

**HOMEWORK – WEEK FIVE**

Skill	What to Do	Required for Next Week
Recall	As for last week, continuing to increase distractions and distances. Continue to use a long line if necessary to ensure compliance and safety. Keep playing recall games and calling dog away from less exciting food, toys, people, and dogs. Remember to always use dog’s name + recall cue. Stay vigilant for potential distractions and manage situations so that you are always in control (or can get it back quickly). Practice taking hold of your dog’s collar when he comes to you – take it very gently under his chin, not over his head, and don’t grab or pull. Reward him once you have your hand on the collar.	Dog responds immediately and enthusiastically to name/recall cue from 15 metres when mildly distracted, and able to ignore familiar dogs and inaccessible food decoys.
Loose Lead Walking	As for last week, increasing the distractions if your dog can cope with them, and working in busier environments, and on a short lead in places where there is less room.	Dog pulls much less and readily gives in to leash tension, regardless of leash length. Dog ignores or accepts being moved away from medium level distractions with minimal resistance, and accepts being moved away from high level distractions reasonably easily. Stays close most of the time and tunes in when you stop or slow down.
Handling	Continue with all-over gentle handling, including feet and teeth. Focus on problem areas. Practice faster collar grab and leading the dog by the collar – forwards, backwards, and sideways. <i>Never</i> drag your dog, as this will cause him to instinctively resist – a little, gentle pressure-and-release (and food in front of his nose if needed) is more effective at letting him know what you want.	Dog accepts all handling without fuss. Can be quickly grabbed by collar and led without resistance.
Sits and Downs	Work towards having your dog work off a verbal cue alone, but don’t repeat it if the dog doesn’t respond straight away – help him out with a hand signal, or even a lure if needed. It is more natural for a dog to follow hand signals and body language, so verbal cues alone can be more difficult. If your dog needs help, give your verbal cue first, <i>then</i> follow up with your hand signal. Over time, he will start to anticipate the hand signal when he hears the verbal cue, and then will start working off the verbal cue instead. Ask your dog to hold position for a few seconds and always release him with “okay”.	Dog moves into position on a verbal signal alone, and will hold position for five to ten seconds, until released with “okay” signal.
Tunnel	Work on getting your dog to go through the tunnel without needing to throw a treat or toy through first. You may need to use a shorter tunnel at first. Run through a couple of times with a thrown treat or toy, then hold on to the reward in your other hand, but when approaching the tunnel, make the same arm movement you were using before, as if throwing it through. If your dog goes through, let him have the reward as soon as he exits, and make a big fuss of him. If your dog hesitates, you may need to throw the reward through the tunnel a couple more times – it can be confusing when you change things. Try to balance letting him figure it out for himself with keeping up his confidence by providing help where needed. Don’t use a verbal tunnel cue unless your dog is going through without hesitation every time.	Dog will go through tunnel with owner beside him, receiving treat or toy at the end, and staying focused on owner.

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Plank	Continue to practice. Make sure your dog is stepping smoothly on and off the ends without jumping (this is a bad habit if you want to do other dog sports, and can also be damaging to joints). Work on keeping all four feet on the plank – this may mean slowing your dog down. Only give physical assistance if absolutely necessary. If your dog is really struggling, use a wider plank so he feels more confident and stable. Often core strength and balance need to develop for a dog to be able to manage a plank more easily – this takes time.	Dog is confident and not hesitating when asked to walk over plank, and not jumping on or off either end. Keeps all four feet on the plank and does not need physical assistance.
Send	Gradually increase the distance the dog can be sent to get into the box to 2 metres, one small step at a time, from different directions. Keep the box in the same place, and move away yourself to increase distance or change direction. You want your dog to run to his box confidently – if he is hesitant, reduce the distance and build up more slowly. If your dog becomes reluctant as the distance increases, also consider whether getting into the box is problematic for him – small dogs may need the sides cut down so they are not having to jump, and large dogs may need a bigger box. As distance increases, these issues can have a bigger effect. Work towards having him stay there for 10 seconds, and not getting out until released with “okay”. To reward, throw a treat into the box or return to the box to hand-deliver it, but don’t call him back to you to reward him.	Dog can be sent 2m to get into box and will stay there 10 seconds until released.
Stay	Build up stay in box to 10 seconds with you one to two metres away, stepping off in different directions. However a solid stay at any distance or for any time is more important than a broken stay at longer distances or times. Go at your dog’s pace. If you are having problems, check out the trouble-shooting section of the <i>Successful Stays</i> handout, as there may be something you are missing. Remember that a Stay can be harder than a Send, because you are leaving the dog, which can be stressful for him, rather than him leaving you.	Dog will stay in box for 10 seconds with handler moving away 1 – 2 metres.
Nose Touch	As for last week. This is a good trick to use when you need to distract your dog from something else. Start asking your dog to work a bit harder – jump up to reach your hand, lie down on the floor, find your hand under a rug.	Confident nose touches at a variety of angles and positions.