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dog. There are lots more distractions in the yard for a pup, so a leash or check cord helps to keep him focused.

What we want is for the dog to WANT to be with you, which you've started with the play training.

The "Here" command is one of the most important commands we can teach our dogs, in order to keep them safe from danger and help them work properly. An alligator he doesn't see, busy roads, other dogs, snakes, chasing running pheasants, Nutria rats, etc.

Remember, we are training the dog all the time. For instance, if the dog is out in the yard, and we give the dog the "Here" command, and the dog does not obey, and we don't do anything about it, we've just taught the dog that "Here" doesn't have to be obeyed unless he wants to.

Make the dog Sit and Stay. Back off several feet, feeding out the check cord or leash, holding up the "STAY" command cop's hand.

If the dog breaks, slap your thigh and give the "Here" command, give no praise, and return the dog to the starting point. This time don't go out quite so far. Remember, if the dog broke to come to you, that's actually a good thing: the dog wants to be with you.

If you give the "Here" command, and the dog does not come in, give him a slight pull on the check cord or leash, saying "here" the whole time. If the dog resists, keep reeling him in, all the way. When he gets to you, give him plenty of praise. The next time, make the range a bit shorter. You may have to shorten up to the 6' leash to keep the dog focused on you. Also, check your body position; remember, standing is less inviting than squatting or sitting.

When the dog sits, stays, and comes in to you with the "Here" command, without breaking go way over the top with praise. From this point on, alternate the "Here" command with three whistles.

If you slip and give the dog the "Here" command when the dog is out of range, and the dog does not obey, you have to act on that. With a young dog, still learning, scolding won't be beneficial. Get closer to the pup, and get low; squat down and approach slowly. The lower you get and the closer you get the more inviting you will be. When the pup commits, give the "Here" command, clap hands, slap thigh; and when the pup gets in, lots of praise. Then immediately do a couple more sit/stay/here drills, at very short range.

With an older dog, that has learned the "Here" command, and simply ignores you, well quite often you just got flipped off, and that requires a response. A few things that work for me: crowd in over the dog till he

breaks over in submission, Sharp scolding and harsh voice / threatening waving of my hat, putting a leash back on the dog and going back to basic obedience, restriction (chain gang) while other dogs are worked. All these corrections include or are followed by constructive drills and praise as with puppy training. Stay in control, and keep your temper in check.

Chasing a mature dog that does not obey the "here" command is usually not effective. Same as the pup, move in closer, get low and wait for the dog to commit. If that doesn't do the trick, try running away from the dog, usually they will chase. If all else fails maybe bring out a training dummy or toy to entice the dog in. If the dog comes in with these tricks, with-hold praise, and remember: keep your temper in check. Where appropriate use simulated anger and scolding in a controlled manner. Soon as the point is made, back off and do a few sit/stay/here drills on a lead, with praise after every one done correctly. Even with a mature animal, I still do not strike my dogs. One more thing to consider: if the dog is well trained, and not behaving at all, there may be some thing physically wrong, and your best friend may be having a bad day, he may be asking for help.

HEEL

Dogs don't like Heel. Well, I don't know if they don't like it, but I think they probably feel about Heel like I thought of geometry. I didn't see any reason in the world that I'd ever need Geometry in my life... and now I work in an industry (offshore oilfield) that is made almost exclusively of geometric shapes.

Heel is the start and stop point of the dogs work. Heel is where the dog needs to be when he walks next to us. Heel is how the dog is going to line up on the bird or the shot. A dog at Heel just looks good.

With the dog on a leash or check cord, say "heel" and put the dog at the heel position. It's the trainer's choice of right or left side. Once the dog is at heel, lightly praise the dog and say "good heel".

Give the command "Stay", and take a couple steps away from the dog.

Give the "Here" command.

When the dog starts coming to you, say "heel" and guide him to the heel position at your side.

When the dog is at heel, praise and say "good heel"

When the dog comes in to Heel on his own with minimal guidance, lay the praise on heavy.

For a pup, do this about 3 to 5 times, and quit. Eventually it'll click.

Walking at Heel:

A 10' (or longer) check cord works best for this. Give the dog the "heel" command, and slowly start walking. Most likely, the dog will try to walk ahead of you. Give him a couple slight tugs and the command "Heel". He probably won't come back completely to heel.

As he starts ranging ahead of you, give him some slack from your check cord, do an about face, hold tight to the check cord and start walking (not fast, don't want to jerk him too hard) in the opposite direction. Don't give any commands or say any thing. The dog will have to turn around and come along. When he's back at the heel position, praise with 'good heel'.

Now you're starting to make him wonder. Just to make sure, he'll try ranging out a couple more times, when he thinks he knows where you're going. Do the slack off, about face and walk away. Every time he's at heel whether by accident or on his own, give him praise.

Walk near a sign post or pole in the yard. This is a dirty trick, but it lets him teach himself. He's going to most likely go on the opposite side of the pole and get wrapped up. Don't say anything, just let him stay stuck there until he clears himself. Then continue walking, praising him when ever he's at heel. By now, you should notice that every other step, he's glancing at you to see where and what you're going to do next. And that's what you're looking for. Stop, have the dog sit at heel one more time, praise, and quit.

