and a down/stay using your leash to be sure he doesn’t get up until you release him.

PROOFING: After a dog has learned an exercise, it needs to be “proofed” to that exercise under varying circumstances. Proofing is a primary goal of this class. However, successful proofing must be done *one parameter at a time*. There are many parameters -- time, distance, and distraction factors (including sight, sound, smell, and movement) – but they must be introduced systematically, and sequentially, from the least to the most distracting. Distraction factors sometimes appeal to a dog’s **natural drives** – for instance, the urge to chase a squirrel is “prey drive”. Proofing against natural drives is much more difficult than proofing to incidental distractions.

The most important thing when proofing a dog is NOT TO ALLOW THE DOG THE FREEDOM TO BE REWARDED FOR NOT OBEYING. For instance, allowing the dog the freedom to be off leash and then letting him run off and chase a deer or squirrel is not going to improve your dog’s response to the recall command. In fact, every time this happens, your dog has received positive reinforcement for this behavior (the thrill of the chase) and his running off behavior is getting stronger and stronger! Consider the situation to be analogous to the 16-yr-old who has just received his learner’s permit to drive. Would you give him the keys to your Porsche and tell him to stay out all night and have the time of his life? If he did have a good time, would you be able to convince him to come home early the next time? If your dog is an adolescent, allowing him to run off leash is very similar to this scenario. You should be making him earn his privileges in a step by step manner, and you should be taking away the “keys” if he acts irresponsibly. If you do not make him earn his freedom, he will not learn to respect you and will continue to be rewarded for not obeying you. Sadly, the chances are very high that this running free behavior could lead to tragedy – so it is something worth making a change to. This idea – of not allowing the dog to be rewarded for undesirable behavior also holds true in the case of a dog that barks at the garbage truck...only to be rewarded by the garbage truck pulling away every day. If you want your dog to do less barking in the yard, you need to consider first if his environment is rewarding him, and then manage the environment so that the dog doesn’t get rewarded.

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HOMEWORK: *The more effort you put into training your dog outside of class, the more you and your dog will get out of it.* Especially at this level, it is important to “take your show on the road”. Since DISTRACTION PROOFING is a self-paced class, you will be given your homework in LEVELS, not “weeks”. **You will have to complete the majority of the objectives of the previous level’s homework before proceeding to the next level of homework.** You may not finish the homework before you finish the class. Because each dog will have different challenges to meet, you will also have a “personal goal” for your own dog and will participate in creating the next step for each week.

ABSENCES: Class is where **you** learn and get feedback from your instructor. The benefit of attending class is that your dog is being asked to perform the exercises in the presence of other dogs and people. The more your dog practices these exercises around controlled distractions, the stronger the dog’s reliability will become. If your dog is ill or injured or is a female in season, you should attend class *without your dog*. There are also no refunds for classes or any portion of the course once classes have begun. If, however, extenuating circumstances arise and you would like to reschedule to a later class, please contact your instructor.

HOUSE RULES: Unless your dog has medical problems, don’t feed your dog his dinner right before class. (Let him *earn* his dinner or dinner-equivalent in class!) Allow at least fifteen minutes to exercise your dog before class and give him a chance to relieve himself. Please use the wooded areas on the side or in the rear of the building and **carry a plastic bag in your pocket** to pick up any stools your dog leaves on the grounds. PLEASE BE CONSIDERATE OF OTHERS. **Outside of the building, dogs must be on a leash at all times.**

CLASS RULES: While dogs are in class, they should be focused on their owners. Don’t let your dog go to the end of the leash to sniff another dog while you are turned in the other direction. Becoming a “Canine Good Citizen” means you not allowing your dog to be rude to other dogs. When you are outside, and want your dog to approach another dog, **always ask the handler’s permission first.** Allow the dogs three seconds to sniff and then re-direct them off to the side (don’t pull back and up on the leash!) After the “three-second-sniff”, you should be able to tell whether the dogs accept each other or not. If you see hackles up, ears forward, tail straight out, lips lifted, or hear a growl, do not allow the dogs to interact any more.

COMMANDS: In your homework, you will see suggested words to use as commands. Please know that you can choose *any* word in any language as a command. It is best, however, to use **oneword commands (i.e. “down” rather than “lay down”.** Also, keep a running list of the words you teach your dog. You want to avoid using any two words that sound alike or rhyme or that sound like your dog’s name (i.e. using the command “Sit” for a dog named “Sid”). You also want to give exact meaning to the words and not use the same word for different things (i.e. “down” means lay down, and not don’t jump up on me). Also, if you have, in the past, used a word like “come” when the dog was misbehaving, and

then you followed that word with some sort of punishment, make sure you **choose a new word for your dog’s training.** Dogs tend to only remember the last thing they were doing (responding to your call) before the consequence of the action (getting punished). If this has happened in the past for your dog, simply choose a new word and only use the new word in a positive context.

