

E-COME

WHERE TO GO FROM HERE

THE BIG PICTURE



The e-collar is a wonderful teaching tool for achieving the 'Come' and much more should you chose to do so. A whole new world is now open to your dog. Going more places with you now, getting good exercise, not to mention less stress for you both.

Even if you chose not to teach your dog anymore it is important to remember that in practical terms your dog's training is not complete and in fact will never complete. You have a very good foundation laid but you will always need to be alert for cracks, reinforce areas where you suspect weakness may be developing etc.

It's much the same as getting physically fit. If you're not in shape, getting there is a lot of work and even so, once you've achieved your fitness goal, without a maintenance program it is all for naught. You can lose it all in what will seem a heart beat. You still have to watch what you eat, sleep right, and exercise. It will never end. The upside is that the benefits reaped from those efforts are a well worth, wonderful return on the investment.

Unlike a fitness program someone else can get your dog "shape" but no one else can maintain that training better then you and as they say, "Use it or lose it!"

SUPERVISION

Your dog is learning twenty four hours a day, seven days a week whether you're teaching or not and it is important that you stay on top of him or her for some time yet.



Having a dog that is trained to come is wonderful but if you want your dog to continue doing so without reservation on going supervision is required. Nature has a template geared towards parents and their young and a big part of that template pertaining to 'parenting' is supervision. Dogs, wolves, apes, humans etc. have to supervise their young every moment of their young lives until they have been equipped with the skills necessary for survival. You are your

dog's 'parent', if you try and circumvent it there will inevitably be consequences. In other words, if you want a dog that learns a rock solid come then don't mess with mother nature.

As an example, for humans of our culture adulthood is achieved around eighteen to twenty-one years of age. Until then our children need us to guide their behaviour. Without this guidance left to their own devices they are very likely to pick up some habits that will have a detrimental effect on the rest of their lives. If you want your dog to have the long term freedom and happiness that a dog is capable of, supervision means, depending on breed and training methodology, the first eighteen months to three years of age. If your dog's training started later than normal, regardless of its current age, look at a year's worth of diligent parenting before you can let your guard down to any extent and give it the keys to the car.

Just as with a toddler, child or teenager, indoors or out you want to make sure that you keep your head in the game, keeping any eye open for trouble around and ahead. You want to be available to teach when the idea to misbehave is forming rather than when the action is well under way. In practical terms this might mean on walks keeping your eyes peeled for the sorts of distractions your dog has historically found the most difficult so you can get your dog's head in the right place before the encounter. It also means purposefully addressing trouble areas with ongoing reminder lessons. This means, if your dog has trouble with squirrels then constant exposure to squirrels must always become a regular part

of your training.

Even outside of the surety of undermining your recall, supervision is still critically important. A little later you'll read 'Definite No Nos' and pertaining to unsupervised access to windows in the house and in the yard. A very large number of the biting dogs I assess have regardless of the amount of training they have had, been left to their own devices in one or both of these two areas and had their abilities to exert self-control compromised. The unsupervised agitation also makes transfers to outings and makes recall harder on both the dog and handler.

No matter how much training it has, in many ways your dog will always be childlike and supervision will always exist in some form throughout its life. Much less so though if you invest the time in these early years.

DEFINITE NO NO'S!

The following are the two biggest factors in wiring a dog to become aggressive and/or at the very least difficult to recall. They are; alone Time (Whether You're Home or Not) with access to windows or in the yard. This is very important and so often overlooked. I have been assessing aggressive dogs for over twenty years and this is one of the biggest common denominators. It is natural for any dog to look for and react on some level to passersby, whether they be squirrels and cats, children traveling to school, people walking their dog, jogging, bicycling etc.



In the early stages of their lives they usually don't show any overt signs they are becoming territorially aggressive. The obvious aggressive responses usually don't rear their ugly heads until the dog is between eighteen months and three years of age. For naturally territorial breeds it may never be a wise area to leave them unsupervised but for any breed it undeniably has a negative effect on their behaviour.

Even if we ignore the possibility of territorial aggression developing imagine the cumulative effect that window or yard time has on your dog when you actually get out on the street they have been watching and/or listening to for hours on end. Constantly seeing all the distractions we've had to overcome to get them this far in their 'Come' program you can bet they'll pull harder and more often requiring more corrections than would otherwise be necessary. They are more

likely to resist or simply ignore a request to 'Come' requiring an unnecessary elevation in e-collar levels. It is much better to structure a less stressful environment for their down time.

So, for the next year, and with some of the more naturally territorial breeds, never allow access to these areas unsupervised. On the other hand, when you can supervise them it would be wonderful if you would take the time to provide correction and reinforcement when you are both at the windows and in the yard as only then might the day come when they can roam the house in a manner unlikely to undermine their training and your relationship with them.

