



Pawsitive Experience
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Whistle Training

Whistle Training has two main advantages. It is possible that your dog may chase a deer or wander out of voice range. A whistle will carry a lot farther than your voice. I always have one with me when I am hiking in national forests.

Another advantage of whistle training is that it is a neutral signal. We often call our dogs in frustration and this can add an ominous tone to our voice. Many dogs are happier and more motivated to come to a whistle.

It is very easy to train. I often start by just grouping the whistle with treats. Give a toot of your whistle and throw them a treat. Go out to the end of the leash and maybe even turn a little to your side so the whistle isn't blow right next to their ear. You will only have to do this about 10 times and then you are ready to use it on recalls.

Step one of whistle recall is to call your dog and then blow the whistle. When he comes back to you, reward him. Follow the steps in my off leash recall article and my KOHD-TV video.

Step two is to call with just the whistle and no voice command.

Keep practicing so your dog enjoys coming to the whistle. It's a great training tool to have and easy to train.

I use a whistle from REI sold under their brand label -- I really like the size and weight. It fits nicely on a keychain and also works well on a lanyard. Go with the smaller size, though -- the larger whistle is too loud and may hurt your dog's ears.

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