ONE PRIMARY HANDLER FOR CONSISTENCY: Class is going to be a distracting place for your dog, and you will soon find yourself saying “But, he does it so well at home!”. This is certainly the real value of coming to class – that your dog realizes he must obey you *despite* the distractions. However, it will be much more difficult for your dog if he does not have the same handler every time in class. **For this reason, we ask you to choose one primary adult handler to come to every class with the dog.** That person will be the one training the dog in class, in the midst of the distractions. The greatest success is usually achieved if the one family member whom the dog “respects” the most consistently attends the dog’s training class. This designated handler can then teach the rest of the family what they have learned. If one other family member (over the age of eight) would like to attend class as well, they may participate as the “assistant” in class, since there are certainly plenty of exercises where an assistant can really be handy. **The assistant, however, should not be substituted for the primary handler.** Certainly, any family members or friends are always welcome to *watch* the class. But, **any children under the age of 18 attending class need to be under parental supervision at all times and children under 8 years of age must be accompanied by a non-participating adult.**

READING LIST: If you would like to read more about training, here are a few recommended books:



- **The Canine Good Citizen.** Jack and Wendy Volhard.
- **Don’t Shoot the Dog.** Karen Pryor.
- **Dogs Are From Neptune.** Jean Donaldson.
 - **Toolbox for Remodeling Your Problem Dog.** Terry Ryan
 - **The Dog’s Mind.** Dr. Bruce Fogle.
- **Surviving Your Dog’s Adolescence.** Carol Lea Benjamin.
- **Owner’s Guide to Better Behavior in Dogs.** Rev. William Campbell.
- **Raising Rover.** Judith Halliburton.
- **Playtraining Your Dog.** Patricia Burnham.
- **Living With More Than One Dog.** Carol Cronan.
- **How to Teach an Old Dog New Tricks.** Ian Dunbar.
- **Excel-erated Learning.** Pamela Reid. □ **How Dogs Learn.** Burch & Bailey.

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EQUIPMENT

LEASH: We would like you to bring a six-foot leash to usually better to teach bold dogs to play with objects like class. We recommend the leash be made of leather, nylon, or cotton and will have some nylon leashes for sale.

Please do not bring a Flexi-leash or a metal chain leash to class.

COLLAR: We recommend the use of a flat or rolled leather buckle collar for Distraction Proofing classes.

TREATS:

After a few classes, the instructor may recommend that you try a special training collar such as a well-fitted Gentle Leader or Easy Walk Harness collar. **You will use this special training collar only during training sessions or in situations when you need control over your dog on a leash. Do not leave special training collars on your dog when you and a leash are not attached.** Training collars are also only used for training a behavior, and should be eventually weaned off; in order to pass the Canine Good Citizen test, the dog must wear a flat collar. **WE DO NOT USE METAL CHOKE CHAIN COLLARS IN OUR DISTRACTION PROOFING CLASSES.**

TOYS & GAMES: Break up your training sessions with play. Only use toys for training that are not available around the house. **These should be “special” toys that only appear when you are training.** You want the dog to play with and focus on YOU, and you should be in charge of the game. Games during training sessions should be the type that can be played in a small space -- like catching a treat or toy in mid air-- not games in which the dog runs away from you after an object and then carries it off.

If your dog likes to retrieve an object like a tennis ball, start your play session with two identical objects. Throw one object, hide the other behind your back. After the dog picks up the first object and is facing you, encourage him to bring the first object to you. When the dog is close, show him the second object and ask him to release the first object. The instant he drops the first object, throw the second as a reward and pick up the first object to repeat the game. Note that the dog is “working” to earn his play and that you are the one in charge of the game. (As opposed to you chasing your dog to get the ball, which would send a message that the dog is in charge of the game.) Another fun game to play is “**hide and seek**”; you can hide yourself or hide a treat or toy in another room, and then encourage the dog to “find it” to get the hidden prize.



CARE OF YOUR DOG

GROOMING: Every dog needs a good brushing not less than once a week. Long haired dogs should be brushed no less than 3 times a week.

Use grooming time to check your dog all over. A thorough grooming session once a week will save you a costly trip to a groomer and make you aware of any condition that needs to be checked by your veterinarian.

Your dog needs a bath when you can smell him. Most breeds should be bathed once a month.



CLEANING EARS: Moisten a piece of cotton with apple cider vinegar (ACV) and water (1:1). Wipe out ears. ACV controls unfriendly bacteria or yeast, common culprits for causing ear infections. Should your dog's ears get red and sore at any time, or have an unpleasant odor, consult your veterinarian.

During routine visits to your veterinarian, have your dog's teeth, eyes, ears and anal glands checked. Keep his vaccinations up to date!

Have your dog neutered or spayed after it is 6 months of age. Neutered pets live longer, healthier lives and make superior pets. Whatever you do, don't bring unwanted puppies into the world.

CLIPPING NAILS: Make sure you clip your dog's nails before the first class, or they will have trouble walking on the tile floors!

(You need nail clippers and small treats):

You need to clip your dog's nails when you can hear him coming on a hard surface.

(1) With your dog lying down next to you on the floor, gently take hold of one paw. Hold for a few seconds, praise and give treat. Repeat until you can hold each paw to the count of 10.

