

Started/AKC Junior Yard Work

Formal Obedience

Two Sided Heeling

Heel is a position, whether your dog is stationary or moving. While heel position typically refers to having the dog on your left, it's also very helpful to teach your dog heel position on your right.

- To teach an inexperienced dog to heel on your left side simply take a lure – either a food lure or a bumper and hold it in your left hand, keeping your hand lined up with the seam of your pants.
- Do not allow your dog to grab for the lure. The lure is there to show your dog where he needs to be.
- Take a few slow steps forward as you tell your dog 'heel'. Praise while you are moving.
- Stop moving, reward with the food lure or allow your dog to take the bumper.
- Gradually add more steps forward before releasing.
- This teaches your dog that heel position is a good place to be.
- You can have a leash on your dog or have your dog off-leash. If you have a leash on your dog the leash must remain loose. There are no corrections while you are teaching. After your dog learns how to heel on your left side with the leash on you can get rid of the lure and use a leash correction (a quick pop back on the leash) to remind your dog not to pull ahead.
- If a quick pop back on the leash doesn't get the message across, simply stop moving forward, tell your dog to 'Sit' and give a quick pop up on the leash to reinforce the sit. Then heel forward.

Most people give right side heeling a different name, for example: "right side".

- The process is the same only it's carried out with your dog on your right side.

Change direction frequently while you are practicing your heeling. This will keep your dog focused because he will not know what you're going to do next.

Recall Return to Heel Position

Teaching your dog to come back to heel position with a bumper or bird is quick and easy if you use a platform. The platform provides a very clear visual picture of where your dog needs to be.

- Place your dog a short distance away from you and facing you.
- Leave your dog and walk back to a platform. The platform should be on your left.
- Call your dog to come and as your dog is coming, point to the platform with your left hand as you say 'heel'.
- When your dog is up on the platform, praise and reward. Release.
- Using the platform will prevent 'drive-by's' on your dog's return.

Sit to the Whistle / Remote Sit

To teach your dog to sit to the whistle you need to do two things: teach him that a short 'toot' on the whistle means sit, and how to stop and sit and turn to look at you while he is moving.

Step 1

- Put your dog on leash, have the whistle in your mouth, a treat in your right hand and start walking forward.
- Stop walking forward and as you do so, blow your whistle softly (remember, your dog is right next to you and you don't want to scare him), say 'Sit', blow your whistle again as you extend your right arm with the treat forward and turn your dog so he is looking at you. The sequence is 'toot, Sit, toot, turn the dog'. Reward your dog.
- Repeat, gradually progressing from walking to jogging or running.

Step 2

- In this step you should be able to get rid of the verbal 'Sit' and your dog should be responding to just one 'toot' of the whistle.
- Have a bumper hidden in your back pocket.
- Put your dog on a long line and allow him to walk ahead of you.
- When he gets several feet ahead, blow your whistle once (you can blow it loudly now).
- If your dog does not sit, step on the long line and blow it again.
- Praise, but no reward.
- Try again. Your dog should give you more effort in turning and sitting. Give him a chance to respond before stepping on the long line if necessary. Even if he's slow or sits crooked, once he's sitting, take the bumper out of your pocket and throw it out past your dog and off to his side and release him to get the bumper and call him to come back to you.
- Make sure you are working in as distraction free environment as you can. It's not fair to your dog to try this if he's taken off after a squirrel.

3 Handed Casting

If you've done your platform homework and your dog is reliably taking your casts to the platform, now is the time to add bumpers to the lesson.

- Visualize a baseball diamond and set out three platforms: one at first, one at second and one at third. Put a white lining pole at each of the platforms. This is important because you will be using lining poles when you get rid of the platform so start the transition now.
- Put a bumper on each of the 'over' platforms and two on the 'back' platform.
- Place your dog in the middle, on the pitcher's mound, facing you.
- Keep a short distance between you and your dog.
- Cast your dog to one of the 'over' platforms. He may want to sit on the platform and that's fine. Simply tell him to fetch the bumper and call him back to you.
- Place him back on the pitcher's mound and cast to the other 'over' platform.
- Place him back on the pitcher's mound and cast to the 'back' platform. If you're using two inch bumpers and he brings back both, don't worry. Once he comes back, simply

walk another bumper out to the platform and make a note to use three inch bumpers the next time.

- The sequence is as follows:
 - Gradually increase the distance between you and your dog.
 - Gradually increase the distance between your dog and the platforms.
 - Gradually randomize which cast you give / which platform you send him to.
 - Remove the platforms and simply use the lining poles.
 - Remove the lining poles and just have bumpers on the ground.
 - Last not but least, send your dog from heel position and whistle sit him when he reaches the pitcher's mound. Then cast.

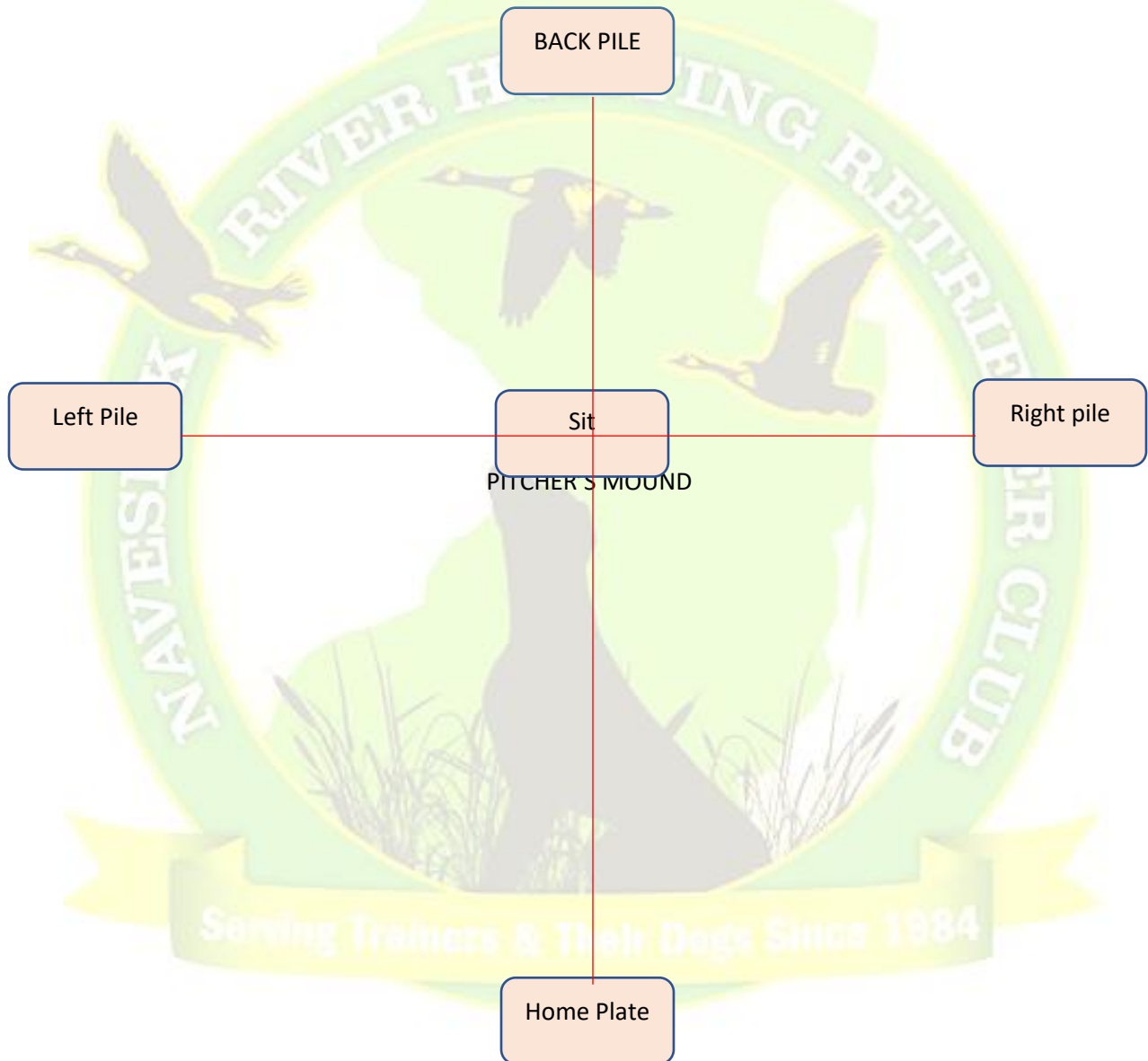
Refer to Carol Cassity's book for casting drills after your dog has mastered this step.



