



Let's talk about...

Reflex to name

1. Get your dog's attention

- Start the exercise when there are no distractions, when it's just you and your puppy alone. Use their favourite treats as a reward. Don't start if your puppy is tired, over-excited or heavily distracted.
- Say your puppy's name once in a warm and happy voice. If you don't get their attention try again after a small pause. Make a kissy noise to help with this.

2. Mark and reward

- As soon as your puppy looks at you and gives you their attention IMMEDIATELY mark the behaviour with your marker word (YES! GOOD!). Give a small food reward and lots of praise. Initially this is what encourages your puppy to look at you when you call.

3. Lose their attention, then try again

- Allow your puppy to turn away from you (this can be done by throwing a treat) and then repeat their name once more. As soon as they look at you, mark again and offer a treat and praise.

4. Repetition

- Repeat steps 1 to 3 at least 8 to 10 times over a couple of minutes. More than this your puppy will get bored and the training will lose its effectiveness.





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- Repeat the above every couple of hours for a few days. Your puppy will soon learn their name means a treat / praise and readily turn to you when you call.
- 5. Vary the training location**
- Repeat steps 1 to 5 all around your home and garden until you can reliably get your puppy's attention. In the early days, only practice when alone, with minimal distractions. Set your puppy up to win.
- 6. Increase the time you require their attention before rewarding**
- Try to increase the time your puppy pays attention before you offer the reward. When they look at you, mark immediately but leave it 2 seconds before giving the treat. Increase to 3 seconds, then 4...eventually get your puppy to pay attention for at least 5 seconds before rewarding. If your puppy cannot keep their attention on you at any stage, drop back to the previous time period for the rest of the session. Ensure competence at each stage before increasing the time.
 - As always keep the training sessions short. Puppies have limited attention spans.