

# THE NAME GAME PHASE 1

(with your dog on a 6-foot leash)



## GOAL:

When you say your dog's name, he turns his head toward you

## WHERE:

Inside your house or in your yard on a 6-foot leash

## TRAINING EQUIPMENT:

A wearable treat bag filled with treats, a marker signal (verbal or clicker), a 6-foot leash

SCAN ME



for details of Lisa Waggoner's book,

***The Original  
Rocket Recall™:  
Teach Your Dog  
to Come***

[rocketrecall.com](http://rocketrecall.com)

In the three phases of the Name Game your dog will learn to immediately “look” toward you when the dog’s name is spoken. You always want your dog to feel wonderful when he hears his name. Always say your dog’s name in a happy, loving tone of voice. In Phase 1 of the Name Game, you’ll train inside your house or in your yard on a 6-foot leash.

## Training:

- Play this game first in a no-distraction environment, such as a quiet room inside your home, with your dog off leash.
- Wear a treat bag with treats and be ready to use your marker signal.
- Stand still and when your dog looks away from you, say his name in a happy tone of voice (one time and one time only). If he doesn’t look at you immediately, resist the urge to repeat his name. Instead, make a kissy or squeaky noise which will likely get his attention.
- The *instant* he begins to turn his neck toward you, even before a full head turn, mark/feed and praise, then remove attention from the dog, giving him permission to look elsewhere.
- Again say his name (one time). The *instant* he orients toward you or looks at your face, mark/feed, and verbally praise your dog, then again remove attention from the dog.
- Repeat in various rooms of your home.
- Once your dog is consistently responding to his name, practice with your dog on a 6-foot leash in slightly more distracting areas around your home (on the front or back porch or patio), before moving to your front or back yard where there are lots of distractions (animal scents on the ground, passersby, etc.).
- Your goal is to help your dog always get it right. This is not about testing his limits with a newly learned skill.

## Problem Solving:

- If your dog won’t look away from you, toss a treat to the floor or ground behind the dog’s back. As soon as the dog finishes eating the treat, say his name. When he looks toward you, mark/feed.
- If your dog is still so focused on you that he won’t look away, ask a friend to join you. The added distraction of another person should be enough to cause your dog to look away.
- If you say the dog’s name and he doesn’t look at you, instead of repeating his name, make another sound with your voice, like the kissy noise I mentioned earlier. The odd noise should be enough to cause him to look at you, giving you the chance to mark/feed. During the early learning phase, you may need to resort to the kissy noise if he doesn’t look at you when you say his name. Don’t worry, he’ll catch on.
- If at any time the exercise isn’t successful, move to a lower distraction area, and/or raise the value of your reinforcer, or go back to where you were last successful.