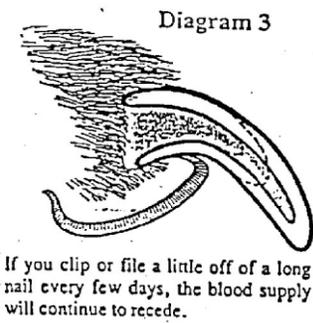
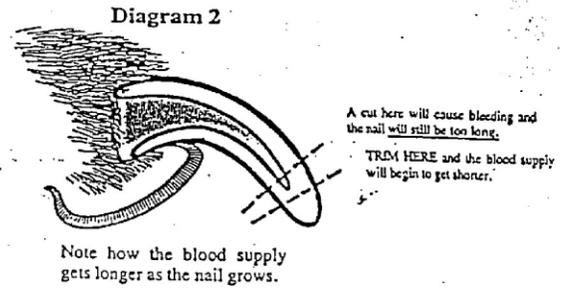
(2) With your dog lying down, take paw in one hand and touch one nail with the clippers. (Do not cut the nail.) Praise and give treat. Repeat until you can touch each nail with no struggle.

(3) With your dog on a "down" by your side, use the clippers and cut the TIP of one nail. (If it bleeds, you have cut off too much!) Praise and give treat. Repeat until you can do one nail on each foot.

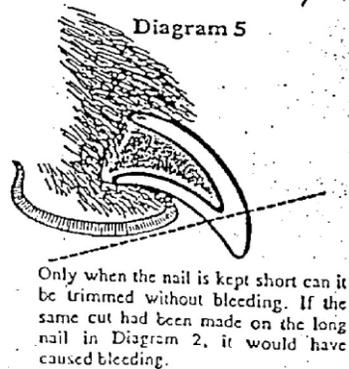
(4) With your dog lying down by your side, take hold of paw, put a little pile of treats under his nose. Let him eat the treats while you cut the nails on one foot. Repeat until you can cut all the nails on all four feet. Praise.

(5) Repeat Step 4, but give treat after you have done one foot.





Rich Health
KWIK-STOP
STYPTIC POWDER



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HOUSING TRAINING HINTS

1) **Feeding:** Puppies need to be fed 3 times a day; adult dogs, twice a day, unless you have an extra-large dog prone to bloat (these dogs need to be fed several small meals per day). Always feed at the same time, even on weekends. Keep the diet constant; abrupt diet changes will cause digestive upsets. Loose stools are a sign of overfeeding, dry stools a sign of underfeeding. Make sure you ask your dog to sit and stay while you're holding his bowl. Slowly set the bowl down on the floor – whisk it back up and away if your dog breaks his stay. When he does stay, release him and let him eat his food. After 10 minutes, pick up dish and put it away. Remember that you want your dog to “work for a living”; *leaving food out all the time (free-feeding) not only causes dogs to be overweight, but it causes them not to value their food.*

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2) **Establish a toilet area:** Always take your dog to a specific toilet area when he should eliminate. If possible, this area should be in a straight line from the house. Ask your dog to do his “business”. Stand still and let him concentrate on what he is doing. Be patient, let him sniff around. After he has finished, praise him.

****If you walk your dog on a leash in order to get the dog to eliminate:** Many people make the mistake of walking the dog *until* he does his business and then promptly ending the walk. It doesn't take most dogs very long to learn to “hold it” as long as possible so their walk will last as long as possible. This can cause a lot of stress on both the dog and you. Instead, bring your dog immediately to his toilet area, ask him to do his business, praise him, and then REWARD him with a nice walk.

3) **When to take the dog to the toilet area:** After eating or drinking, after waking up, and after playing or chewing. Watch for sniffing and circling.

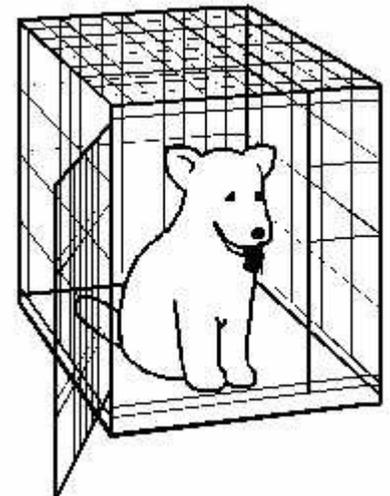
4) **Dealing with accidents after the fact:** If your dog has had an accident in the house, do not call him to you to punish him. Not only is it too late, your dog will simply associate going to the bathroom in your presence with punishment, and choose a back bedroom next time! Dogs also DO NOT understand rubbing their nose in their own scent; otherwise, why would dogs roll on the grass where another dog has eliminated if they truly disliked the scent so much? Always keep calm. Clean up the mess, making sure your dog is not watching you. Use white vinegar or enzyme-based solutions as cleaners. Do not use any ammonia-based cleaners (they smell a lot like urine to the dog). Most importantly, make sure that when your dog does go outside, you praise him a lot for going in the correct place and be very vigilant for future signs of sniffing and circling. If your dog continues to have accidents, take him to the vet to check for health problems.

5) **Catching your dog in the act:** Give your dog verbal feedback by telling him “wrong” or “eh-ent”, but stay calm and *do not get angry*. Do not try to drag him outside because that will make your clean-up job much more difficult. It is very important not to let the dog associate eliminating in your presence in general with fear; this results in dogs that will not eliminate outside (because, after all, you are standing there) and will seek out hidden areas of the house to eliminate. Again, make sure that when your dog does go outside, you *praise him a lot* for going in the correct place and be very vigilant for future signs of sniffing and circling. Hint: Until your puppy is reliable, it is not a good idea to let him have the run of the house. See the next page...



