FREE GUIDE

# THE CORE FOUR AT HOME

**Sit, down, place and recall.** Made truly reliable, these four skills prevent almost every common problem before it begins. This guide shows you how to start each one at home, the same way we start every dog we coach.

### SIT

MANNERS

Prevents jumping up and over-excited greetings. A sit is something your dog can do instead.

### DOWN

CALM

Settling anywhere: at home, in a café, at the vets. A calm dog in public.

### PLACE

CONTROL AT HOME

Prevents door dashing and chaos when visitors arrive. Your dog has a job to do while life goes on.

### RECALL

FREEDOM

Prevents chasing and running off, and is the first step towards off-lead freedom.

## HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

01 **Start with the markers.** Yes and Good, on the next page. Everything else is built on them.

02 **Teach the movement first.** Your hand shows the way. The words come once the movement is easy.

03 **Little and often.** Two to five minutes, a few times a day. Short sessions beat long ones.

04 **Go at your dog's pace.** Move on when a step is easy, not because a day says so.

### WHAT YOU'LL NEED

- A scoop of your dog's daily food in a treat pouch
- A bed or mat for place
- A quiet room to start in

### WANT A HAND?

Book a free 15-minute call on WhatsApp. Scan the code or message us.

WhatsApp

**07731 927832**

BEFORE ANYTHING ELSE

# MARKERS: YES & GOOD

A marker is a word that tells your dog the exact moment they got it right. It captures the behaviour; the reward follows. Both markers **always mean a reward**. The difference is what happens next.

**"GOOD"**

- **Stay there, a reward is coming.** Bring the reward to your dog, in place, while they hold what they're doing.

**"YES"**

- **All done.** The reward comes on the move: toss it, or give it from your hand while your dog moves.

## CHARGING YOUR MARKERS

**01** Quiet room, a scoop of their daily food ready.

**02** Say "Good" once, in a calm, clear voice. Hands still.

**03** Wait **at least half a second**, then give the food where your dog is.

**04** Charge "Yes" the same way, but toss the food or deliver it on the move.

**05** Ten of each, at the start of every day.

## THE CHECK-IN GAME

BE WORTH WATCHING

Stand in a quiet room with food and wait. The moment your dog looks at you, say **Yes** and toss a piece away. When they come back and look again, Yes and toss.

Two or three minutes. A dog who chooses to check in with you is ready to learn anything.

### THE MARKER RULES

- **Mark, pause, reward.** Keep still for half a second before the reward moves.
- **One marker, once.** No "good good good".
- **Timing beats volume.** Mark the moment it happens, not a second later.

FOLLOW THE HAND

# SIT AND DOWN

We teach positions with a **lure**: your hand shows your dog the way, and the marker tells them they found it. No cue words yet. We're teaching the movement first.

### HOLDING THE LURE

- **Palm and thumb.** Food in your palm, held by your thumb. Hand open and flat.
- **Let them push.** Offer your hand to your dog's nose and let them push into it.
- **Then move slowly.** Nose follows hand, body follows nose.

## SIT

NOSE UP, BOTTOM DOWN

**01** Dog standing. Offer your hand to their nose and let them push.

**02** Move your hand slowly up and slightly back over their head.

**03** The moment their bottom touches the floor, **Good**, pause, and reward in place.

**04** Give two or three more rewards while they hold the sit.

**05** **Yes** and toss a piece of food to finish.

## DOWN

NOSE TO THE FLOOR, ELBOWS DOWN

**01** Start from a sit. Let them push into your hand.

**02** Take your hand straight down between their front paws.

**03** Slowly slide it along the floor towards you.

**04** The moment their elbows touch, **Good**, pause, and reward on the floor between their paws.

**05** **Yes** and toss to finish.

### LURING RULES

- **Slow hand.** If your dog loses the hand, you moved too fast.
- **Mark the moment.** Good as the bottom or elbows land, not a second later.
- **Reward where you want them.** Good means the reward comes to the dog, in position.
- **Never push your dog into position.** Stuck on the down? Try it on a rug and lure slower.

THE OTHER TWO

# PLACE AND RECALL

**Place** gives your dog somewhere to be when the doorbell goes. **Recall** is what lets them enjoy freedom safely. Both start indoors, with the same markers.