Pile Work – Single T / Double T

Started / AKC Junior

SINGLE T/BASEBALL



Now that you have gone through basic pile work, you will increase the difficulty by introducing over piles and casting to over piles.

To set this drill up place a pile of bumpers at the back, left, and right over piles. Have a long line on the dog. Set this up without your dog seeing you place the piles. Bring your dog to the pitcher's mound and have him sit in the heel position, facing the back pile. Identify the pile with a thrown bumper and send your dog with a BACK command. When the dog returns have him front finish and take the bumper. Take one to two steps back away from your dog. Identify the pile by tossing a bumper, over the dog's shoulder in the direction you want him to turn. When you have good eye contact give him the back cast to the same side you tossed the bumper. He should ignore the over piles but if he decides to go to the over piles be prepared to stop him with the long line.

Bring him back to the pitcher's mound, place him in the front finish position, and identify the pile, send him with a the same cast he just failed on with a back command, front finish when he returns. Now step back and identify the pile with a toss over the shoulder in the direction you want him to turn, send him with a back cast.

When your dog is taking left and right back casts and ignoring the over piles move halfway to home plate and repeat the process. Always start by identifying the pile. When he is returning from the back pile you will move up to have him front finish at the pitcher's mound. For now, you are always meeting him and having him stop at the pitcher's mound with a front finish. Over the course of a few sessions you should be able to move back to home plate and he should be ignoring the over piles and taking your right and left back cast to the back pile.

Now that your dog is 90 % correct with his back casts from the pitcher's mound with you at home plate, we will start to sit him on the recall. If you did not teach whistle sit during yardwork you must go back and teach the whistle sit.

During this drill your dog has always been sent from and returned to the pitcher's mound so he should know this area well. With you at home plate and the dog at the pitcher's mound facing you give the dog a right or left back cast. When he is returning from the pile and is at the pitcher's mound tell him SIT, WHISTLE, SIT and start to walk toward him. Do not overdo this, maybe once in every 6-8 returns. If he fails on the first attempt DO NOT repeat it on the next return. You need to keep momentum going and coming to the pile. You do not want to create a situation where he is anticipating being stopped so his drive becomes slower.

Once he is stopping on the return, we will now stop him on the way to the pile. Start with him at heel at home plate. Identify the pile and send him with a back command. When he returns have him in the heel position, line him up to the back pile, when he is ready send him with a back command. Repeat this process three times before you try to stop him. On the fourth pass

you will stop him at the pitcher's mound. Just before he gets to the pitcher's mound command, SIT, WHISTLE, SIT, and apply pressure on the long line, just enough so he cannot run through your sit command. When he stops, he should have turned to look at you, but he may be confused and he is sitting facing away from you. If this happens keep pressure on the long line and walk up to him, turn him around, sit him, and walk back to home plate. Give him a minute to focus and gain eye contact with you. When you and he are refocused give a right or left back cast to the pile.

It does not matter if he did a good or poor job sitting on the way out, DO NOT STOP HIM ON THE NEXT send. For each time you stop him on the way to the pile you should run 3-4 free passes to reestablish his drive. These 3-4 free passes to the back pile are critical. You do not want to create a dog that pops because you are stopping him too often and he is anticipating being stopped so he figures he will just do it on his own.

Momentum is key during this part of training.

Once the dog understands and is sitting on the whistle you can start to introduce the E-collar correction ***if your dog has been properly trained to the E-collar*** for when he is disobedient to the sit whistle.

Now that your dog is going, stopping, back casting, and returning on command we will introduce the over piles into the drill.

On your dog's first trip to the back pile, start at home plate with him in the heel position, identify the pile and send him. When he returns have him front finish. Make 2 more trips to the back pile with either right or left back casts

On his 3rd trip stop him at the pitcher's mound. Before you cast him to an over pile you will identify the pile with a bumper tossed to the pile you are sending him to, opposite of the side he prefers to turn to. This is important as his next cast will be a back cast and we want him to turn to his strong side on that back cast. Example: If your dog likes to turn left then you will toss and identify the pile to his right. Regain eye contact with your dog and give him a right over with a little step to the right as you give a right over cast. When he returns, front finish, take the bumper and place it behind you. Now give him a left back cast. Notice we gave a left back cast. This will turn him away from the over pile that he just came from. This is important for the first back cast after an over cast to be to the opposite side of the pile he just came from. You will run 3 back casts from the front position between each stop and over cast. You can alternate between right and left back but always make the first cast after an over to the opposite side.

If, on any trip to the back pile he decides to go to an over pile, let him get about ½ way there and stop him with a sit whistle. Move up towards the pitcher's mound, tell the dog "No try again" and bring him to a front finish, then give him the same cast he just failed on to the back pile. Identify the back pile prior to sending him. Do not give in and let your dog take the cast he

wants. This is a great time to TEACH him how to do it correctly. Once he picks up the bumper return to Homeplate have a party! Be patient - your dog is learning, and you should remember that you need to be in teaching mode. He is not being disobedient at this time; he is just making mistakes while he learns.

Once your dog is going, stopping, taking over casts 90% of the time you will increase the difficulty by giving a back cast to the same side as the over pile he just returned from. Be prepared to stop him if he tries to go to the over pile. When you stop him move up to the pitcher's mound tell him "No try again ". Bring him to front finish, identify the pile and give him the same cast he just failed on.

