

GH PAWS HANDLER MANUAL



Introduction to Dog Training at
Givens Hall PAWS Program

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

2

VOICE

Dogs are very keen to voices, and respond to volume, tone and pitch. Commands are given to the dogs in a clear concise voice. Commands should be firm, but never angry or harsh. If commands (particularly the *down* command) are given in a harsh voice, the dog will believe it has performed incorrectly, and become confused. When praising a dog for performing well, use a high pitched, almost effeminate pitch and tone.

BODY POSTURE

In addition to tone of voice, body posture conveys information to a dog. Looming over a dog, grabbing at their collar/neck, and making fast or jerky motions at a dog are all intimidating. While we never want to intimidate a dog into performing the tasks we ask, knowing proper body posture is crucial to successful dog training. Dogs are very perceptive to facial gestures, pheromones, and other cues given off by their trainers that may transmit a sense of happiness, excitement, anger, or nervousness. It is important to be aware of your mood and state of mind when working a dog, so that you send clear messages of what you want done, and whether or not it is performed in a manner you approve of.

PACK ORDER

Nearly everything in a dog's existence revolves around pack order. Training is nothing more than using rewards to manipulate a dog's desire for an ordered world. The following are important fundamentals owners need to heed to passively establish themselves at the top of the pack order.

- a) Always proceed through doors and up/down stairs first.
- b) Sit a dog before passing through a door.
- c) Do not play tug-of-war with a dog unless you know how. Tug-of-war can be used as a confidence building tool for fearful dogs by allowing them to win approximately eight out of ten tugs. Used improperly, tug-of-war can create aggression towards people.

BOUNDARIES

Set your own boundaries. It is up to you, the pet owner, to set the boundaries for your dog. **Be consistent!** In order to successfully train your dog, you must be consistent. If you allow your dog to jump on you one day, but punish the dog the next day for the same behavior, you are confusing your dog, and being unfair to your dog.



3

SEPARATION ANXIETY

Many dogs suffer from separation anxiety (fear of being left alone). Dogs are pack animals and therefore do not like to be left alone. If you come home from work and your dog has torn your house apart, it is not that your dog is a jerk, but may be suffering from separation anxiety. There are tools and methods you can use to address this behavior. If this behavior sounds familiar, please ask trainers for tips. A great habit to create is to ignore dogs for thirty seconds after you come through a door, and thirty seconds before you leave through the door.

ALTERCATIONS

Dog fights commonly break out over food/toys (resource guarding), during rough play, and as individuals jostle for pack order. Stiff, erect tails, hackles (hair between the shoulder blades and along the spine) erected, ears laid back, and lips curled are physical signs of a potential altercation.

REWARD

Like people, dogs enjoy receiving rewards for a job well performed. In order to perform well, the instructions must be clear and concise, and the reward must come in a timely manner. Rewarding a dog too late for a behavior will lead them to believe that what they were doing at the moment of reward is what you desired. Doing this repeatedly will gradually lead the dog off target, which can result in the trainer correcting the dog, who is completely confused because it only did what it was trained to do. Proper rewarding takes precision, which can only come through experience, but keep in mind that a reward is properly administered within a second of the dog completing the command you gave.

- *PRAISE* – Is a verbal reward for the dog. Praise is given in a high, airy, effeminate voice. Praise is a great tool because, just like a verbal correction, it can be given immediately at any distance, and does not require the dog to be under direct physical control. It is easy to deliver verbal praise in a timely manner.

- *FOOD REWARD* – Almost all dogs are food motivated and will work readily for a treat. Dog kibble and treats are the most commonly used during circle training. Dog biscuits, jerky and other similar treats can be used as big ticket rewards. Human food is unnecessary, and in general, not good for the dogs.

MARKERS

There are two types of markers; positive and negative markers. Markers are select words, chosen by the owner to communicate to the dog that the behavior the dog is exhibiting is either desired, or undesired. It is important that the marker is the same every time. An example of a positive marker is saying the word “**GOOD**” at the exact moment your dog sits, after you told it to sit. An example of a negative marker is saying the word “**NO**” at the exact moment that dog exhibits an undesirable behavior, like jumping on you. Essentially, markers are a way for you as the pet owner to communicate effectively with your dog.

LEAD USE

To properly handle a lead, fold the lead approximately ten to twelve inches from the apex of the sewn-in loop. Turn that loop in on itself, allowing a slack on either side. Insert your thumb through the eye of the sewn loop and grasp the folded portion of the lead with your right hand above your left hand.

