

Homework – Week 4

Skill	What to Do	Goal for Next Week
Recall	As for last week.	Dog can be called or lured away from big distractions, and can ignore other dogs.
Loose Lead Walking	As for last week.	Dog is more relaxed on a leash walk and responding readily to changes of direction and pace.
Perch	Keep working on getting your dog to take steps around the perch with his back feet. When you have a few confident steps, work on getting the dog to circle right round the perch with his back feet, keeping his front feet on the perch at all times. Work on both directions equally.	Dog is taking definite steps with his back feet.
Zen Bowl	As long as your dog is confident, start asking him to maintain eye contact for longer – adding just a second or two. Make sure you are not waiting so long that he looks away again. You can start adding the recall into the process if you feel ready – have a couple of treats in your hand, and when your dog has finished the treats in the bowl, call him back to you (name + recall cue) and immediately reward him from your hand. Only call him if you are certain he will come to you straight away.	Dog is offering eye contact and holding it for three to four seconds before being released. Dog is releasing to the bowl with enthusiasm and confidence.
Tunnel	As for last week.	Dog is running through tunnel confidently with owner beside him, on either side.
Plank/Ground Poles	Practice plank if you think your dog still needs some work on this. Trotting over a narrow plank is a good conditioning exercise for a dog so you may want to continue with this regardless. Work on getting your dog walking confidently and correctly over poles on the ground, stepping with each foot into each space. Ideally he will be stepping into the centre of the space, rather than closer to one pole or the next. If your dog is doing well, you can start to ask him to trot through, but go back to a walk if he has any problems. If he is going too fast and hasn't yet learned how to judge his stride correctly, he will get out of step towards the end and have to jump or stumble the last couple of poles to save himself - this indicates that he is not yet ready to pick up the speed. Adjust the distance between the poles to suit his stride, aiming for an extended trot.	Dog can walk or trot over four to six ground poles, maintaining correct stride.
Send	Continue to build the distance you can send your dog, and the length of time he will stay there until released. Always reward him on the mat, making sure all four feet are on it and he doesn't move off it until you say "okay".	Dog can be sent 4-5m to his mat and will wait there for 15 seconds.
Stay	Work on building distance and duration Aim to build up both stays to 25 seconds at 3-4 metres, but it is always better to have a solid stay at a closer distance and for less time than to push the dog too far and have him break his position. Practice your down walkaround separately from the down stay for now.	Dog can do a 25 second sit stay at 3-4 metres, and 20 second down stay at 2m. Down walkaround is started or progressing.

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Lead Hand Training	Work towards taking five confident steps with your dog beside you, following your hand and finishing with a nose touch. If your dog still can't follow your hand without food in it, go back to just one or two steps and work on getting your dog confident at that level without the food. You can do this by simply having a smaller and smaller piece in that hand until there is none. Never give your dog the food that is in your leading hand; always feed from the other hand. This way he will know the reward is there even if it is not right in front of his nose. Continue to ask for a proper nose touch at the end before rewarding.	Dog can take up to five steps following the leading hand without food in it, and nose touch at the end.
Cone Work	If your dog is confidently following your lure hand around the cone, work on this with no food in your hand but still rewarding at the completion of each circuit. You may find your dog doesn't need you to lure him – with or without food – very quickly. In this case, start reducing the luring down to an abbreviated hand signal instead. Make sure you are being completely consistent about which hand you use for which direction – dog-on-left/left hand/clockwise, and dog-on-right/right hand/anticlockwise. This is particularly important if you plan to take up Agility.	Dog can circle cone without a food lure, and preferably on a hand signal rather than a leading hand lure.
Tricks to Try	<p>The tricks listed below are great for fitness and conditioning. All dog sports require a dog to be strong and flexible, and if your dog ever needs physiotherapy or rehabilitation, these tricks give you a head start. However, they all require a dog to build strength and flexibility over time, so never push beyond your dog's comfort level. Dogs should always be warmed up with a few minutes of trotting or playing before starting training. Tricks should never be performed for more than 5 – 10 seconds at a time or trained for longer than 5 minutes. Always give your dog the option to walk away at any point, or just say no, and stop if you see your dog becoming tired or starting to struggle.</p> <p>Backing Up – dog should move straight and use each leg properly, not hopping or shuffling. Slow is better than fast.</p> <p>Extended Shake – have dog on low perch to anchor him, and then ask him to reach forward to shake hands, extending through the shoulders. An advanced version is to have the dog extend his back legs as well.</p> <p>Shrinking Boxes – the dog is asked to get all four feet into ever-smaller boxes.</p> <p>Square Stack – the dog stands in a “show” stack with front feet on one platform and back feet on another of equal height. Front legs straight and back should be level (depending on breed and conformation), never dipped or bowed.</p> <p>Leg Weave – dog weaves in a figure of eight through owner's legs.</p> <p>Around the World Stretch – dog is required to keep all four feet still while nose follows a food lure up, down, and side to side.</p> <p>Wobble Cushion – front feet on wobble cushion, back feet on wobble cushion, front and back on wobble cushions at the same time.</p> <p>Spins – dog turns in a tight circle in both directions.</p> <p>Crab Walk – dog steps sideways from one mat to another, in both directions.</p> <p>Tripod – dog holds up each foot for five seconds.</p>	