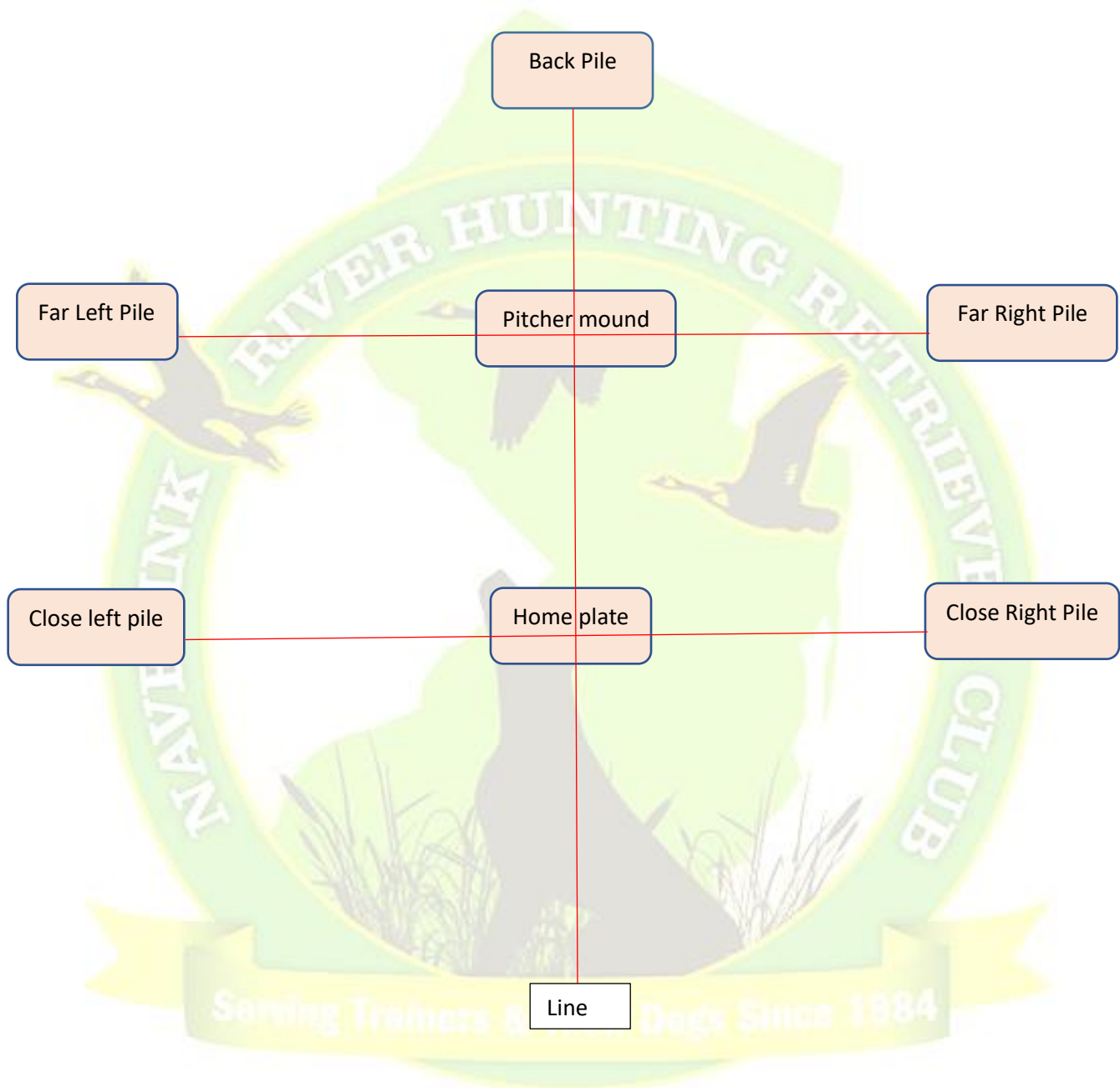
Once he is comfortable casting and going to all piles and willing to ignore the piles he just came from when he is cast to the back pile with a back cast on the same side as that over pile you will add the second set of over piles.

The only thing your dog can be disobedient for in this drill is NOT GOING. If you give an over and he takes a back it is just a mistake so, do not correct him for trying to go somewhere. He just made a mistake on where he went. If your dog fails to go somewhere when cast that is a major problem and you will need to address it.



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DOUBLE T



Now that your dog has completed single T you will start to fine tune his casting ability. Your dog should now understand to sit quickly, stop on the whistle and come in quickly. He should also understand that it is ok to go to the wrong pile, make a mistake, but it is not ok to POP or fail to go when he is cast

There are 2 parts to Double T: Simple double T is where we will stop the dog one time for each cast we will be giving him, and Double T, where we will be stopping him 2 times for each cast you will be giving him.

Start with your dog at heel position at home plate. Identify the back pile, send him with BACK. As he makes the retrieve you should back up so you can get a stop in at home plate on the next send and cast to one of the closest over piles. Have him return to heel position, take the bumper and place it behind you. Send him for the back pile, this time you will stop him at home plate. Once he has stopped and made good eye contact, send him for one of the close over piles. He should have no problems taking a cast to the over, since he understood the concept from just finishing single T.

You will continue to send him to the back pile, and from the new line, further away from home plate. Sometimes you will stop him at Home plate and cast to the close over piles and sometimes you will stop him at the pitcher's mound and will cast him to the further over piles. To avoid the dog anticipating an over cast every time he is stopped you should mix in back casts as well. Remember you will still need 2-3 freebies to the back pile between every stop.

When you first start this drill and try to cast your dog from the pitcher's mound to one of the far over piles, he may make the mistake of going to one of the short over piles. If this happens let him get about ½ way and stop him, wait a few seconds, tell him no and, then bring him to the pitcher's mound. Have him in the front position, identify the pile he should have gone to by tossing a bumper to it. You need to walk back to home plate and give him the same cast he just failed on.

This drill will take several sessions for your dog to grasp the concept but stick with it until he is confident and casting correctly 90 % of the time. Now you can move onto walking baseball and the second phase of Double -T. Walking baseball will be discussed in another section.

SECOND PHASE OF DOUBLE -T

In the second part of double -T you will be stopping the dog 2 times for every cast he will be given. Once again remember that 2-3 freebies are required between each stop.

To get 2 stops while running the further over piles you will follow this sequence. Start with the dog at the line in the front position and cast him for the back pile, when he reaches home plate sit him. Make good eye contact and give a back cast to the back pile, when he turns go to the back pile let him reach the pitcher's mound and stop him a second time. Let him sit a few seconds and make good eye contact. Cast him to one of the further over piles. The cast direction for both the back at home plate and the over at the pitcher's mound are at your discretion.

To get 2 stops in while casting to the closer over piles you will follow this sequence. Start with the dog at the line in front position and cast him for the back pile. This time let him run past home plate and stop him at the pitcher's mound, wait a few seconds, "toot" recall him in, stop him at home plate. Cast him to one of the close over piles.

When your dog is running this with 90% correct casting you can run more difficult casting drill, within the double -T set up. Example: cast from the line to back pile, stop him at home plate, cast to one of the over piles, then cast back to the over pile on the opposite side, making him run through home plate. Cast from the line to the back pile, stop at pitcher's mound, recall and stop at home plate, cast back to back pile, making him run through the pitcher's mound where he was just stopped.

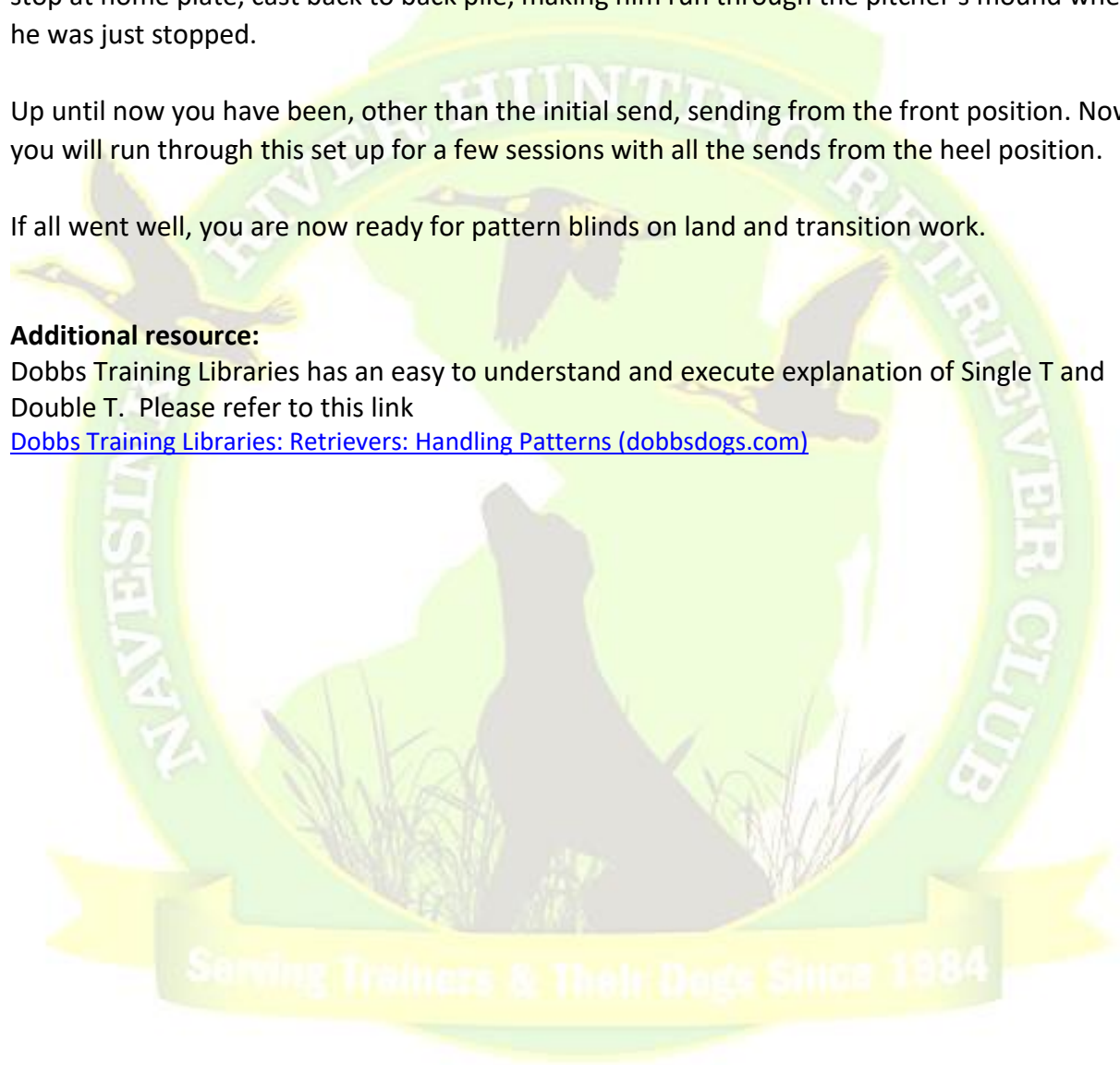
Up until now you have been, other than the initial send, sending from the front position. Now you will run through this set up for a few sessions with all the sends from the heel position.

