
WHY WON'T MY DOG COME TO ME?

USUALLY WHEN A DOG WILL NOT COME TO YOU IT'S AN OWNER-CREATED PROBLEM.

It is very likely an owner-created or family-created problem, not your dog's problem. By not training your dog properly, you can create a dog over which you really have no control. That's the first mistake.

You may have taught your dog not to come to you by punishing him when he finally does. Look at it from your dog's point of view. You keep yelling at him to come, but when he finally does, what happens to him? He is spanked or yelled at, over corrected, jerked around and once back home, maybe even locked up or isolated from his pack members, meaning your family. Dogs are not stupid; they will avoid coming to you as long as they can if this is the only reward they can expect. Can you blame them? Who would come back happily just to be punished!

Coming to you needs to **always** be a positive experience for your dog. Even if you have had to chase him (which is the last resort), or follow him pretending to enjoy it, as if this was your idea! When he **finally** returns to you, or you simply catch up to him and are lucky enough to gently grab his collar and hook the leash on, swallow your anger and your pride and **praise your dog!**

You may ask, "Isn't that just praising my dog for running away and not coming to me?" No. Dogs recognize praise or corrections for the very last act they committed prior to the praise. So the "last act" prior to the praise was your dog came to you or allowed you to approach him and hook him to his leash. You need to praise, not punish, for that act. Believe me, punishing your dog for not returning to you when you have given a recall command is simply training your dog not to come on command.

Keep the following in mind:

- Coming to you must **always** be a **positive** experience for your dog.
- If your dog is not rock solid off-leash trained, do not put yourself in a situation where you recall your dog and cannot enforce it. Work more on the recall with your dog on-leash or on a long training line until he is reliable with the "come" command. If your dog consistently refuses to return to you on the "Come" command, it's time to think of a different recall word. It's time to replace the recall word with "Front" or "Here." It's often easier to change the recall word than to change the attitude of your dog and his response to the command, "Come!"
- **Never** call your dog to you when you are going to perform a negative task like giving pills, brushing teeth, taking a bath, etc. Instead, go to your dog and do what you have to do, but never call him to you for anything he may perceive as unpleasant.
- **Always** praise your dog and sometimes give a treat when he comes to you.