7) THE USE OF A CRATE GREATLY SIMPLIFIES

HOUSETRAINING AND PUPPY CONTROL. Crates are no more cruel to a puppy than a playpen is to an infant. Crates can ensure that your young puppy is safe from harm while you are gone and will encourage the dog to sleep during this time; making it less likely that he will have to eliminate. (Puppies need to sleep 16-18



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hours a day!) Crates can be weaned off gradually after the dog is housetrained and has stopped a lot of its chewing. **Interestingly enough, as adults, most crate-trained dogs choose to sleep in their crates after they are no longer required to stay in them!**

- 8) **Housetraining relapses:** Should your dog have a relapse once he has been housetrained, have him examined by your veterinarian. Chances are, he is ill.

Guidelines for Introducing the Crate:

- * **Practice going into crate, sit with dog, praise and pet. Feed the dog treats.**
- * **Feed every meal in the crate, requiring dog to go into crate before food dish is set down. Close the door while dog eats.**
- * **Close door and walk away. Don't respond to whimpers! Do not open door again until dog is quiet.**
- * **Only make a big deal about going into the crate not coming out.**
- * **Leave crate door open when home.**
- * **Place crate in someone's bedroom at night for dog to sleep in.**
- * **Never allow children to play in crate.**

WEEK "ZERO" HOMEWORK



1. MOTIVATORS: Keeping training enjoyable is the best way for your dog to learn. In order to create a tail-wagging attitude toward learning, you will need to have "objects of attraction" to use in training your dog. These objects should **not** be things that the dog has unlimited access to. For instance, if the dog's tennis ball is always around, chances are if your neighbor's dog gets a squeaky ball, your dog will be much more interested in the squeaky ball than his tennis ball because it is new and interesting. The same goes for food rewards; everyday dog food is much less exciting than cut up pieces of beef hot dog or doggie beef jerky. List your dog's favorite rewards for each category and rank them from (#1) most motivating to least motivating:

	FOOD	FOOD	TOYS	GAMES
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				

your dog carefully and slowly, like a veterinarian does an exam. If your dog growls or shows serious resentment, **do not proceed with the examination of that area** and note it below. If your dog pulls away, resists, or shows very submissive behavior like wetting, try the following exercise: Place peanut-butter on a vertical surface, (use the lid of a margarine container with masking tape on the back of it and to stick it to your refrigerator, then spread the peanut butter on the margarine lid) and after your dog starts to lick the peanut butter, begin to slowly and gently pet him in the sensitive area, using verbal praise. Repeat several times this week.



TEST THESE FOOD ITEMS ON YOUR DOG

- Cut up beef hot dogs
- Chopped up cubes of cheese
- Moist dog food treats
- Cereal - like Cheerios or Kix
- Pounce cat food treats*
- Jerky sticks or strips for dogs
- Cooked chicken or turkey pieces
- Moist packaged dog food
- Sliced carrots
- Unsalted pretzels
- Unsalted oyster crackers
- Dried liver pieces
- Unsalted popcorn
- Shelled, unsalted peanuts

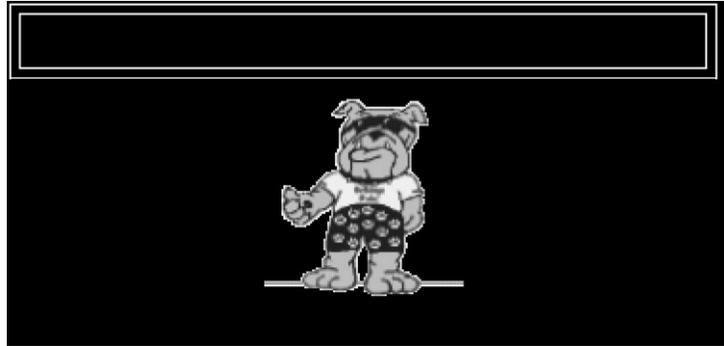
AREAS DOG LIKES TO BE PETTED: _____

DOG'S REACTION:

AREAS DOG DOES NOT LIKE EXAMINED: _____

DOG'S REACTION:

2. ACCEPTING HANDLING: Being able to handle your dog is very essential not only for practical reasons, but for behavioral reasons as well. Teaching your dog to accept handling from you and also from strangers is a goal of the class. The next time you take time out to groom or to pet your dog, do a thorough evaluation of his sensitive areas. For instance, many dogs do not like their feet, ears, or tails touched. Handle



(Your dog must do at least five of the following in order to advance to level two. Each level builds on the previous level's work.)

For these exercises, you will need treats or rewards at three rankings. We will refer to these treats as by their degree of motivation and abbreviate them as low-motivating treats (LOW), medium-motivating treats (MED), and high-motivating treats (HIGH).

1. **LEAVE IT:** Find a corner in the room. Place dog treats (LOW) behind you in the corner – have dog on leash out in front of you. Block the pieces of food with your body, saying "leave it". When the dog gives up and sits in front of you, give the dog different type of treat (HIGH) from your pocket.
 GOAL: After several repetitions, your dog should be able to sit in front of you and not even attempt to go for the treats.