If all went well, you are now ready for pattern blinds on land and transition work.

Additional resource:

Dobbs Training Libraries has an easy to understand and execute explanation of Single T and Double T. Please refer to this link

[Dobbs Training Libraries: Retrievers: Handling Patterns \(dobbsdogs.com\)](http://dobbsdogs.com)

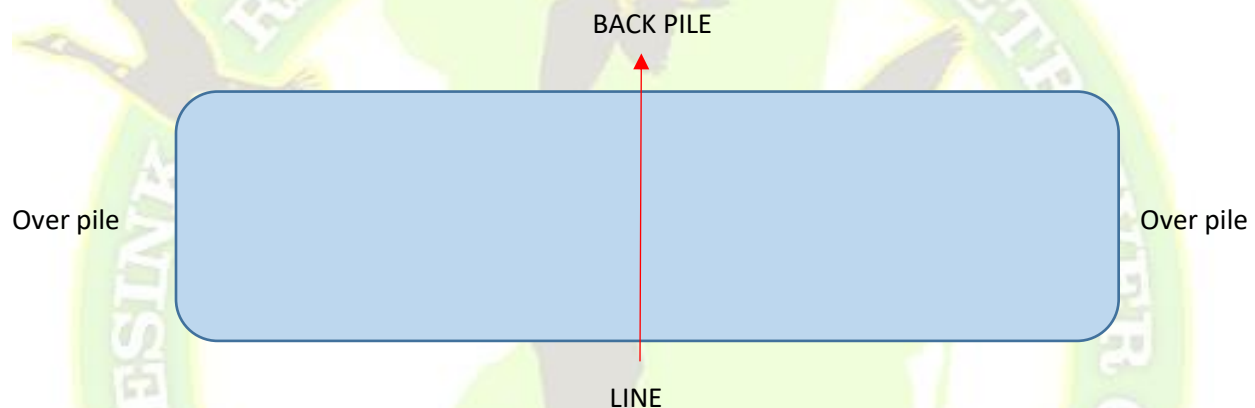


Swim By

SWIM BY DRILL

Before you start this drill a word of advice: Swim By is a drill that must be started and done to completion without any extended days off between sessions. You should be prepared to get at least 5 sessions per week. For most dogs you can figure 2-3 weeks of 5 day a week session. This is not a complicated drill but the addition of water into handling will cause problems you did not encounter on land.

Swim By is basically Single-T on the water. Finding the correct pond is one of the toughest parts of this drill. The pond, ideally, should be 10-15 yards wide and 30-40 yards long with well-defined corners. The banks should have no cover or obstructions for your dog's entry and exit. You may have to compromise on the size and shape of the pond but do the best you can to come as close to these dimensions possible.



To get started you should have bumpers at the back and each over pile. These should be in place before you bring your dog to the line. The piles should be far enough up the shoreline so your dog has to completely exit the water to pick a bumper up.

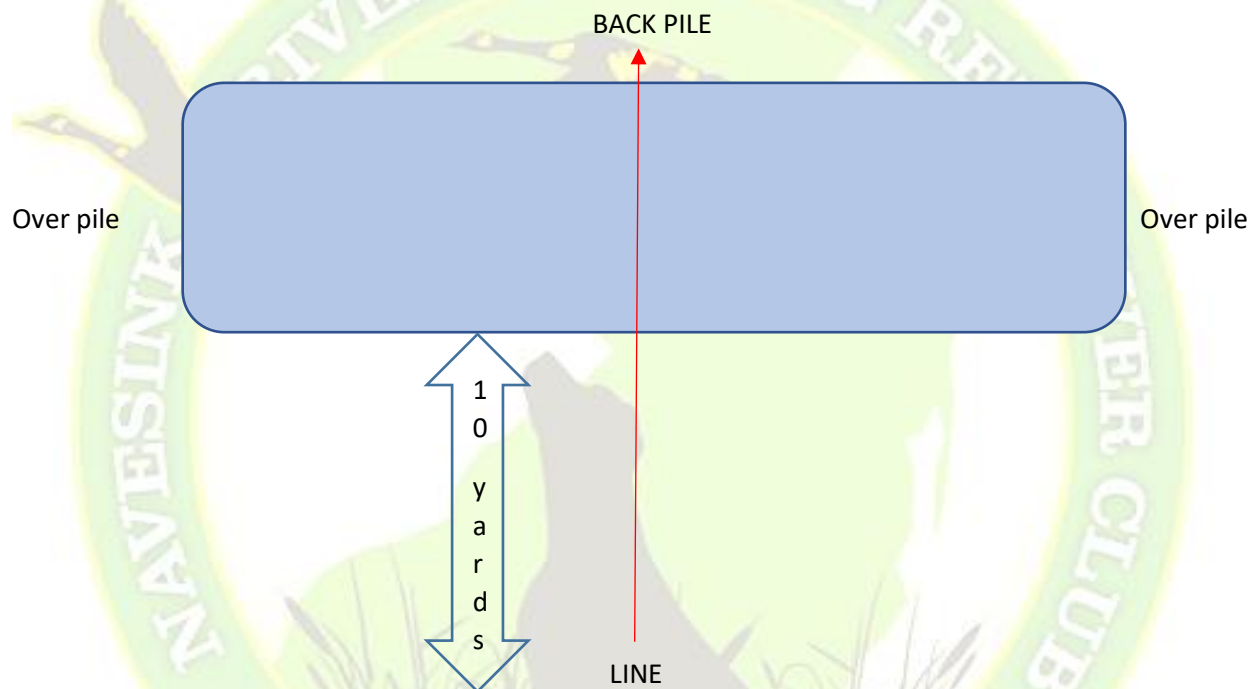
For the first few days you will send your dog from your side across the pond to the back pile. Start right at the water's edge and go through your cue sequence, DEAD BIRD, GOOD, BACK. You can add a cue such as IN THE WATER if you choose but it is not required. If you choose to use the new cue your sequence would be DEAD BIRD, IN THE WATER, BACK. You would remove the good cue and replace it with "in the water". In the future when the dog is presented with a blind that will require him to be in the water this would be your sequence. That is your choice.