## PLACE

ALL FOUR FEET ON THE BED

**01** Stand next to the bed with your dog on the floor.

**02** Lure them onto the bed with your hand.

**03** When all four feet are on it, **Good**, pause, and reward on the bed.

**04** Reward two or three more times while they stay on it.

**05** **Yes** and toss the food off the bed so they step off. Repeat.

## RECALL FOUNDATION

RUNNING BACK TO YOU PAYS

**01** **Yes and toss.** Toss a piece of food a few metres away.

**02** As your dog eats it, step back and present your open hand at your knee.

**03** When they push into your hand, **Good**, pause, and reward at your legs.

**04** Repeat in a loop: Yes, toss, back to the hand.

### THE NAME GAME

- **Say your dog's name once.** The moment they look at you, Good, pause, reward. Their name only ever means good things, which is what makes a recall work later.

### RECALL RULES

- **Never call your dog to something they dislike,** such as a bath, nail clip or going home. Go and get them instead.
- **Coming back always pays.** Every time, without exception.
- **Indoors first,** then the garden once it's easy inside.
- **Outside, keep a lead or long line on** until your dog's recall is reliable. The line keeps every recall a success.

BUILDING IT UP

# WORDS AND HOLDING STILL

Once your dog follows your hand easily into a sit, down and onto place, add the **words**, fade the lure to a **hand signal**, and teach your dog to **hold** a position until you say Yes.

## ATTACH THE WORD

CUE, THEN LURE

**01** Say the cue once, clearly: "Sit", "Down" or "Place".

**02** Pause one second, then lure exactly as before.

**03** **Good**, pause, reward in place.

**04** After plenty of reps, say the cue and wait three seconds before helping. Many dogs start to answer the word.

## FADE THE LURE

FROM FOOD TO SIGNAL

**01** Lure with an empty hand, reward from the other hand or the pouch.

**02** Make the hand movement smaller each session.

**03** Sit: open palm lifted up. Down: flat hand towards the floor. Place: point to the bed.

**04** Work towards the word alone.

## HOLDING A POSITION

STAY THERE UNTIL YES

**01** Cue a sit. **Good**, pause, reward in place.

**02** Reward again every few seconds while they hold it.

**03** Slowly stretch the gaps between rewards.

**04** Finish with **Yes** and a toss **before** they break.

## SAY IT ONCE

NO REPEATING

Say each cue once, then wait. "Sit, sit, SIT" teaches your dog that the first two don't count.

No answer? Help with the hand, mark and reward, and make the next one easier.

## COMMON MISTAKES

**Too much, too soon.** A new room, more distraction or a longer hold all at once. Change one thing at a time.

**Sessions too long.** Stop while your dog still wants more.

**Shouting or repeating.** A calm voice and one cue, always.

GETTING STARTED

# YOUR FIRST WEEK

A simple order to start in. Three short sessions a day, two to five minutes each, with a quick marker charge to start the day. Tick a box for every session. If a step isn't easy yet, stay on it: your dog sets the pace.

| DAY | MAIN FOCUS | PLUS | SESSIONS |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Day 1** | Charge Yes and Good | Check-in game | ☐ ☐ ☐ |
| **Day 2** | Lure the sit | Name game | ☐ ☐ ☐ |
| **Day 3** | Lure sit and down | Recall loop indoors | ☐ ☐ ☐ |
| **Day 4** | Lure onto place | Check-in game in a new room | ☐ ☐ ☐ |
| **Day 5** | Sit, down and place, mixed | Recall loop indoors | ☐ ☐ ☐ |
| **Day 6** | Add the word to sit | Short holds on place | ☐ ☐ ☐ |
| **Day 7** | Review, film one minute | Notes on what's going well | ☐ ☐ ☐ |

### WANT A HAND?

Every dog is different. On a free 15-minute WhatsApp call we'll talk about your dog and tell you honestly what would help next.

WhatsApp

**07731 927832**

### ONLINE COACHING, UK-WIDE

- A weekly video session at home
- Daily WhatsApp support and clip reviews
- A written plan that moves with your dog
- In person across the North East & North Yorkshire

strixk9.com/online-dog-training

**Enjoy it. Every short session builds a calmer, more confident dog, and an owner who knows exactly what to do next.**