

On your first few visits to the park, your puppy is likely to be just as interested in you as she is in the sights and smells of the park, and as a result she may not go away from you very much. Don't worry about this; it is natural for her to be slightly wary encountering the big wide world. Make use of her interest in you and play games with her, which will make you a very exciting companion and she will be more likely to come back to you when you call.



Teaching your dog to come when called



Teaching your puppy to come when she is called should be started as soon as possible. It is easier to teach good habits than it is to undo bad habits

The key to getting your puppy to come to you, is to make it a pleasurable experience. Very young puppies will be often be happy just to have a cuddle when they come back to your call, older puppies would also appreciate a game or a treat. Every time you call your puppy to you give her a treat and tell her she's a good girl. She should soon associate coming back with good things and come running every time she is called.

That is the easy start, but your puppy needs to learn that it is fun to come back to you even when there are other distractions around. If you have more than one person in your house, then both of you need to be involved in this stage.

One person should be with the puppy in one room of the house, playing together. The other should go into another room and have a treat ready. As the person calls the puppy, the person playing with her should stop the game and stand still, not looking at the puppy or saying anything. Meanwhile the person in the other room is calling the puppy enthusiastically to encourage the puppy. As soon as the puppy realises that the game has stopped and the playmate has become boring, she should race toward the more exciting person. When she arrives she should be praised and given a treat immediately.

When your puppy is coming to you reliably in these circumstances, it is then important to make things slightly more difficult. Using the same principles one person should play with the puppy and you go into another room with a supply of very tasty treats. Call the puppy, but this time the person playing with puppy should continue to play with

puppy but not too enthusiastically. When the puppy runs to greet you, it is important to give an immediate treat and lots of praise. Gradually increase the amount of distraction the person playing with the puppy provides as the puppy becomes more reliable about running to greet you.

You can do all this preparation in your own home and garden. Vary the rooms and area you use, so that puppy understands that she has to run to you wherever she is- not just from one particular room to another. When she is running to you as soon as you call- she is ready to be let off her lead when you take her to the park for a run.



Hopefully you will have done all this training before your puppy even goes to the park for the first time. When you take her to the park, she can safely be let off the lead. Allow her to run around for a few minutes, then call her to you, gently hold her collar while you give her a treat and then let go of her and let her off for another run.