THE LUNGE LINE AND LEASH

While you are cementing your dog's idea as to who is the teacher and who is the student, two of your dog's best friends next to the e-collar and perhaps a crate, are a leash for indoors and a lunge line for out doors. I highly recommend that regardless how confident you are in your dog's 'Come' and your handling ability, that for the next 30 days you have a leash attached to the dog indoors and a lunge line attached outdoors. These will become your 'just in case' safety lines. I can't tell you precisely why you might need them but I can tell you that sometime in the next 30 days you are going to need them.

As much as your dog and you have learned, your timing and ability to read your dog is still developing and the leash and lunge line are excellent back ups in the event you miss a cue or fail to spot a particularly tempting distraction. It is always better (and easier on the dog) to catch the idea rather than the action and if you miss that opportunity you'll be very happy you had some back up.



I must warn you. You will become very confident in your dog much sooner than the 30 days and probably for good reason but if you persevere using the safety lines as your back up, after 30 days outside of local bylaws and common sense you'll not have to worry about another leash ever again. Again, I caution you, I know the progress your dog has made is remarkable but he or she is still a dog and still in some ways will always be very child like in the ways of the world. Diligence, consistency and practice will always be essential.

TRAINING TIPS AND REMINDERS

WHO SHOULD USE THE E-COLLAR?

Only those that have been trained in its use. If you wish to add anyone else to that list, just give me a call and we'll make arrangements. The only restrictions I have is that the collar transmitter should never be used by someone you wouldn't leave a two year old child with for twenty four hours or more.

AVOID CREATING A COLLAR & TRANSMITTER WISE DOG

A collar and/or transmitter wise dog is one that believes that if one and/or the other isn't around it is free to ignore commands. Our goal is to ensure your dog believes you have the leadership worthy of following with or without the collar.

- Plan on keeping the collar as your training partner for use day in, day out for a year.
- Put the collar on the dog ½ hour before your training begins.
- Don't ever test to see if your dog will respond without the collar.
- For the next year, never speak a command until you've engaged your dog's attention with the collar.
- Don't use the collar right after putting it on the dog.
- Keep the transmitter around and in your hands even when the dog isn't wearing the receiver.
- Associate positives. Look for something nice to do or say each time it goes on. (treat, toy etc.)
- NEVER experiment to see if your dog will respond correctly without first getting its attention via the e-collar. Stimulation, then command each and every time.
- Consider investing in a 'dummy' collar. Essentially a regular collar, same weight, strap but without contact points and it doesn't work for 24 hour wear.

COME

Come means your dog must get from point B (where the dog is) to point A (where you are) and wait until its told to 'go free'. At this point your dog knows that if it feels stimulation from the collar its attention is required and it's to locate you and listen for a command. However, for a while remember that before you ask this of your dog you must place yourself so that your dog can easily spot and identify you specifically, particularly if there are other humans about. If not your dog can get confused and even head over to the nearest human in hopes he or she is doing what is required. As you and your dog develop your skills you can expand the recall by making your dog look a little harder for your location each time. Just go slow. Slow is always faster when you're training dogs.

Here are a few for your consideration for 'Come'.

- Squirrels
- Large Dogs
- Small Dogs
- Cats
- Wildlife
- Adults
- Children
- Wheelchairs, walkers etc.
- Traffic
- Joggers
- Bicyclists
- Skateboards
- Roller Bladers
- Stairs
- Crowds
- Different surfaces

TONE AND BODY LANGUAGE

The e-collar is only your attention getting tool. Once you have your dog's **attention**, then comes the **command**, and then comes the use of your **tone and body language**. You use those to play a game of "You're warm, You're cold."

This is particularly important for recalls. When you say that word, 'Come', squat down, open your arms and sing praises to your dog. It gets the dogs attention, makes you more welcoming and fun and what it's leaving not as hard. The more exaggerated in the early stages of the outing the better. When you're displeased the contrast provided makes it easier for the dog to understand where it erred.

As days pass you'll find your tone and body language can become much more subtle and people will have to strain to hear what you're saying to your dog. No matter, your dog will be listening as well and each kind word and discouraging tone will be absorbed as effectively as the more exuberant interaction in the early stages.

ALWAYS WARMUP

Warm your dog up before you immerse yourself in a situation where 'Come' might be challenging. At some point this will not be necessary but only if for the next

year you take a few moments to give your dog a pop quiz before each big test.