1. **LEAVE IT: "Doggie Zen"** in order for the dog to get the treat, he has to learn to give up the treat. Take a smelly (HIGH) treat and place it in your closed fist. Place the fist with the treat at the dog's nose level. If the dog licks, bumps, paws, etc. at your hand to get the treat, he doesn't get the treat. If he looks away from the treat hand or backs away from it, *even for one moment*, praise instantly and give him the treat.
 GOAL: After several repetitions, your dog should be able to pull away from the treat faster and for longer periods of time. Be careful that you don't train your dog to first bump your hand and then pull away. Praise and reward the dog instantly if you lower your treat fist to his nose level and he doesn't go to investigate it.

2. **WALKING ON A LOOSE LEASH:** Place dog in a sit or down stay. Drop treats (LOW) on the ground in a random pattern. Pick up dog's leash and tell him "let's go!" or "heel". Walk through the pieces of food, using "leave it". Do not allow your dog to pick up or to even get close enough to pick up a treat. Reward you dog every time he looks at you with a treat (HIGH) from your hand. Have your dog do a sit after you parade through the food path. Repeat until your dog walks past the treats without looking down. When you are finished, pick up the treats on the ground, and reward your dog using play or by giving him a different type of treat (HIGH). (The idea is "No, you really can not have it...but you were a good dog for leaving it alone!")
 GOAL: After several repetitions, your dog should be able to walk past LOW motivating treats (within a 1 foot distance) without pulling towards them and should respond to the "leave it" command.

3. **CONTROLLED POSITIONS -- TIME:** Do this exercise in a non-distracting environment. Choose a time of day that is convenient for a **30 minute** training period. Make sure your dog has had plenty of exercise already that day. Find a comfortable pillow for you to sit on and a mat or rug for

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your dog. Do not give your dog a toy or a bone and remove these objects from sight. Down your dog and tell him to stay. You may watch TV, and the dog may relax and stretch out, but the dog must **stay for 30 minutes until you release it.** If the dog attempts to get up, place your hand on his shoulders and tell him “ehnt-ehnt”. Place him back into a down position and praise him when his elbows touch the floor. If he tries to interact with you too much or to gnaw on your hands, stand on his leash close to the snap. Praise him when he stops struggling and settles down. If he falls asleep, wake him up at thirty minutes and release him. If he is struggling to get up right when thirty minutes is over, wait until he’s relaxed before releasing him. Remember, it must be *your* idea, not his, to get up.

□ **GOAL:** After several repetitions, your dog should be able to stay in a long down in a nondistracting environment for 10 minutes without struggling to get up.

4. **CONTROLLED POSITIONS -- DISTANCE:** Do this exercise in a non-distracting environment. Down your dog and tell him to stay. Walk out in front of your dog, pivot back and release. (If he gets up, *immediately* tell him “ehnt-ehnt” and gently place him back into a stay position. Praise him softly when he’s back in position. Praise him softly when he’s back in position). Down your dog and tell him to stay again. Walk around your dog, pivot back and release. Repeat with the following options: walk over your dog, turn your back to your dog, sit down, and pretend to ignore your dog. **IMPORTANT! MAKE SURE THIS EXERCISE IS “DISTANCE” ONLY AND NOT “TIME”! DO EACH POSITION FOR ONLY ABOUT 5-10 SECONDS, AND THEN RELEASE YOUR DOG AND TRY AGAIN.**

□ **GOAL:** After several repetitions, your dog should be able to stay in a down position no matter where you are in the room for 5-10 seconds.

5. **CONTROLLED POSITIONS -- DISTRACTIONS:** Do this exercise in a non-distracting environment. Down your dog and tell him to stay. Drop a low-motivating treat on the floor out of his reach. If he gets up, *immediately* tell him “ehnt-ehnt” and gently place him back into a stay position. Praise him softly when he’s back in position. Next, try a low-motivating toy. Each time, hold the stay for about 5-10 seconds before releasing. Do not allow the dog to have the low-motivating treat or toy, but instead, reward him with a high-motivating treat or toy instead. **IMPORTANT! MAKE SURE THIS EXERCISE IS “DISTRACTIONS” ONLY AND NOT “TIME”! DO EACH DISTRACTION FOR ONLY ABOUT 5-10 SECONDS, AND THEN RELEASE YOUR DOG AND TRY AGAIN.**

□ **GOAL:** After several repetitions, your dog should be able to stay in a down position with at least two low-motivating distractions for 5-10 seconds.

6. **CONFIDENCE BUILDING:** When you are out on a walk this week, stop at a fire hydrant, a telephone poll or a mailbox and tell your dog to "sniff" or "Say Hi!". Praise for confident investigation. Repeat until dog investigates without hesitation. Repeat once more, telling dog "Say Hi" (allow three seconds of interaction) and then end interaction with "leave it" and move away from the object.

□ **GOAL:** After several repetitions, your dog should be able to "Say Hi" on command.

7. **COMING WHEN CALLED:** In your yard, practice recalls using a Flexi lead.

□ **GOAL:** After several repetitions, your dog should be able to come without hesitation and stop at your feet facing you and sit.



