

UNDERSTANDING THE PREMACK PRINCIPLE



GOAL:

Understanding how Premack games can be used to strengthen your dog's recall.

In this photo, a lower probability behavior, running past the Jolly Ball, can reinforce a higher probability behavior, Cailie playing with the Jolly Ball.



SCAN ME



for details of Lisa
Waggoner's book,

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

The Premack principle, known as Grandma's Law, can help you strengthen your recall training. We have the psychologist David Premack to thank for helping us learn about his theory of reinforcement, which is that a lower probability behavior can be reinforced by a higher probability behavior.

It's called Grandma's Law because it can be stated as: "Eat your veggies, then you get dessert." The lower probability behavior of a child eating vegetables can be reinforced by the higher probability behavior of eating dessert.

The Premack principle is used frequently in dog training. Some people use it when teaching fetch. The dog learns that after the ball is thrown, the dog must bring the ball back and drop it (lower probability behavior) in order to have the chance to chase the ball another time (higher probability behavior).

We've used the Premack principle consistently in our Rocket Recall workshops and classes with much success. The lower probability behavior of a dog recalling to the handler while passing a person holding a bowl of chicken is reinforced when the handler accompanies the dog back to be reinforced by eating chicken from the bowl, a higher probability behavior.

The Premack Games that follow can be used after you've achieved consistent success with your dog coming to you in a variety of settings. Once you learn the concept of Premack, the ways you can incorporate Grandma's Law into your training are endless.