Start with your dog in the heel position, right at the water's edge, identify the pile with a tossed bumper, go through your cue sequence, send your dog. Have your dog return to heel, take the bumper, go through your cue sequence, send your dog. Identify the pile as much as is needed in

the first few days of this drill. Before you move back from the shore or introduce any overs your dog need to know without a doubt where he is expected to go when sent to the back pile.

Once your dog shows he knows where the back pile is and is going without hesitation, and without having to identify the pile multiple times you can start to move further from the shoreline. Do not rush moving back, an extra day or two running from the shoreline will not hurt your training.

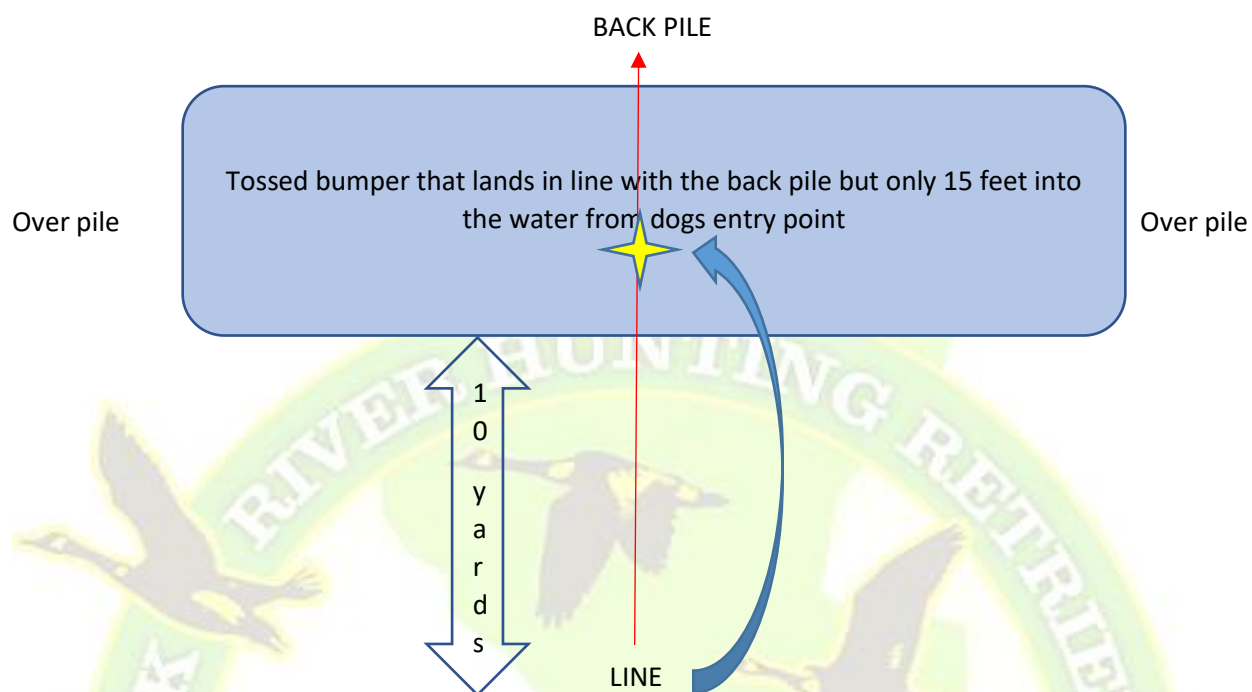
Once you start to move back from the shoreline you can start to send from the front position. Wait until you at least 12-15 feet from the shoreline to start this. When you send him from the front position do not use any cues, just give the cast you want him to take.



Once you are about 10 yard from the shoreline, and this should be about the 5th day ,and your dog is going directly to the pile without wondering left or right and going directly into the water you are ready to introduce “force into the water” ***if your dog has been properly conditioned to the E-Collar.***

This will be done differently than the force to pile you did on land. For this force make sure your transmitter is set to a low level. You will use low level continuous pressure that the dog can “turn off” by getting in the water. Timing is critical here. Pressure should be applied by tapping the continuous button until the dog HITS the water, not when he is close, not when he is at the shoreline, not when he is leaping for the water, WHEN HE HITS the water. He needs to understand the act of GETTING IN the water is what will turn the pressure off.

The next chart will walk through the initial force sequence.



The sequence for force in the water is as follows.

Start at your line 10 yards from the water

Dog in the front position

Send, with a back cast, 3 times to the pile.

On the fourth send, identify the pile with a tossed bumper. This bumper should not reach the pile but be in line with the pile and only 12-15 feet from the dog's entry point. This bumper needs to be visible to the dog as soon as he turns and heads to the water.

When he turns and is facing the water, not while he is turning, but when he has completed his turn and is facing the water. Now press the continuous button on your transmitter and **tap it** until he is in the water.

From the moment you turn on the pressure give the command BACK, BACK, BACK

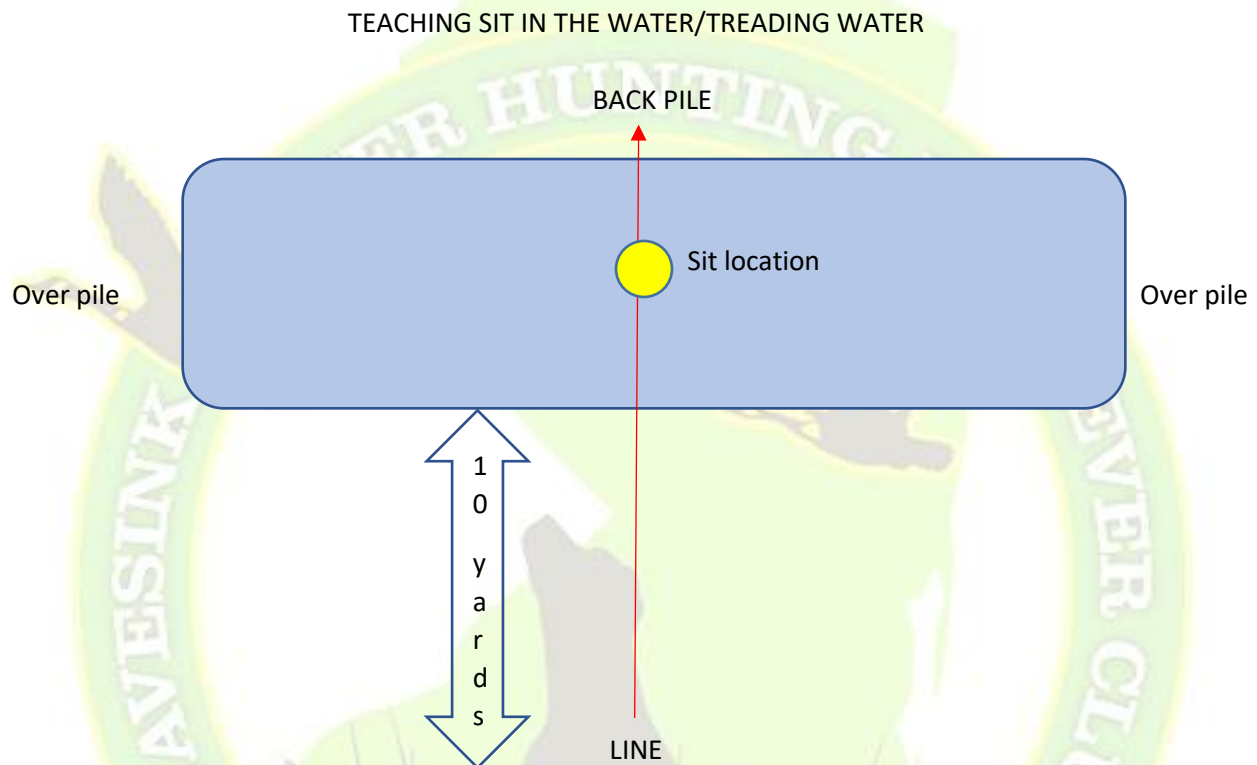
As mentioned earlier, timing is critical. DO NOT turn the pressure off until he is IN the water.