Level Two: Mild Distractions

(Demonstrate that your dog can do at least four of the following in order to advance to level three)

1. **LEAVE IT:** Find a doorway to use. Place dog toys behind you and stand in the doorway between the dog and the toys – have dog on leash out in front of you. Block the doorway with your body, saying "leave it". When the dog gives up and sits in front of you, praise the dog and give him a high-motivating treat. Release the dog and repeat several times. When the dog does not attempt to get past you and sits immediately, allow the dog to go through the doorway and have a play session with the toys.
 - **GOAL:** After several repetitions, your dog should know to sit in front of you rather than to try to go through the doorway.

2. **LEAVE IT: "Doggie Zen"** Take a smelly (HIGH) treat and place it in your open hand. Place the hand with the treat at the dog's nose level. If the dog goes for the treat, close your hand into a fist so that he doesn't get the treat, and tell him "ehnt-ehnt." If he looks away from the treat hand or backs away from it, *even for one moment*, praise instantly and give him the treat.
 - **GOAL:** After several repetitions, your dog should be able to pull away from the treat faster and for longer periods of time. Be careful that you don't train your dog to first get you to make a fist before he pulls away. Praise and reward the dog instantly if you lower your treat hand to his nose level and he doesn't go to investigate it.

2. **WALKING ON A LOOSE LEASH – THE PENALTY YARDS GAME:** Place a (HIGH) motivating treat or toy across the room. With the dog in control position and using a (MED) treats, walk towards the (HIGH) treat. Praise the dog with a (MED) treat for good walking. If the dog pulls, take one step back and say "uht-oh!". Each time the dog pulls, take one step back. Move forward only if the dog is walking nicely. The dog gets the (HIGH) treat or toy on the ground when he walks all the way towards it without pulling. Repeat several times with different motivating items at the "goal line".
 - **GOAL:** After several repetitions, your dog should be able to walk all the way to a distracting toy or treat without pulling.

3. **CONTROLLED POSITIONS – TIME & DISTANCE: Do this exercise in a non-distracting environment.** Down or sit your dog and tell him to stay. Walk out in front of your dog, pivot back and release. (If he gets up, *immediately* tell him "ehnt-ehnt" and gently place him back into a stay position. Praise him softly when he's back in position.) Down your dog and tell him to stay again. Walk around your dog, pivot back and release. Repeat with the following options: walk over your dog, turn your

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back to your dog, sit down, and pretend to ignore your dog. Try each exercise for 10 seconds, then 20 seconds, and up to 1 minute. Repeat and work up to 3 minutes. Remember: if your dog does not succeed, go backwards to LESS time and LESS distance to get success! Then, gradually work your way up again.

□ **GOAL:** After several repetitions, your dog should be able to stay in a long down or sit in a nondistracting environment with you in various positions at a distance from him for 1 minute without attempting to get up.

4. **CONTROLLED POSITIONS – TIME & DISTRACTION:** Do this exercise in a non-distracting environment. Down your dog and tell him to stay. Drop a low-motivating treat on the floor out of his reach. If he gets up, *immediately* tell him “ehnt-ehnt” and gently place him back into a stay position. Praise him softly when he’s back in position. Next, try a low-motivating toy. Try each exercise for 10 seconds, then 20 seconds, and up to 1 minute. Repeat and work up to 3 minutes. Remember: if your dog does not succeed, go backwards to LESS time and LESS distraction to get success! Then, gradually work your way up again.

□ **GOAL:** After several repetitions, your dog should be able to stay in a down position with lowlevel distractions for 1 minute.

5. **CONTROLLED POSITIONS – MILD DISTRACTIONS:** Do this exercise in a mildly distracting environment like your backyard or a room with people in it. Down your dog and tell him to stay. Stand close to your dog and stand on his leash close to the snap if necessary to keep him in a down/stay. Have your dog hold the stay for 5 minutes. Watch very closely for the dog to notice the distractions AND BE SURE TO PRAISE HIM AND GIVE HIM A TREAT IF HE RESISTS GETTING UP! If he does get up, *immediately* tell him “ehnt-ehnt” and gently place him back into a stay position. Praise him softly when he’s back in position. Release the dog only when he’s relaxed and not trying to get up. AS ALWAYS, MAKE SURE THE RELEASE IS YOUR IDEA!

□ **GOAL:** After several repetitions, your dog should be able to stay in a down position for at least one minute in a mildly distracting environment.

6. **CONFIDENCE BUILDING / GOOD GREETING BEHAVIOR:** When you are out on a walk this week, ask people to pet your dog. However, first tell them that the dog must sit in order to be petted. Ask the person to give your dog treats for good sitting behavior and MAKE SURE THE PERSON STOPS PETTING YOUR DOG IF HE JUMPS UP!

□ **GOAL:** After several repetitions, your dog should be able to sit politely and confidently for petting.

7. **COMING WHEN CALLED + LOW LEVEL DISTRACTIONS:** In an otherwise non-distracting environment, place low-motivating toys on the ground. With your dog on a Flexi lead, sit/stay him, and call him to you. If he pauses at the toys, run the other direction, using the Flexi lead to guide him away from the toys and back to you. Praise him for ignoring the toys and coming to you. Reward him with high-motivating treats. Repeat and watch very closely for the “decision” not to stop at the toys on the ground. Make sure you “jackpot” (give lots of treats!!) the first time he “decides” not to stop at the toys.

