



RSPCA School for Dogs Information Sheet

Look at me

Can you get your dog's attention? Always?

Having your dog's attention on you is one of the most important foundation skills you can ever master with your dog. It is the first skill to learn for teaching loose leash walking and come when called and it is important in distracting environments.

Look at me!

The first thing that you teach your dog to do is to respond to their name, and give you their attention.

Call your dog's name in a pleasant/happy way.

The second they look at you, click and treat. (See our info sheet on clicker training for the benefits of using a clicker).

Keep a soft face and do not stare at your dog threateningly. Staring can be very intimidating for a dog.

Don't continue to call your dog's name if they don't look at you straight away. They will only learn to ignore their name if you keep calling!

If your dog is too distracted, you can try the following:

Show your dog a treat close to their nose.

Raise your hand towards your face; as you do so say your dog's name.

When your dog looks at you, click and treat.

Or can you simply wait until they do look at you, then click and treat. (It is important to practice this in an easy environment first such as at home).

Gradually you can begin to ask your dog to look at you for longer periods of time before they earn a reward.

Never call your dog's name and reprimand them. They will only learn to avoid eye contact with you and also coming to you.

Remember to reward your dog if they give you attention without you asking for it too.





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Try this exercise in lots of environments and situations and teach your dog that focus on you always earns a reward, be it a treat, a pat or a game!

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