Remember to identify the pile every time you will be applying pressure and keep the sequence and your mechanic consistent. For each pass with pressure be sure to give 2-3 freebies to the back pile. This portion of swim by could take 3-4 days to complete. When you see an increased drive and desire from your dog to get in the water you will be finished with force into the water.

The next step in Swim By is force in the water. This will be done with low level "nicks" while the dog is in the water on his way to the back pile. Before starting force in the water give your dog a no pressure day of training. Take him to the pond and send him to the back pile several times

with no pressure at all. Your dog will feel good about himself going through an entire session with no pressure.

Start your next session with 3-4 sends to the back pile with no pressure. On the next send you will give the dog a LOW level nick while he is in the water and ½ way to the pile. Along with the nick you will give a verbal BACK. Follow that with a verbal back so he understands what the pressure is for. The sequence will be BACK, NICK, BACK. Remember to give 2-3 freebies for each time you force. Try to get 2-3 passes with force in your session for the next 2 days. If all has gone well, you will be done with this portion of swim by.



Now it is time to teach your dog to sit in the water. You are actually going to teach him how to tread water but you will use a command he knows – sit - to make that happen. Start by sending your dog from the heel position to the back pile, remember to use your proper cues and send sequence. When he returns send him from the front position 2 more times. On the next pass you will stop him when he is in the water and ½ way to the pile.

A few notes before you send your dog. Have your whistle ready. Pay attention to the direction your dog turns when he stops, you will take advantage of his momentum during his turn to determine which back cast you will be giving. Example. When you command SIT, WHISTLE, SIT, and your dog turns to his right you will give him a left back cast. This cast will allow him to continue the momentum he has by not asking him to change direction; that will come later when he can tread water for a longer period. If he turns left when you stop him then give him a right back cast.

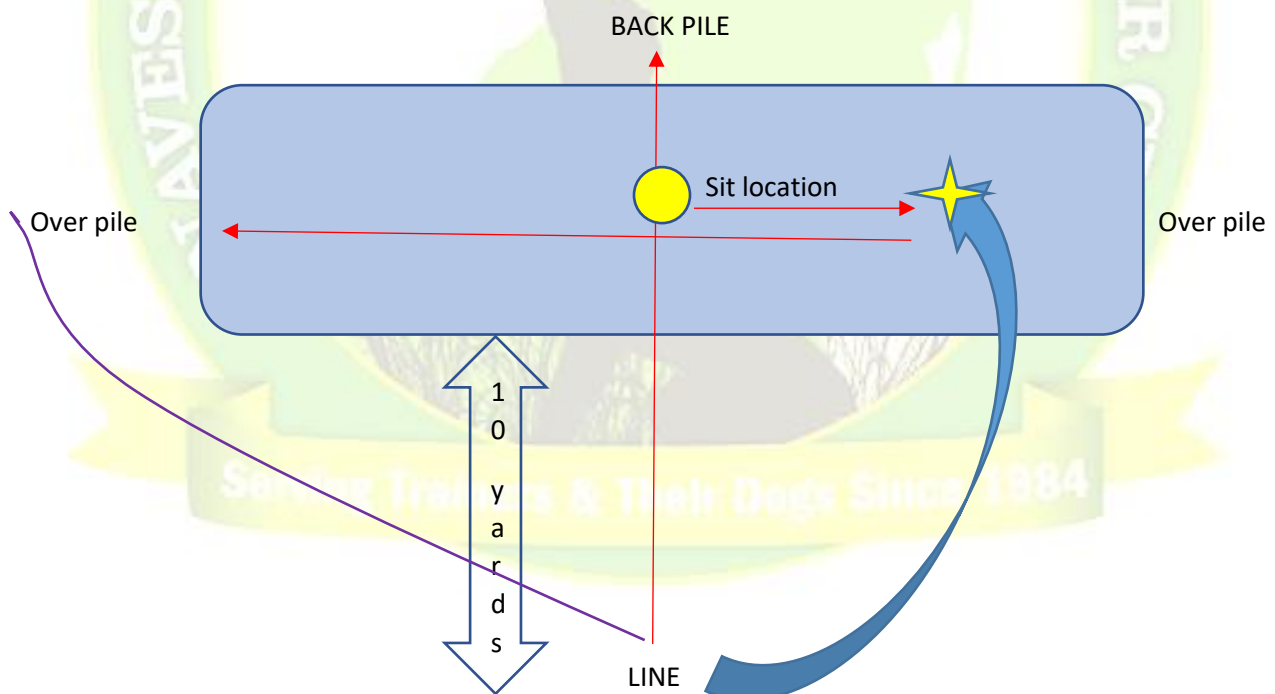
The first time you stop your dog in the water all you are looking for is for him to stop forward drive and turn to you. Once he does make eye contact and give him the back cast that will allow him to keep turning in the direction he is already turning. Not all dogs will be able to tread water right away so be patient and prepared for this portion of swim by to take several sessions.

Each time you stop your dog wait a second longer before you cast him back. When you can keep his focus on you and he is holding his position for a second or two then you can start to back cast him in the opposite direction he turned when you stopped him.

Once your dog is, going, stopping, and taking back cast in both directions, we will introduce the over piles and exit points.

TEACHING OVER PILES AND EXIT POINTS

By now you should know that your piles should be out before you bring your dog to the line. For this portion of the drill you will be adding an additional training aid. At the exit points for the over piles place large cone or platform just to the right of the right pile and the left of the left pile and one more about 30 yards further to the right and left of the piles. These will create a better visual for you and establish the proper exit point for the dog.



Begin with a bumper on the ground behind you, within close reach. Send your dog to the back pile 2 times with no pressure or stops. On the third send you will stop the dog. Send your dog to the back pile, as soon as he leaves for the pile pick up the bumper you placed on the ground behind you. When your dog gets $\frac{1}{2}$ across the pond stop him. Once he turns and makes eye contact toss the bumper to his right or left, depending on the over pile you choose to start with, so that it lands in the water $\frac{1}{2}$ way to the over pile and in line with the pile. (YELLOW STAR) Regain eye contact with your dog and give him the over cast.

When your dog has committed to the cast and is moving toward the bumper and pile you will go to the opposite side over pile. (PURPLE LINE) Be prepared to call your dog as soon as he grabs the bumper. Do everything you can to have your dog swim back down the channel to the exit point where you are at. You may have to walk up and down the shore, use your recall constantly. Show him a bumper that you twirl around in the air, do whatever you can to keep him in the water. Do not let him get out of the water. As your dog gets closer to you move back $\frac{1}{2}$ way to the cone you placed 30 yards from the shoreline to receive your dog.

Have him sit in the front position holding the bumper. You will now walk back to the cone you placed 30 yard back and call your dog to you, sit your dog and do not take the bumper. You will walk back to the original line he was sent for to start the drill and call him to you, when he arrives you can now take the bumper

You want your dog to exit the water and continue to move away from the water to this point. You are laying the groundwork for your dog taking long casts, even if that cast requires him to get out of the water, he should still carry the line of the cast he was given

Remember to continue to do 2-3 trips to the back pile between each time you stop your dog.