□ **GOAL:** After several repetitions, your dog should be able to come without hesitation past lowmotivating toys and stop at your feet facing you and sit.



Level Three: Intermediate Level Distractions

(Demonstrate that your dog can do at least five of the following in order to advance to level four)

Note: Level Three homework requires a trip to a local shopping center. Be very careful not to let your dog get over-heated or to burn his foot pads on hot pavement. Visit the shopping center in the early morning or late evening. Please remember to pick up after your dog.

1. **LEAVE IT:** Set up a “leave-it box” by putting food in each of four corners of a room. Use medium motivating human food (like bread or cereal) as distractions. Walk your dog around the room, giving a “leave-it” command at each corner and then praising your dog for looking up at you / leaving the distraction and walking with you. Reward your dog with a (HIGH) motivating treat for leaving the human food.

□ **GOAL:** After several repetitions, your dog should be able to walk once around the room without trying to pull toward the human food.

3. **LEAVE IT: “Doggie Zen”** Take a smelly (HIGH) treat and place it in your open hand. Place the hand with the treat on the ground in front of the dog. If the dog attempts to get the treat, close your fist around it so that he doesn’t get the treat. If he looks away from the treat hand or backs away from it, *even for one moment*, praise instantly and give him the treat.

□ **GOAL:** : After several repetitions, your dog should be able to pull away from the treat faster and for longer periods of time. Be careful that you don’t train your dog to first get you to make a fist before he pulls away. Praise and reward the dog instantly if you lower your treat hand to the ground and he doesn’t go to investigate it.

2. **WALKING ON A LOOSE LEASH – THE PENALTY YARDS GAME:** Play the Penalty Yards Game outside, putting human food at the end of the goal line. With the dog in control position and using a (HIGH) treats, walk towards the distraction. Praise the dog with a (HIGH) treat for good walking. If the dog pulls, take one step back and say “uht-oh!”. Each time the dog pulls, take one step back. Move forward only if the dog is walking nicely. Repeat several times with different motivating food items at the “goal line”.

□ **GOAL:** After several repetitions, your dog should be able to walk all the way to a distracting food without pulling.

3. **CONTROLLED POSITIONS – TIME & DISTANCE & DISTRACTION:**

Do this exercise at a local shopping center.

Down or sit your dog and tell him to stay. Walk out in front of your dog, pivot back and release. (If he gets up, *immediately* tell him “ehnt-ehnt” and gently place him back into a stay position. Praise him

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softly when he's back in position.). Down your dog and tell him to stay again. Walk around your dog, pivot back and release. Repeat with the following options: walk over your dog, turn your back to your dog, sit down, and pretend to ignore your dog. Try each exercise for 10 seconds, then 20 seconds, and up to 1 minute. Repeat and work up to 3 minutes. Remember: if your dog does not succeed, go backwards to LESS time and LESS distance to get a success! Then, gradually work your way up again.

□ **GOAL:** After several repetitions, your dog should be able to stay in a long down or sit in a mildly distracting environment with you in various positions at a distance from him for 5 minutes without attempting to get up.

4. **CONTROLLED POSITIONS - THE DOORBELL EXERCISE:** Do this exercise in an otherwise non-distracting environment. Down your dog and tell him to stay near a door. Reach around and ring the doorbell. If he gets up, *immediately* tell him "ehnt-ehnt" and gently place him back into a stay position. Praise him softly when he's back in position. Next, try knocking on the door. Repeat, making sure to praise and treat the dog when he resists getting up from a stay at the sound of the bell or the door.

□ **GOAL:** After several repetitions, your dog should be able to stay in a down position with door distractions for 1 minute.

5. **CONTROLLED POSITIONS – THE CAR MANNERS EXERCISE:** Make sure your car is parked in an otherwise non-distracting environment. **Do not leave your dog in a closed car without the air conditioning running if the outside temperature is above 50 degrees F.** With your dog on a leash, down your dog and tell him to stay inside the car. Step outside the car and swing the door part way closed, while holding onto the leash. If your dog gets up, *immediately* tell him "ehnteht" and gently place him back into a stay position. Praise him softly when he's back in position. Repeat the exercise until you can open and close the door part way without your dog getting up from the stay. Praise, treat, and release your dog when he visibly resists getting up when you swing the door open or closed.

□ **GOAL:** After several repetitions, your dog should be able to stay in a down position while you open the car door.

6. **CONFIDENCE BUILDING / GOOD GREETING BEHAVIOR:**

Do this exercise at a local shopping center.

Find a spot where a lot of people are walking by. Sit/Stay or Down/Stay your dog. Ask passers-by to pet your dog. Be sure your dog remains in a stay position for petting. Also, make sure to praise and treat your dog for showing self-control around all of the distractions.

□ **GOAL:** After several repetitions, your dog should be able to sit politely and confidently for petting in a distracting environment.

7. **COMING WHEN CALLED + MEDIUM LEVEL DISTRACTIONS:** In an otherwise non-distracting environment, place medium-motivating toys or treats on the ground. With your dog on a Flexi lead, sit/stay him, and call him to you. If he pauses at the toys or treats, run the other direction, using the Flexi lead to guide him away from the toys or treats and back to you. Praise him for ignoring the toys or treats and coming to you. Reward him with high-motivating treats. Repeat and watch very

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closely for the “decision” not to stop at the toys or treats on the ground. Make sure you “jackpot” (give lots of treats!!) the first time he “decides” not to stop at the toys or treats.

