



Behavior and Training Department

Resources

More on Teaching Attention

After teaching your dog her name and rewarding her efforts to turn and look at you, the next step is to train her to pay attention to you, even when distractions are present. This skill is very useful in the “real world”.

Step Two: Adding Distractions (Location Changes) Every time you practice any exercise (head snap, sit, down...) in a different place your dog will be distracted by the novel experience. There will be different environmental distractions such as new smells, visuals and surfaces making it more challenging to get her attention.

1. **Start Close:** In a new location in your house or yard. Practice a few attention/head turn (you say your dog's name and reward them for looking toward you) exercises with her very close. Don't go on to the next step until she is reliably giving you attention when you ask for it.
2. **Add Behavior:** After the head snap, ask for a behavior (sit, down...one they already know). You may have to lure your dog into position because of the distractions. This is normal. Lure your dog 2 or 3 times, and then try without the lure.
3. **Repeat & Move:** Practice these just like you practiced in the house—5-6 practices in one spot (patio), then move to a new spot (lawn) and try 5-6 more. Each time you move to a new spot, you may have to go back to the lure.
4. When your dog is reliable and does not need the lure in various areas in and out of your house then you are ready to increase distractions by taking your training to other locations.

When dealing with training and behavioral issues it is advised to get professional assistance. Sonoma Humane offers a variety of training classes, behavioral consultations, in-home training, and private sessions.

Sonoma Humane Society Behavior & Training Department
5345 Hwy 12 West Santa Rosa, CA 95407 707-542-0882 ext. 233
www.sonomahumane.org