

Conditioning the Name

To teach a dog to reflexively turn and look at you whenever you say his name is a relatively easy thing to do if you are willing to work on this skill two minutes a day, every day, for two months.

Here's how to do it: Count out 20 pieces of your dogs' food. Say the dogs name; give him a piece of kibble. Don't worry about what he is doing when you give him the treat. That comes later. For this exercise you want to have the dog make the association between hearing his name and good things happening. Do this 20 times over the course of the day.

The idea behind this is this: let's say that for a period of time, every time I was to say your name, I gave a \$5.00 bill. Soon enough, you would get to feeling all warm and fuzzy inside every time I called your name. I would bet that soon enough, even if you were in the middle of a conversation with someone else, if I called out your name, you would turn to see what was up.

This is what we are trying to accomplish with the dog. By pairing the dogs name with wonderful things happening, over time, the dog will develop a reflexive response every time he hears it.

You can also do this same exercise with the word "come" or "here".