

Give It A Name

by Sue Marino

“Give it a name”. If you want your Newf to do something and to do it consistently, you must give the command a name. In addition to “naming” the command, the handler must use the same terminology consistently for your Newf to learn exactly what you want them to do for you. The name you give the action does not matter as long as it is used consistently. You could teach your dog to “sit”, every time the word ‘peanut butter’ is spoken, as long as that word(s) is used for that particular command every single time. The dog will learn to associate the command with the action, of course it should always be accompanied by the appropriate amount of praise for a job well done.



But often our dogs do not behave consistently when we ask them to, so is this learning problem with the dogs or with us? After careful consideration, the problem lies with us. We are not consistent with our verbal commands. How can we expect our Newfs to understand (although most do, they just make us sweat it out especially in the ring) and grasp these concepts when we keep changing it on them?

One common example that we all can relate to is the command “down” and its action. Many people use the word “down” to have the dog lie down on the floor. Others use the command “down” when the dog is on the sofa, bed or

jumping up, meaning to get off. For example, you have taught your Newf that “down” means lie down. You return home and discover your furry friend lying on your bed drooling on your pillow, you command “DOWN”. He looks up at you quizzically “But I am already lying down and quite comfortably, what is it you really want me to do?” Now let us say that you have taught your dog that “down” means to get off. You go to your first obedience class and use the

command “DOWN” wanting him to lie down on the floor. You get no response from that command. You repeat “DOWN” as you push on his shoulders to the floor. All the time he is thinking, “I am not even on anything. Stop pushing me.”



Here lies the problem. One word with different meanings. How is the dog to know which one you mean? Well let us make it easy for them and less difficult on us.

One word = one action.
Consistency = success.

In my quest to achieve my first CD with my first Newfoundland “Rigby”, it has been a challenge to learn these commands and use them at the right time to get the right response from her. But our Newfs can do so many wonderful things that I wanted to make a list of as many different commands as I could.

To assist me along the learning curve, I called upon other NCNE members and their experience and knowledge to formulate a list of commands that will be

very helpful in this training process. So here is the list:

- SIT (Obvious!)
- DOWN Lie Down or Put all four paws on the ground
- HEEL Walk on my left side at my pace, with your shoulder at my knee
- STAND Stand
- COME Come directly to me and sit in front of me
- WAIT Be still but pay attention there's another command coming
- STAY Do NOT move from your current position
- FRONT Sit facing me close enough to touch
- FINISH / PLACE / HEEL Where ever you are return to the heel position and sit
- AROUND Same as above but can be applied to going around anything
- OKAY / FREE Used to release the dog
- TAKE / TAKE IT Put whatever it is that I'm holding or pointing to in your mouth
- HOLD Hold whatever it is in your mouth and DO NOT let go
- GIVE Give me whatever it is you have in your mouth
- CARRY Dog holding item, moves with the item in her mouth
- OVER Jump over the broad jump or roll onto your side
- JUMP Jump over bar jump or jump over anything
- HUP! Jump over high jump

- OUT / GO OUT Go away from me or go outside or spit it out
- FIND / FIND IT Find the article with my scent or Find a person as in Hide and Seek or Search and Rescue
- SEEK / SEARCH Examine closely and find what I'm looking for
- HERE Come close to me but you don't have to sit
- FORWARD Haul forward
- BACK Back up or Return to where you came
- LEFT / RIGHT Turn left / Turn right
- SLOW / EASY Slow down
- NO PULL / EASY Stop forging ahead
- FAST Dog heels fast
- SLOW Dog heels slow
- WHOA Slow and then stop remain standing
- PULL Dog pulls with an object in her mouth
- SWIM Dog swims at the handler's side
- OFF Put all four paws on the ground
- UP Get up on whatever I ask: Table, Bench etc.
- LEAVE IT Ignore whatever it is, Don't touch it, Don't play with it, Don't lick it
- NO SNIFF Don't smell it, Stop air scenting
- LETS GO Come with me but you don't have to heel
- HURRY UP Move faster or urinate on command
- SIDE Roll onto your side or Dog moves sideways
- BELLY / LAY BACK Roll onto your back, belly up
- SHAKE Shake off rain, snow, mud, etc. or Shake hands
- LOOK Look at me or where I'm pointing
- OPEN Dog opens mouth for inspection
- SPIN Dog turns in a circle to the left (Counter Clockwise)
- TWIRL Dog turns in a circle to the right (Clockwise)
- LIFT Dog allows handler to lift and place feet
- GIVE ME FIVE Dog shakes hands, slaps paw to handler's hand
- KICK Dog kicks when handler lifts her leg
- WEAVE Dog walks underneath handler's legs as the handler is walking or Dog goes thru weave poles
- HIKE Dog walks underneath the handler's legs while the handler stays still or Haul forward
- UNDER Dog goes under table, chair etc.
- TUNNEL Dog goes thru tunnel
- CRATE / KENNLE / BED Dog goes into it's crate, kennel or bed
- LOAD UP / CAR Dog gets into the car or truck
- QUIET Dog stops barking
- SPEAK Dog barks on command
- GOO-O-OD BOY / GIRL Self-explanatory. Hopefully used the most!

I want to thank every one who took the opportunity to share with us their ideas and suggestions. I hope this list helps and gives everyone some good ideas. Remember, "GIVE IT A NAME!" and BE CONSISTENT! So now get out there and train whether it's for an obedience, draft or water title or just for fun!