

Fun Obedience Games

Obedience class can become repetitive and boring pretty quickly for our dogs if we do not make it fun for them. Games are a great way to get both you and your pup invested and engaged in training. These are also excellent ways to motivate any children in the household to “train” the dog. Many of these games work best with multiple dogs. These are excellent ways to incorporate multiple household dogs into a training session, or you can invite your friend/family dogs over for a play day. If you only have 1 dog and/or your dog does not play well with others, you can still utilize these techniques to help advance your obedience work.

1. How Do You Sit?

This game can be played two different ways depending on your end goal. If you want to work on the speed of the dog’s sits, then you can set a timer for two minutes and ask the dogs to sit as many times as possible in the two minutes while reinforcing each sit. Don’t forget to count your sits! This works on heavily reinforcing the behavior and making sit more exciting.

Another way to play is working on stimulus control and context. How many different ways can you ask your dog to sit AND have the dog comply? Some examples may be, facing away from the dog, sitting down, bending over, doing jumping jacks, clapping your hands over your head, etc. This is a fun one and really lets you know how well your dog understands the behavior.

2. Relay Walks

This is a good way to practice loose leash walking in a fast paced environment. Relay around a small obstacle course (weaving between cones or around objects). Then try to do the course while holding a golf ball on a spoon or while bouncing a tennis ball. Try having every family member do the course with the dog. You can even time the course and/or grade on accuracy to help add a competitive edge!



3. Leap Frogs Down

This game is played in the similar fashion of the game Leap Frog. Create a start line and a finish line. The team member that is up first must down their dog and have the dog hold a stay at the start line. The next member walks past the first member and has their dog down and stay in front of the first member. Each member goes down the line with a down stay until the last member performs the down. Now the first team member moves to the end of the line and repeats the down stay. The rest of the team follows. Work on your speed and accuracy by using a stopwatch to see how long it takes to get all the way to the finish line.

4. Recall Races

Have two dogs hold a stay and have the owners walk a good distance away. Have both dogs recall to their owners. Gates may be used for novice dogs who may veer from course. As the dogs get good at this game, begin to introduce distractions along the way, whether it is someone sitting in a chair, a ball on the ground, or even a treat. Work from easy distractions to hard.

5. Musical Hoops

This game can be played with many different things as the 'safe zone' such as, hoops, mats, towels, or low platforms. We will use hoops for this example. Set up hoops in a straight row, one less than the amount of dogs you have. Have someone play music while the owners and their dogs walk around the hoops in an organized fashion. You can use clicker/treats to reinforce. When the music stops, owners and dogs must make their way to the hoop and get their dogs to perform a behavior (sit, down, etc.). Whichever dog is left that doesn't perform the behavior in a hoop is out of the game. Remove a hoop and repeat. Repeat this until you have one dog left, he is the winner!

*These games are courtesy of Monica Callahan BS KPA-CTP is the owner of Anything's Possible LLC in the Cleveland, OH and The Modern Dog Trainer



These materials are provided for you as a way to review behaviors previously discussed in training sessions. It is important for the success of both you and your dog, that these materials are used for reviewing, not for teaching. Do not skip ahead, even if you think your dog is ready. Every dog, every owner, and every situation is specific and requires a training program catered to fit; because these handouts are very general, please talk to Kelsey before attempting any of these training techniques on your own.