With arms relaxed, rest your hands between your navel and belt buckle.

The lead should have a slight J-shape below where it clips to the dog’s collar.

COMMANDS

5

HEEL

Give the command “HEEL” and proceed by leading off with your left leg; this is a visual cue for the dog.

A dog is heeling properly when it matches your pace and keeps its shoulders in line with your hips and shoulder. If your dog begins to forge ahead of you, stop moving; wait for your dog to acknowledge you, mark with your marker word, and turn the other direction. If you have a dog that likes to forge, this exercise may take several sessions to fix this issue-stick with it.

READY

The “READY” command is used to begin a training session. **All** training sessions begin by using this command and this lets the dog know that it is time to work and learn.

EXERCISE FINISH

The “EXERCISE FINISH” is the command which releases the dog from the training session. At the end of all training sessions, this command is given to let the dog know that training is over. The dog is now allowed to be free and typically is rewarded with playtime.

ABOUT TURN

When performing an about turn, simply turn to the right at either a forty-five degree angle, or, if walking the circle, a complete one-hundred and eighty degree turn.

This is a good technique to use for teaching your dog to follow you, especially if you have a dog that likes to forge. Change direction multiple times if necessary.

LEFT ABOUT TURN

The manner in which a left about turn is performed depends on where the dog is in relation to your hips. If the dog is heeling properly, use your left knee/thigh to guide the dog around. This is another technique that is helpful in dealing with a dog that likes to forge.

SIT

The visual component of the “**SIT**” command is performed by flattening the palm of the right hand and bending the right elbow to a ninety degree angle. The verbal command should be given with a slight raise in pitch.

DOWN

To command a down, with palm facing down perpendicular to your body, lower your hand toward the ground while saying “**DOWN**”. The command word down is said in a firm, authoritative tone, but not so severe as to sound as though it is a correction.

STAY

When staying a dog, draw your right arm across your torso and place a flattened palm just short of the dog’s snout, commanding it to “**STAY**”. You can leave your dog in a stay while it is in a sitting, down, or standing position. When stepping away from the dog, lead with the right leg so that the dog is not confused by the visual command to heel.

COME (RECALL)

To recall a dog, first be sure that the dog is paying attention to you. Once you are certain the dog is focused on you, hold your right arm out from your body at a ninety degree angle and pointed toward the horizon.

As you say “*Fluffy* – **COME**” in a loud, clear voice, draw your extended arm up and across your torso, ending with a flattened palm on your left shoulder. Back-up as the dog comes to you, constantly offering praise in a high pitched voice. Praise can be anything from baby-babble gibberish to “Atta boy/girl/dog”, but excessively repeating the dog’s name or saying “come on” is inappropriate and should be avoided. Some dogs veer to the right or left while recalling; do not adjust yourself to the dog’s path. Continue to back-up and offer praise. If the dog completely breaks from recalling, correct it with a negative marker, then reaffirm with praise when it makes eye contact. The dog has completed the recall when it is at your left side, lined up shoulder to your hip.



PAWS – Canine Good Citizen (CGC) Tests



Dog Name: Marcus

Handler: Cody

Date: 7/31/22

Score: 10 /10

INDICATE (P) OR (F) FAIL:

P TEST 1: ACCEPTING A FRIENDLY STRANGER

This test demonstrates that the dog allows a friendly stranger to approach and speak to the handler in a natural situation.

- The evaluator walks up to the dog and handler in a friendly manner, ignoring the dog.
- The evaluator and handler shake hands and exchange pleasantries.
- The dog must show no signs of resentment or shyness.
- PAWS supplemental: The dog must show no signs of over-excitement, nor break from its position.

P TEST 2: SITTING POLITELY FOR PETTING

This test demonstrates that the dog allows a friendly stranger to touch it while it is out with its handler.

- With the dog sitting at the handler's side to begin the exercise, the evaluator pets the dog on the head and body.
- The handler may talk to the dog and encourage or praise it throughout the test.
- The dog may stand in place as it is petted and must not show shyness or resentment.
- PAWS supplemental: The dog must remain in a sit unless handler exercise finishes the dog to stand.

P TEST 3: APPEARANCE AND GROOMING

This test demonstrates that the dog welcomes grooming or examination, and permits someone, such as a veterinarian, groomer or friend, to do so. It also demonstrates the owner's care, concern and sense of responsibility.