Distance yourself a little ways from the area your dog might find challenging and put him or her through his or her paces for 'Come' using the e-collar but with leash or lunge line dragging for safety. If you're going to the dog park, you might park farther away than normal and do a routine before you get in there. If you just pull up, jump out and let him or her go at it, don't be surprised if they "forget" about you in all the excitement and you have to use higher than necessary levels on the e-collar.

It's the same as taking a child somewhere you know they are going to be wound up. You don't wait until they're in to review who paid the admission and what the boundaries are. It's no guarantee that they're going to be easier to handle once the excitement starts but it's a good start.

AVOID UNNECESSARY TEMPTATION OF YOUR OWN

In the early stages of training it is tempting to show others how well your dog's training is coming along and then push the boundaries too far, too fast. Be wary of these moments. Don't set you and your dog's progress back by trying to prove something prematurely. Your dog's training may be going along swimmingly but leave the demonstrations for down the road when you both have more experience. You have nothing to prove to anyone and should you want to, you're a year away from when I recommend doing so. It may not start off that way but some situations seem to get out of hand before you know it. Stick to your training plan.

WHEN YOUR DOG MAKES A MISTAKE

This is where most people go wrong. When your dog makes a mistake it is important to recreate the scenario after the correction so the dog can connect the dots as to what your point is. For example, if while exercising your dog he or she resists recalling because a bush he or she just has to sniff, you would of course engage the collar to get his or her attention and then . . . this is the important part . . . go back to the same spot and try again until your dog understands what its mistake was. If you are doing it right it shouldn't take more than three repetitions.

MISCELLANEOUS

EXERCISE

Exercise is an all too often overlooked main ingredient in a happy, calm and as a result obedient dog. I don't believe you can ever have a truly fulfilled dog without the exercise component, no matter how obedient the dog appears. I can't emphasize this enough. Now that you have an e-collar trained dog that 'Come's when called you can exercise your dog in a meaningful manner and reap the behaviour benefits.



Unless your dog is a tiny breed a walk does not serve as true useful exercise. Exercise is an activity that strengthen muscles and the cardiovascular system. The average walk for the average dog, no matter how brisk just can't accomplish that. Depending on the age, breed current level of fitness a dog should be running about from twenty minutes to forty-five daily. A good rule of thumb is if you have to clip your dog's nails once a year or at all for that matter, they're probably not getting enough exercise.

Don't fall into the trap thinking that yard time counts as exercise. Dogs don't exercise there either. At best, they run, stop, smell something, maybe pee, run, stop, smell something, pee etc. The running doesn't add up to what I'm talking about when I say exercise.

A well exercised dog inarguably overall behaves better and is happier. You may have heard the term "Runner's High". It is an almost euphoric, calm and clear state of mind reached after a significant period of aerobic exercise. Essentially it provides a lasting general boost in mood and happiness likely due to the release of endorphins. Aerobic exercise is exercise that is of moderate intensity, that continues for a significant length of time. Other than the obvious advantage of keeping your dog's body fit it plays an integral role in increasing your dog's calmness throughout the day.

Just as with humans, depending on age and level of physical fitness (build your dog up), 5 to 10 minutes of a walk to warm up and a minimum of 20 minutes of exercise sufficient enough to get your dog's heart rate up and then a 5 to 10 minute period of cooling down. This should occur daily and preferably before any

period when your dog is going to be alone for a while.

Here are some exercising options:

Other dogs

If your dog gets along with other dogs I think this is the best overall exercise you could provide. This can be accomplished through three venues:

- Leash Free Parks
- Doggy Day Care
- Play Dates

Ball/Frisbee

- If your dog is ball or Frisbee crazy, you've got it made. You know what to do. If you have a poor throwing arm as I do, purchase a "Chuck It". It works great.



Miscellaneous

- Jogging
- Hiking
- Biking (Use a device like a Springer for safety.)
- Agility
- Skijoring (The dog is trained to pull you on your bike or cross country skis)

The best but not mandatory time of day to incorporate exercise is before your work day begins.

NUTRITION

You are what you eat and so is your dog. All dog foods are not created equally. I am not a nutritionist but after over twenty years of working with dogs I have over and over again witnessed the effects nutrition have on a dog's mental well being. There are a variety of theories as to what is best to feed a dog. To start I would suggest that if the food you are buying is available through a grocery store or a wholesalers outlet and you could likely do better.



One can't always tell based on the bag. Two foods might have identical percentages of fat and protein but different levels of digestibility. Veterinary approved, all Natural, Premium labeling etc. don't mean much any more. Do your own research. Some people end up frustrated enough that they start making their own dog food. If this won't work for your life style and I don't recommend it unless you've been feeding yourself properly talk to some people that work

their dogs and are unlikely to receive incentives from a dog food company or store to promote any one product. can be misleading.