- **GOAL:** After several repetitions, your dog should be able to come without hesitation past medium -motivating toys and stop at your feet facing you and sit.



Level Four: Difficult Distractions

Note: Level Four homework requires a trip a park and to an enclosed area like tennis courts. Be very careful not to let your dog get over-heated or to burn his foot pads on hot pavement. Visit the park / tennis courts in the early morning or late evening.

1. **LEAVE IT:** For this exercise, you will need the help of two to four assistants. Set up a “leave-it box” by asking an assistant to stand in each corner of the room. Each person should have a medium-motivating distracting toy or food item and can wave it at the dog as he passes. If you do not have four assistants, place a high-motivating toy or food item in a corner instead at nose level (place it on a chair or on a dish. Use potato chips, hot dogs, or other aromatic human food as high-motivating distractions. Walk your dog around the room, giving a “leave-it” command at each corner and then praising your dog for looking up at you / leaving the distraction and walking with you. Reward your dog with a (HIGH) motivating treat for leaving the human food.
 - **GOAL:** After several repetitions, your dog should be able to walk once around the room without trying to pull toward the human food.
2. **LEAVE IT: “Doggie Zen”** Find a corner in the room. Place dog treats (LOW) behind you in the corner – have dog on leash out in front of you. Block the pieces of food with your body, saying "leave it". When the dog gives up and sits in front of you, give the dog different type of treat (HIGH) from your pocket.
 - **GOAL:** After several repetitions, your dog should be able to sit in front of you and not even attempt to go for the treats.
2. **WALKING ON A LOOSE LEASH – THE PENALTY YARDS GAME:**

Do this exercise at a local park.

Play the Penalty Yards Game in the park, using other people and dogs as “the end of the goal line”. Instead of walking along the main paved path at the park, you should walk from the wooded area toward the paved path. With the dog in control position and using a (HIGH) treats, walk towards the paved path where everyone is walking. Praise the dog with a (HIGH) treat for good walking. If the dog pulls, take one step back and say “uh-oh!”. Each time the dog pulls, take one step back. If you

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have to, back all the way up into the woods and practice long sits and downs until the dog settles down. Move forward only if the dog is walking nicely. Reward your dog at the end of the session with some running and playing in the park.

□ **GOAL:** After several repetitions, your dog should be able to walk toward the path of people and dogs without pulling.

3. CONTROLLED POSITIONS – TIME & DISTANCE & DISTRACTION:

Do this exercise at a local park.

Place yourself in an area where you can see the dogs and people walking by, but they will not come closer than 20 feet from you. Down or sit your dog and tell him to stay. With your dog on leash, walk out in front of your dog, pivot back. (If he gets up, *immediately* tell him “ehnt-ehnt” and gently place him back into a stay position. Praise him softly when he’s back in position.) Keep your dog in a stay position for 5 minutes. Praise, treat, and release only when the dog clearly resists getting up and settles down. Reward your dog at the end of the session with some running and playing in the park.

□ **GOAL:** After several repetitions, your dog should be able to stay in a long down or sit in a distracting environment like the park for 5 minutes without attempting to get up.

4. CONTROLLED POSITIONS – GOING OFF LEASH:

Do this exercise in a fully-fenced and enclosed area like a tennis court.

Down your dog and tell him to stay inside the enclosed area. Drop his leash and pivot out in front of your dog and then back. Keep your dog in a stay position for 5 minutes with the leash still attached to him. Praise, treat, and release only when the dog clearly resists getting up and settles down. Reward your dog at the end of the session with some running and playing in the park. Repeat, and try the exercise with your dog off-leash in the enclosed area. Work your dog up to 5 minutes off leash in the enclosed area.

□ **GOAL:** After several repetitions, your dog should be able to stay in a down position off leash in an enclosed area for five minutes.

5. CONTROLLED POSITIONS – OFF LEASH PLUS DISTRACTIONS:

Do this exercise in a fully-fenced and enclosed area like a tennis court.

When your dog has mastered the exercise above, try adding some distractions. Down your dog and tell him to stay inside the enclosed area. Remove his leash, but keep it with you. Leave the enclosed area, but stay near to the gate in case you need to go inside to get your dog back into a stay. Don’t forget to PRAISE YOUR DOG for resisting the urge to get up. (This is a difficult exercise!) If your dog is relaxed in his stay, begin to run around the enclosed area. Work your dog up to 5 minutes off leash in the enclosed area with you on the outside.

□ **GOAL:** After several repetitions, your dog should be able to stay in a down position off leash in an enclosed area.

6. COMING WHEN CALLED OFF LEASH:

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Do this exercise in a fully-fenced and enclosed area like a tennis court.

When your dog has mastered the exercise above, try doing some off-lead recalls in the enclosed area. If your dog is coming to you without hesitation, try placing some distracting items on the ground between you and the dog that he should ignore.

□ **GOAL:** After several repetitions, your dog should be able to come without hesitation to you off-lead in an enclosed area.