If the dog lags behind, walk slower, and encourage the dog with praise.

If the dog resists, and pulls back, stop the walking heel drill, and go back to standing heel for several repetitions.

Our dogs want to please us. They'll nearly kill themselves to hear "good dog". Our job is to help them learn what it is that we want them to do, to please us. It's a win / win situation.

Like I said, this is nothing new, and lots of other folks know more than me, and have better ways of doing the same things. These are some techniques that have worked for me over the years, and I hope they help.



YOUR WHOLE PET/Bigger than you think: The story behind the pet food recall

By Christie Keith, Special to SF Gate

The March 16 recall of 91 pet food products manufactured by Menu Foods wasn't big news at first. Early coverage reported only 10-15 cats and dogs dying after eating canned and pouched foods manufactured by Menu. The foods were recalled -- among them some of the country's best-known and biggest-selling brands -- and while it was certainly a sad story, and maybe even a bit of a wake-up call about some aspects of pet food manufacturing, that was about it.

At first, that was it for me, too. But I'm a contributing editor for a nationally syndicated pet feature, Universal Press Syndicate's Pet Connection, and all of us there have close ties to the veterinary profession. Two of our contributors are vets themselves, including Dr. Marty Becker, the vet on "Good Morning America." And what we were hearing from veterinarians wasn't matching what we were hearing on the news.

When we started digging into the story, it quickly became clear that the implications of the recall were much larger than they first appeared. Most critically, it turned out that the initially reported tally of dead animals only included the cats and dogs who died in Menu's test lab and not the much larger number of affected pets.

Second, the timeline of the recall raised a number of concerns. Although there have been some media reports that Menu Foods started getting complaints as early as December 2006, FDA records state the company received their first report of a food-related pet death on February 20.

One week later, on February 27, Menu started testing the suspect foods. Three days later, on March 3, the first cat in the trial died of acute kidney failure. Three days after that, Menu switched wheat gluten suppliers, and 10 days later, on March 16, recalled the 91 products that contained gluten from their previous source.

Nearly one month passed from the date Menu got its first report of a death to the date it issued the recall. During that time, no veterinarians were warned to be on the lookout for unusual numbers of kid-

ney failure in their patients. No pet owners were warned to watch their pets for its symptoms. And thousands and thousands of pet owners kept buying those foods and giving them to their dogs and cats.

At that point, Menu had seen a 35 percent death rate in their test-lab cats, with another 45 percent suffering kidney damage. The overall death rate for animals in Menu's tests was around 20 percent. How many pets, eating those recalled foods, had died, become ill or suffered kidney damage in the time leading up to the recall and in the days since? The answer to that hasn't changed since the day the recall was issued: We don't know.

We at Pet Connection knew the 10-15 deaths being reported by the media did not reflect an accurate count. We wanted to get an idea of the real scope of the problem, so we started a database for people to report their dead or sick pets. On March 21, two days after opening the database, we had over 600 reported cases and more than 200 reported deaths. As of March 31, the number of deaths alone was at 2,797.

There are all kinds of problems with self-reported cases, and while we did correct for a couple of them, our numbers are not considered "confirmed." But USA Today reported on March 25 that data from Banfield, a nationwide chain of over 600 veterinary hospitals, "suggests [the number of cases of kidney failure] is as high as hundreds a week during the three months the food was on the market."

On March 28, "NBC News" featured California veterinarian Paul Pion, who surveyed the 30,000 members of his national Veterinary Information Network and told anchor Tom Costello, "If what veterinarians are suspecting are cases, then it's much larger than anything we've seen before." Costello commented that it amounted to "potentially thousands of sick or dead pets."

The FDA was asked about the numbers at a press conference it held on Friday morning to announce that melamine had been found in the urine and tissues of

some affected animals as well as in the foods they tested. Dr. Stephen Sundlof, director of the Center for Veterinary Medicine, told reporters that the FDA couldn't confirm any cases beyond the first few, even though they had received over 8,800 additional reports, because "we have not had the luxury of confirming these reports." They would work on that, he said, after they "make sure all the product is off the shelves." He pointed out that in human medicine, the job of defining what constitutes a confirmed case would fall to the Centers for Disease Control, but there is no CDC for animals.

Instead, pet owners were encouraged to report deaths and illness to the FDA. But when they tried to file reports, there was no place on the agency's Web site to do so and nothing but endless busy signals when people tried to call.

Veterinarians didn't fare much better. They were asked to report cases to their state veterinarian's office, but one feline veterinary blog, *vetcetera*, which surveyed all official state veterinarian Web sites, found that only eight had any independent information about the recall, and only 24 even mentioned it at all. Only one state, Vermont, had a request on their site for veterinarians to report pets whose illnesses or deaths they suspect are related to the recall. And as of today, there is no longer a notice that veterinarians should report suspected cases to their state veterinarians on the Web site of the American Veterinary Medical Association.

The lack of any notification system was extremely hard on veterinarians, many of whom first heard about the problem on the news or from their clients. Professional groups such as the Veterinary Information Network were crucial in disseminating information about the recall to their members, but not all vets belong to VIN, and not all vets log on to VIN on the weekend (the Menu press release, like most corporate or government bad news, was issued on a Friday).

But however difficult this recall has

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