RETRIEVING GAMES

Game Day 16 – Retrieve at a distance

Now comes the time to bring in some distance into the retrieve, throwing the toy further away. This is a bit of a testing phase and will evaluate your dog's understanding of their Hot Zone and release cue. Take time with this phase until your dog understands that only the verbal cue will get the game going.

Start where you know your dog can be successful and grow it from there. The further you throw the toy away, the harder it will be for your dog to come back to you. Go back to putting more value into the "pick-ups" and "pick up & HT" phase if needed.

What you'll need:

- Some space to create distance
- Your dog
- Toys/items your dog has already played with
- High value treats
- Your dog's retrieve cue
- Your dog should be familiar with all previous games

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Step-by-step guide:

a. Ask your dog to sit at your side
b. Throw your toy overhead. Give your retrieving cue ONLY once when you are happy with your patiently waiting dog.
c. If you see any paw movement or lurching forward, just calmly walk over to the toy and pick it up.
d. Try again with less distance.
e. Throw your toy/item into different directions. Make sure your dog is facing the throw direction and can see where the toy lands.
f. Play on both sides

Troubleshooting:
My dog starts running for the toy before being released.
Go back a step and spend more time playing Game Day 15. Test your dog's understanding and instead of throwing the toy, warm up with a few drops. Progress once your dog can remain calm next to you when the toy is dropped to the ground.

If your dog grabs the toy before you can reach it, gently take them by their collar and hold the toy until they let go. Praise your dog for the let go.

Daily Use: Play this game a few times during the week with different toys/items and in different environments. Play through all stages with a new toy/item or in a new environment. Only change one parameter e.g. new toy OR new environment.

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