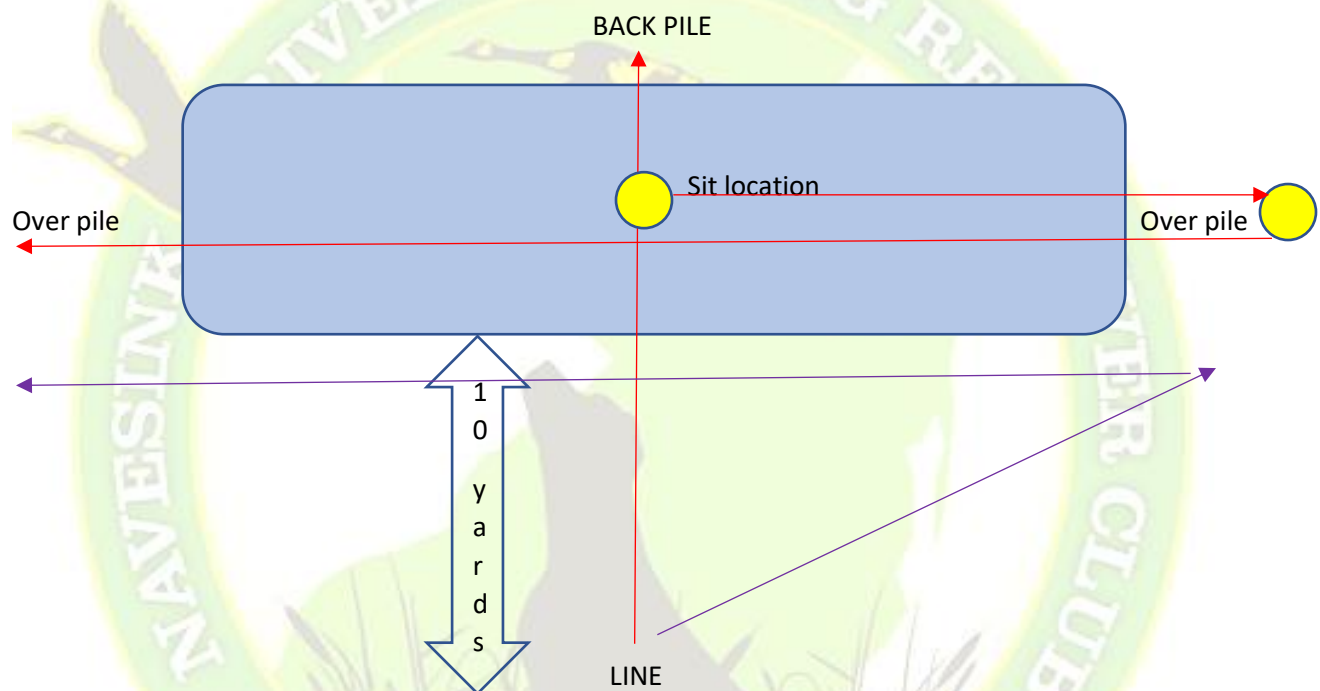
Follow this process of tossing a bumper to identify the pile and walking to the exit point for 3-4 sessions. When you are confident your dog is stopping, casting and returning to the correct exit point and carrying the exit to you 30 yard up the shoreline you can stop identifying and just give him a cast to the over pile that is on the shore.

Up to this point you have been identifying the over pile with a tossed bumper in the water and your dog has not had to exit the water to pick up the bumper. Now you will increase the difficulty by not identifying the pile and asking the dog to exit the water to pick up the bumper and reenter the water to swim back to you at the exit point on the other side of the pond.

Some dogs will not get back into the water and may attempt to cheat and run around the corner to run the shore back to you. Pay close attention to your dog when he gets out of the water and picks up a bumper, as soon as he grabs a bumper give your recall command, AS SOON as he picks up the bumper. Do not allow him time to think about anything, give the

command quickly. If he shows any signs of trying to cheat immediately blow the sit whistle. Give him a second and make eye contact, if you introduced the IN THE WATER cue, command IN THE WATER, HERE. Eventually you will see your dog commit to swimming the channel without hesitation or delay. It is now time to move to the next portion of Swim By.

The next session, when you stop your dog and cast him to the over pile, you will not move around to the exit point. You will now move to the water's edge on the same side the dog will be picking up the bumper from the pile. In this portion you will be teaching the dog to swim the channel to the exit point without you being there to call or guide him to the proper location.



Start his session with 2 sends to the back pile. On the third send stop (YELLOW CIRCLE) and cast your dog to the over pile. This time you will walk to the shoreline corner nearest the over pile you cast your dog to. (PURPLE LINE) when your dog gets to the pile and picks up a bumper blow the sit whistle. (YELLOW CIRCLE). You should only be 15-20 feet from your dog at this point. Make sure you have good eye contact and give him an over cast into the water toward the exit point. Once your dog is in the water and moving toward the other side you will walk along the shore with him. If he looks towards you just give him an over cast and keep moving along with him. When he reaches the other shore make sure he continues his progress until he reaches the marker you set out 30 yards back from the shoreline. Once he reaches the marker you can call him to you. Job well done.

If, while swimming the channel to the exit point your dog turns and makes an attempt to head toward the shoreline you are on blow the sit whistle and give him an angle back cast to get him moving to the exit point. Handle as much as is needed to keep him in the water and moving in the right direction. At this point HELP your dog as much as is needed.

Eventually you will see your dog willingly swimming the channel, without your helping casts, to the exit point and beyond to the marker you set 30 yards up the shoreline. You are still walking along the shore with your dog at this point.

Now you will decrease the amount of walking you will do after sending from the line. Start this session by sending the dog 2 times to the back pile. On the third send stop and cast him to the over pile.

When he commits to the cast you will walk the line to the back pile and stop at the shoreline. When your dog reaches the pile and picks up a bumper blow the sit whistle, make eye contact, cast him back into the water with the over cast that will send him to the opposite side exit point. You will not move, we want the dog to take the cast and SWIM BY you on his way to the exit point and then the marker up the shoreline. If your dog tries to head to the shore stop him with a sit whistle and give him the cast that will put him back on the line to the exit point. Once your dog can do this comfortably you will now remain at the original line you sent the dog from and go through the entire sequence. When you can send , stop in water , cast to the over pile , exit the water to pick up bumper , sit , cast back into the water carry the cast to the opposite side exit point and up the shoreline to your marker, you are ready to repeat the process and teach the other side over cast.

Teaching the other side will take minimal time as your dog now understands what you expect from him.

When your dog can handle and stay in the water from both sides and is willing to carry the cast when he gets out of the water you will be finished with swim by.

NOTE: The Navesink River Hunting Retriever Club assumes no responsibility for a handler's incorrect use of an E-Collar during this or any other exercise and is not liable for a handler's incorrect use of an E-Collar during this or any other exercise.

Additional Resource:

Dobbs Training Libraries has an excellent article and diagrams of teaching Swim By
Please refer to this link

[Dobbs Training Libraries: Retrievers: Beginning Water Handling \(dobbsdogs.com\)](http://dobbsdogs.com)

E-Collar Conditioning

Force Fetch

If you would like to learn how to properly use an E-Collar and/or a Force Fetch program we suggest you refer to either Pat Nolan's online program [Electric Collars - An Instructional Guide - Dog Trainers Workshop](#) or Bill Hillman's program at www.billhillman.net.

Platform Work

The platform is a valuable training tool that you should use throughout your dog's entire career.