TOYS

A good chew toy is a great way for a dog to pass the time when in their crate or on a mat. I've found that if you have something that holds their interest for twenty minutes you can reduce their stress level at having to exert self control significantly.

- Don't have more then half a dozen toys and keep all but one hidden away, rotating them as interest wanes in the current toy.
- Select toys that cannot be confused with house hold items. For instance plush/stuffed animals are pillow-like. Rope toys are fringed and made from Georgia cotton as are the fabrics we wear. The fringes on carpets can be confused with their toys. Choose materials that are tough and dissimilar to household items.
- Avoid squeaky toys if it motivates your dog to rend them to pieces to extract the squeaker. This encourages pleasure out of tearing things apart in some dogs, obviously an undesirable trait.



TUNE UPS

Your e-collar training program comes with a life time guarantee. Whatever it takes to keep your dog in tune or get it back (if you've been lax) is just a phone call away. Usually an hour of time together to review what the problem is and

how to get things back on track will do it. Sometimes I'll want to take the dog and work with it for a day or two and then spend some time with you. Just as we did with the original training.

It is far better to call me when you are unsure whether there is a problem. You're probably right, there is a problem or one is developing. When in doubt pick up the phone.



E-COLLAR INFORMATION

You have in your possession what I think is currently the top of the line e-collar in the world. I haven't seen or heard of one that comes close. However as with any piece of electronic equipment it needs to be cared for properly. Fortunately this doesn't take much as the collar is well sealed and waterproof.

HOW LONG CAN A DOG WEAR IT?

It varies, but eight to ten hours as a rule. I shift the collar from one side of the dog's neck to the other every few hours, take the collar off when the dog is going to be in its crate unless it will be for a very short time. In hot humid weather or after swimming it is important to regularly check your dog's neck for irritation. If the collar is fit snugly it doesn't happen a lot but each dog is different.

THE EACH AND EVERY TIME YOU PUT THE COLLAR ON AND TAKE THE COLLAR OFF PROTOCOL

You've had lots of practice at this but it bears repeating. Each and every time you put your e-collar on your dog.

- Turn it on
- Try it out on your self
- Attach it to the dog making sure the fit is snug enough for the silver nubs to touch your dog. Mark the hole to simplify this for each time.
- Test it out in a controlled environment with some simple obedience
- Check your dog's neck for irritation like hot spots, particularly after swimming or in hot humid weather.

Cleaning

Outdoor conditions can be harsh on the surfaces of the collar. After exposure to brackish, salt, or alkaline water, wash the collar with clean water and use a small brush to remove any foreign materials, particularly around the contact points, the

on/off switch, and the battery compartment end cap. Do not use acids, alkalis, solvents, or abrasive tools for cleaning.

The contact points on the collar can become loose. Inspect the contact points for tightness each time you put the collar on your dog. If the contact points need tightening, use the plastic tool that comes with the collar.

Fit

All remote trainers are designed to be worn snug on the dog's neck or the stimulation will not be consistent. If it seems that your dog isn't feeling the stimulation, try tightening the collar strap a notch and wiggle the contact points firmly against his neck to ensure that they've reached through his undercoat. Also, if your dog has a dense undercoat, the long contact points will make better contact than the short ones. If your dog's breathing sounds hoarse, loosen the strap.



- Place the collar strap in the middle of the dog's neck. The receiver should be on the underside of his neck although on some dogs' necks the receiver will naturally seek a slightly off-center position.
- The receiver light should face forward (towards the dog's nose).
- The charging contacts should face backwards (towards the dog's chest).
- Tighten the buckle by holding it with two fingers as you pull the strap snug. Remote training collars must be put on a dog quite snugly to ensure consistent contact and reliable stimulation. Do not put any fingers under the strap as you tighten it.
- Slip the free end of the strap through any D-ring or keeper that is present, and through both sides of a double-sided buckle.
- Do not attach your dog's leash to the D ring on the collar.

Charging

The charger charges rapidly – only two hours are needed. NiMH batteries do not have a "memory" so you can recharge at any time, even if the batteries have not run down. Also, you can leave the unit (or battery pack only) on charge in the

cradle at all times when it is not in use, without damage to the batteries.

The cradle flashes red and then green briefly when power is applied. When the receiver is charging at full current, the cradle light will be red. When the system switches to trickle charge, the cradle light will be green. The receiver is now fully charged but may be left on charge. If the cradle light is off, power is interrupted, there is no receiver on the cradle, or the receiver is not properly connected.

Customer Service for Tritronics

Customer Service Hours of Operation: Monday - Friday *

Winter Hours: 7-5 PM Mountain Standard Time

Summer Hours: 7-5 PM Pacific Daylight Savings Time

*excluding major holidays

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