



## **Name Recognition**

Congratulations! You've settled on a name for your new family member. Whether it was debated amongst family members, or the name they were given at the shelter, this will be the name that your pet will keep for the rest of their lives. What a big decision!

Like all cues, your pup's name is a word that we must teach them. Remember that your dog is an ESL student and has **no idea** what this new word means! So, what exactly do you want your pup to do when you say their name?

The picture of name recognition: **look at me, give me your attention!**

That's it!

**Your dog's name DOES NOT mean:**

- **Come here**
- **Stop what you're doing**
- **Bad dog**
- **Anything except look at me!**

How do we teach this? Follow the steps below to develop rock solid name recognition!

Be sure to read the following Behavior Blueprints before attempting this exercise:

- How Dogs Learn (Training Philosophy)
- Marking Mechanics (Must Reads)
- Ain't Misbehaving (Must Reads)



**Step 1:** Say your dog's name **one time**. Be sure to give them a moment to process!



**Step 2:** If your dog doesn't respond after ~2 seconds, make a fun noise! **Do not** repeat their name!



**Step 3:** Mark **"yes!"** when your dog looks towards you. Don't expect eye contact immediately, **mark and reward their head turning towards you!**



**Step 4:** Reward your dog with a tasty treat!

## Name Recognition FAQ's

### My dog isn't giving me eye contact when I say their name:

- Baby steps! If your dog isn't looking at you when you say their name, first just mark and reward when your dog turns their head at all. We all have to start somewhere, so start first with just the slightest hint of your pup giving you their attention.

### My dog won't respond to their name unless I have a treat:

- What is the picture of name recognition? **Look at me.** When you say their name, is your dog looking at you or the treat? Try not to have a treat in your hand when asking for any behavior. If you do, keep it behind your back or in your pocket. Dogs are excellent observers of our behavior and are very good at picking up context clues. Don't add "treat in hand" to the picture of a behavior!
- Read more about this in the Generalization (Advanced Skills) Behavior Blueprint on our website.

### My dog won't respond to their name when we're outside:

- Act like a fool! Is your dog staring at a squirrel or at another dog? We have to be so much more interesting than the distractions. If your dog has the choice between a squirrel or "teddy, hey teddy, teddy," which do you think they would choose?
- Say your pup's name **one time**, and then make a really fun and weird noise. (ex: blow a raspberry) Yes, initially your dog is looking at you because of the weird noise, but that noise will begin to go away as they become more fluent with their name.

Teddy  Raspberry  Attention  Treat

Teddy  Attention  Treat

### My dog isn't coming to me when I say their name:

- **Remember:** their name doesn't mean come here! It doesn't mean anything **except** look at me! Check out the **Come When Called** Behavior Blueprint to learn how to teach your dog to come to you.