Private training session for leash reactivity and short-distance recalls (no or mild distractions)

2-Week Training Plan

Thanks for the opportunity to work with you and Buddy yesterday. He is such a sweet, fun little dog and is so oriented towards people, which is wonderful. He also has a terrific food drive. The combination of his affinity towards both people and treats will help you greatly as you work to reduce the severity of his on-leash reactivity.

For the next few weeks, do your best to follow the training plan on the following pages. At the end of this period, we will begin to work with moderate distractions (dogs at a moderate distance, people in close proximity). My hope is that Buddy begins to show improvement over the next few weeks around such distractions as:

* Small animals (squirrels, chipmunks)
* Boring people without dogs
* Dogs barking in windows
* Dogs appearing at a significant distance.

I would also like to see him paying more attention to you on your walks and not pulling so frequently on his leash.

Do your best to avoid head-on passing of other dogs during this period. The less Buddy can practice his lunging and barking, the less it will be reinforced. Try to take your walks when you know that there will be few distractions.

If you see improvement in Buddy over this period, I would like take him to a field where there are lots of dogs (Emerson Field in Concord: : <https://goo.gl/maps/AkAdMCNW8482> and walk him around the fenced perimeter for our next lesson.

If you do not see improvement over the next few weeks, we should have a brief phone conversation to trouble shoot the training plan and figure out what we need to do differently.

The training plan is outlined on the following 2 pages:

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| **Objective** | **Training plan** | **# of reps/session** | **Suggestions/Notes** |
| Charge your new marker, “Yes!” | 2 sessions per day where you simply proclaim “Yes!” and give him a treat | 10 | We want “YES!” to be Buddy’s new favorite word. It means, “You did exactly what I wanted you do to do! You are awesome! Here is a great treat!” |
| You can reduce the number of reps to 5 once you see Buddy staring right into your face and wagging his tail with anticipation after you say, “YES!”. |
| Teach and reinforce the command, “Touch!” | 2 sessions per day where you say “Touch!” and put your hand about 3 inches away from his nose | 5 | Begin leveraging Buddy’s new knowledge of touch. You can use your hand to guide his head and eyes away from something you to not want him to see (e.g. a dog) |
| Teach and reinforce the command, “Watch!” | 2 sessions per day where you say “Watch!” and wait for him to make eye contact. | 5 | If Buddy is having trouble with this behavior, take the treat and move it slowly to your eyes. After he is following the treat and looking at you, just use your pointer finger. By the end of the training period, he should respond to the verbal cue, “Watch!” without the support of the visual cues (treat, then finger). |
| Teach and reinforce the command, “Turn!” | 1 session per day where you practice quick U-turns. | 5 | You and Buddy will use “Turn!” when you want to completely avoid a situation in front of you. While “Turn!” is typically a 180 degree about-turn where you begin to walk briskly in the other direction, you can also use “Turn!” to turn 90 degrees off of the path or sidewalk to let others pass. If you use turn in this way, be sure to keep treating Buddy as the distraction passes. |

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| **Objective** | **Training plan** | **# of reps/session** | **Suggestions/Notes** |
| Teach and reinforce a 10-foot recall | 2 sessions per day where you let Buddy wander out and then call him when he is mildly distracted. Do not call him unless you are 90% sure he is going to come. | 5 | Make sure that you use your best treats. For all future off-leash trail walks with Buddy, I would encourage you to maintain a 10-foot maximum distance. If he goes further, call him back. Also, be sure that you reward him for checking in with you (e.g. Buddy looks back to see where you are during the walk) |
| 5-minute-loose leash, attention walk | Take Buddy on a walk by himself (or if you take Lucy, do your best to focus 90% of your attention on Buddy for now) where you insist that he walk:   * On your left hand side * With a loose leash * While checking in (looking at) you frequently. | n/a | Remember the following commands. This is not easy for either you or Buddy. A loose leash, attention walk involves asking Buddy for several new behaviors:  “Let’s go!” – You are beginning your attention walk.  “Watch” or “Touch”- Use these when you need to get his attention (e.g. when there is a distraction)  “Okay!” – Use “Okay!” when you are giving him permission to sniff, dig, etc. However, do not let him do behaviors you are trying to discourage, including pulling hard, lunging and barking. These are not allowed on walks. If he does them, just stop and wait. When he turns his attention to you, reward heavily.  Make sure you just STOP when he pulls forward. After he turns to look at you to see if he can move ahead, reward with very high-value treat  Reward Buddy ANY time he looks at you and gives you attention on a walk. This is EXTREMELY important in getting him to change his on-leash behavior |

**Rewards:**

At this stage of training, you will mark (“YES!”) and reward every positive behavior that Buddy gives you. In a few weeks, you will move to a “lottery system” where sometimes he gets a great treat, sometimes he does not.

If Buddy does not give you the behavior you are looking for, just say. “Too bad” in a nice voice and move on. Corrections are not necessary or even helpful when working on leash-reactivity with Buddy.

Do, however, think about your level of reward and mix it up: Level 1 might be kibble, Level 2 jerky, Level 3 deli turkey, Level 4, warm meatballs. ALWAYS reward the recall and ignoring mild distractions with Level 4 treats.