

COMMANDS USED IN BASIC GUNDOG TRAINING AND WHAT THEY SHOULD MEAN TO YOUR DOG

USE OF COMMANDS.

It is important that a dog learns to obey the first and only command given to initiate any action or position. In order to achieve this, handlers need to discipline themselves and only give one command.

The benefit in using a positioning and praise type of training method is that giving one command is more easily achieved because the command word is given **once**, then the handler **shows** the dog what he must do to obey.

Once the dog is obeying the command, he is in the required position or taking the appropriate action, **then** the command word can be used as often as necessary whilst that particular command continues to be obeyed.

Puppies and older dogs just beginning their training have a very short attention span, so the repetition of a command word used **only as a reminder** to the dog to continue obeying you, coupled with verbal praise to encourage the dog to continue what he is doing, are an important part of this training method .

A dog is not born with a command of the English language, teach by putting the word to the action, then verbal praise when achieved. **Remember a word is only a sound that should trigger a required action.**

You may use different command words, but keep the words simple, be consistent. A command should (once the dog has learned its meaning) alert him to certain action which he will know he has to carry out.

VERBAL COMMANDS

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| HEEL. | Be on my left hand side, 6 inches away, your right shoulder parallel to my left leg. |
| SIT UP. | Put your bottom on the ground and stay until asked to do something else. |
| HOLD. | Take an item into your mouth and keep it in your mouth until I take hold of it and say 'dead'. |
| DEAD. | When I hold an item which is in your mouth and say 'dead' you must gently release the item immediately. |
| COME HERE. | Return to me as quickly as you can. |
| LEAVE. | Dismiss from your mind all thought of having or doing what you are thinking of, or taking possession of, or getting involved in. |
| BACK. | Go away from me in a straight line for a retrieve you have not seen fall. |
| GET OUT. | Go in a straight line to the left or right, depending on which arm I use. |
| LOST. | Search and hunt the area approximately 6 feet in diameter from where you are. |

- OVER.** Get over to the other side of any obstacle directly in front of you.
- SHAKE.** You may now shake to get rid of the water in your coat.
- NAME OF DOG.** Used in specific circumstances only, to get a dogs attention before giving a command,
or
Go and retrieve a mark, when nothing else has happened in between the mark being thrown and the dog being sent when working more than one dog.
- OFF YOU GO.** The release command, you can stop obeying
the last command I gave you. You are free to go off on your own.

WHISTLE COMMANDS

- ONE LONG PEEP.**
Sit and/or stop and look at me because I am going to give you another command to help you. **Also called the stop whistle.**
- ONE or TWO SHORT QUICK PEEPS.**
Turn and come back towards me. Used when the dog is quartering to keep him hunting close to the handler.
- SEVERAL SHORT QUICK PEEPS.**
This is the recall meaning the same as **COME HERE.**

HAND SIGNALS

Only one hand at a time is ever used to command, often used with a verbal and/or whistle commands.

- SIT.** One hand held up in the air above the head is used with a single peep of the whistle when handling at a distance.
- GO LEFT.** Left hand held up in the air above the head, then horizontally out to the left hand side. Used at the same time as **GET OUT** command.
- GO RIGHT.** Right hand held up in the air above the head, then horizontally out to the right hand side. Used at the same time as **GET OUT** command.
- BACK.** Hand held in front, then raised above the head at the same time giving the **BACK** command.

‘GOOD DOG’.

As we develop as dog trainers and improve our technique we often forget to appreciate the little things. All too often we can become obsessed with getting our desired result and forget our dog’s efforts.

As a trainer our aim should be to get the most out of our dogs natural abilities, remember every dog is not going to be a field trials champion.

However we all need to appreciate our dog’s ability and what it can achieve, and not get obsessed on what it cannot, with praise and continued training our dogs will improve throughout their lives.

Remember no one likes to fail, not even your dog.

When your dog gets thing right, let them know that is what was required and give them praise.