



THE SEND-AWAY

What is it?	Why do it?
Dog learns to rush out to item or obstacle on command.	Useful for improving confidence in dog, increasing speed, improves off leash control, improves distance work (allowing handler to take more shortcuts on agility courses)

NB: Each of the following steps may take several days or weeks. Do not progress through the steps until your dog is consistently performing the previous step with enthusiasm and speed.

Step 1: Introduction to the Send-Away

What you need:

- 🐾 A send-away bowl. This should be a small plastic bowl or large jar lid that will be easily seen by your dog. Choose a colour that will not blend into surroundings.
- 🐾 Lots of small (delicious) treats.
- 🐾 A hungry dog that is held by collar or leash to prevent it going to the bowl too soon.

What you do:

- 🐾 Have the dog restrained (either tied up or someone holding it). Don't use a 'wait' or 'stay' command – you want the dog to be pulling with enthusiasm to get to the send-away object.
- 🐾 Put one piece of treat in the bowl – when first teaching the dog make a point of showing your dog the food in the bowl. Have another piece of food ready in a pocket or in hand.
- 🐾 Place the bowl a couple of metres away from you (or have a helper do this). Make sure your dog is paying attention to the bowl.
- 🐾 If your dog is not very interested (ie is not even looking at the bowl), you can take them up to the bowl on leash or with hand through collar, show them the food and then walk them away again. Then point to the bowl saying "look".
- 🐾 When dog's focus is firmly fixed on the bowl, let your dog go and encourage it away with a command such as "away" or "run" or "go on". Take care with your choice of command – it will be a word that you will use when sending your dog ahead of you over a line of jumps. (The word "go" on its own can sound a little too much like "no". Do not use "fetch", "get it" etc as this can cause confusion when you teach the retrieve).
- 🐾 Don't use your dog's name when sending it - this may cause them to look back or slow down.
- 🐾 When you first teach the send-away, once the dog reaches the food in the bowl, instantly start calling the dog to come back to you, offering the second piece of food.

Use an enthusiastic voice and lots of praise to ensure your dog performs the exercise with speed and enjoyment.



Step 2: Consolidation

- 🐕 When your dog understands the send-away command and is doing it reliably at a good speed, start to increase the distance gradually. Work towards doing a reliable send-away over a reasonable distance (eg 5 metres) and with reasonable speed (ie the dog running or trotting NOT walking).
- 🐕 Use your voice positively, make it fun.
- 🐕 Stop asking the dog to come back to you every time - I.e. stop always doing the send-away in combination with the recall. Send the dog away and finish the exercise when the dog gets the food from the bowl, rather than always finishing with a recall.
- 🐕 Don't over practice or the dog will get bored with the exercise.

Step 3: Motivation

- 🐕 Work on increasing the speed and enthusiasm of your dog's send-aways.
- 🐕 Use your voice positively, make it fun.
- 🐕 Tease and encourage the dog so that it is straining to be released to do the exercise.
- 🐕 Combine this exercise with a special focus reward, like a ball or other toy, and start to use it as your send-away item.

Step 4: Increasing the Distance

- 🐕 When you have the speed and enthusiasm reliable at 5 metres or so increase the distance gradually to 20 or 30 metres.

Step 5: Adding Obstacles

When you have a reliable, fast and long distance send-away, you can start doing the send-away over obstacles. To do this you will need to go back to a shorter distance and ensure that the send-away item is easily visible in direct line with the last obstacle.

- 🐕 Start with one jump at low height. If your dog tries to go around the jump instead of over it, run with it giving the jump command and help lead it to the send-away item. Line the dog up carefully with the centre of the jump.
- 🐕 If speed is a problem you may switch to a toy reward – ie throw a toy as the send-away item.
- 🐕 Gradually increase the number of jumps (up to 6) back from the send-away item – add one jump at a time. Use your jump command before each jump until your dog gets the idea. Reduce the number if you strike any problems and reinforce the easier step further before trying to progress again.
- 🐕 When your dog is 100% reliable and fast, you can start to move the jumps slightly out of a straight line. Start with flowing curves or lines on an angle. Reduce the number of jumps if necessary to ensure that your dog is not tempted to short-cut away from the jumps straight to the send-away item.
- 🐕 Once your dog is an expert, different obstacles, like a tunnel, 6 weave poles, A-Frame with hoops, a modified duel-direction long jump, and flyball jumps can be used in the course too.