- The evaluator inspects the dog to determine if it is clean and groomed.
- The dog must appear to be in a healthy condition (i.e. proper weight, clean, alert).
- The evaluator then softly combs or brushes the dog, and in a natural manner, lightly examines the ears and gently picks up each front foot.
- It is not necessary for the dog to hold a specific position during the examination, and the handler may talk to the dog and encourage or praise it throughout the test.
- PAWS supplemental: The dog must remain in a stand during the examination, even if the evaluator walks away for a period. The dog should accept touching of the tail, mouth, and back feet as well.

P TEST 4: OUT FOR A WALK / WALKING ON A LOOSE LEAD

This test demonstrates that the handler is in control of the dog while out on a walk.

- The dog's position should leave no doubt that the dog is attentive to the handler and is responding to the handler's movements and changes of direction.
- The evaluator may use a pre-plotted course or may direct the handler/dog team by issuing instructions or commands.
- The handler may talk to the dog along the way, praise the dog, or give commands in a normal tone of voice. The handler may sit the dog at all stops, if desired.
- PAWS supplemental: The dog must sit when the handler stops. The dog must remain on the left side of the handler throughout the test. Handler may choose not to use a leash.

P TEST 5: WALKING THROUGH A CROWD

This test demonstrates that the dog can move about politely in pedestrian traffic and is under control in public places.

- The dog and handler walk around and pass close to several people (at least three).
- The dog may show some interest in the strangers but should continue to walk with the handler, without evidence of over-exuberance, shyness or resentment.
- The handler may talk to the dog and encourage or praise it throughout the test.
- The dog should not strain on the leash or jump on people in the crowd.



PAWS – Canine Good Citizen (CGC) Tests



P TEST 6: SIT AND DOWN ON COMMAND; STAYING IN PLACE

This test demonstrates that the dog has training, will respond to the handler's commands to sit and down, and will remain in the place commanded by the handler.

- The dog must sit AND down on command, then the handler chooses the position for leaving the dog in a stay.
- Prior to the test, the dog's leash may be replaced with a line of 20 feet.
- The handler may take a reasonable amount of time and use more than one command to get the dog to sit and then down. The evaluator must determine if the dog has responded to the handler's commands. The handler may not force the dog into position but may touch the dog to offer gentle guidance.
- When instructed by the evaluator, the handler tells the dog to stay, walks forward 20 feet, turns, and returns to the dog at a natural pace. The dog must remain in the place in which it was left (it may change position slightly) until the evaluator instructs the handler to release the dog.
- PAWS supplemental: The handler should be able to command the dog to sit or down from a distance away from the dog. The handler may use voice or hand signals only to command the dog.

P TEST 7: COMING WHEN CALLED

This test demonstrates that the dog comes to them when called by the handler.

- The handler will walk at least 10 feet away from the dog, turn to face the dog, and call the dog to come.
- The handler may use encouragement to get the dog to come.
- Handlers may choose to tell dogs to 'stay' or 'wait' or they may simply walk away, giving no instruction.
- PAWS supplemental: The handler may walk more than 25 feet from the dog and call to come. The handler may use voice or hand signals only to call the dog. The handler may down the dog part way.

P TEST 8: REACTION TO ANOTHER DOG

This test demonstrates that the dog can behave politely around other dogs.

- Two handlers and their dogs approach each other from a distance, stop, shake hands and exchange pleasantries briefly, and continue for about 10 feet.
- The dogs should show no more than casual interest in each other. Neither dog should go to the other or its handler.

P TEST 9: REACTION TO DISTRACTIONS

This test demonstrates that the dog is confident at all times when faced with common distracting situations.

- The evaluator will select and present two distractions. Examples include dropping a chair, rolling something past, having a jogger run in front, etc.
- The dog may express natural interest and curiosity and/or may appear slightly startled but should not panic, try to run, show aggressiveness, or bark.
- The handler may talk to the dog and encourage or praise it throughout the test.
- PAWS supplemental: The handler may leave the dog and stand at least 10 feet away during distractions.

P TEST 10: SUPERVISED SEPARATION

This test demonstrates that a dog can be left with a trusted person and will maintain training and good manners.

- Evaluators ask the handler to watch their dog then take hold of the dog's leash.
- Handler will go out of sight for 3 minutes.
- The dog does not have to stay in position but should not bark, whine or pace unnecessarily, or show anything stronger than mild agitation or nervousness.
- Evaluators may talk to the dog but should not engage in excessive talking, petting, or management attempts.