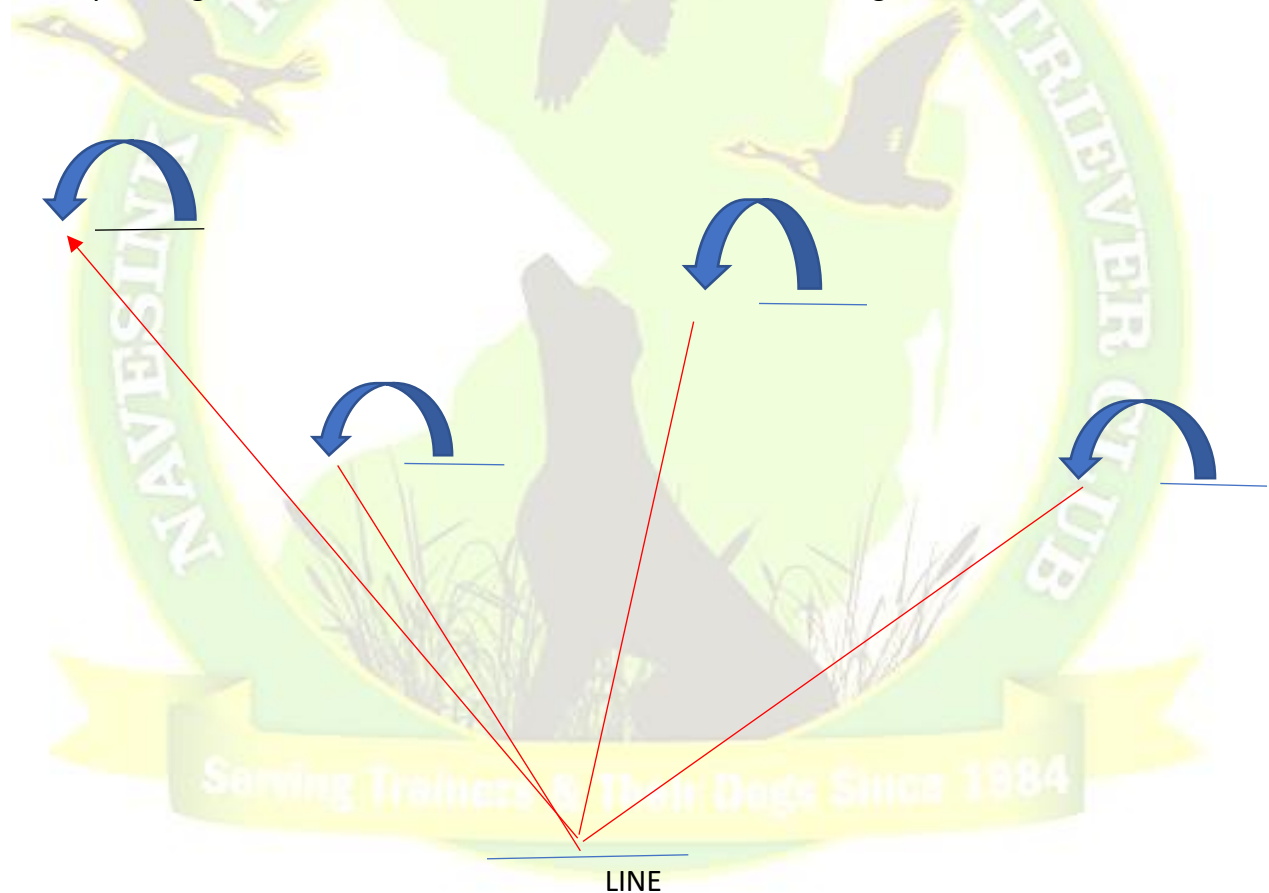
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SINGLES OFF MULTIPLE GUNS

As your dog progresses into running multiple marks, he will be put in the situation of seeing multiple holding blinds /throwers the field. In this drill we present the scenario of multiple throwers but we will be focusing on running single marks at this time. We will get into multiple marks later when your dog has progressed.

The object of this drill is to produce a dog that can focus on the mark it sees and not be distracted by or have the additional holding blinds act as suction when retrieving.

The set up will be at least 4 holding blinds set at varying distances from the line and with enough separation so the throws do not land within 30 yards of a blind other than the one the mark is coming from . All throws to start this drill will be thrown in the same direction, left to right or right to left. We will increase the difficulty by alternating the direction of the throws when your dog can retrieve without distraction from all the holding blinds.



When running this as singles start with the outside marks first then move to the inside marks. This order will give enough separation between the marks so the previous mark should not create any suction. This running order will also help you later when your dog is running multiple

marks and you choose to have them pick up in the order OUTSIDE-OUTSIDE-INSIDE; they will have seen the concept in this basic drill.

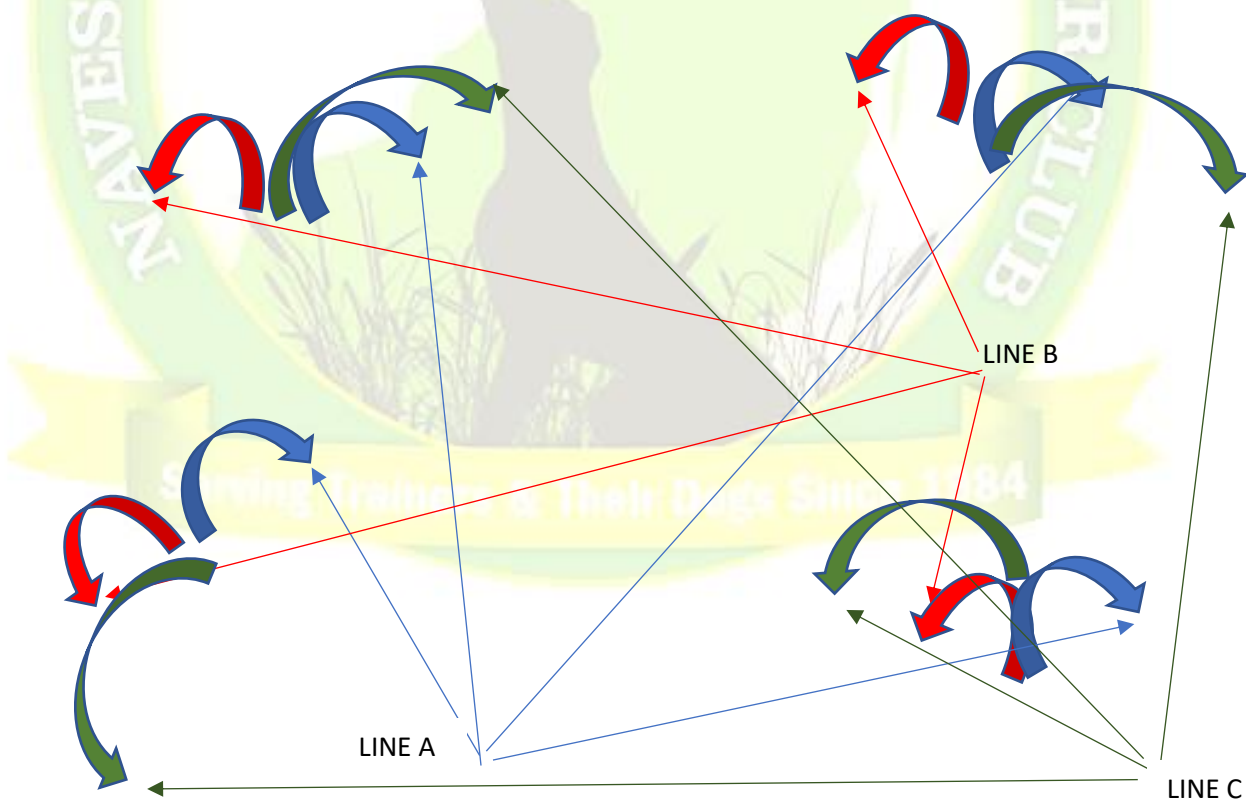
When your dog is comfortable running these singles and is focused on the thrown mark and ignoring the additional blinds in the field you can now start to change up the order and the direction the throws will be presented.

Be aware not to throw any short mark where the fall is in line with one of the longer marks. We want the dog to have success and not create an INLINE marking situation that would cause the dog to break down around the short fall and start to hunt. INLINE marks will be discussed later.

This drill and the visual it presents to the dog will lay the groundwork for almost all the scenarios he will see when he starts running multiple marks. Repeat this drill in multiple areas and with varying distances. You can do one set up in a field to start your training and move to another field to present the same concept using different distances and varying the throws directions.

ABC DRILL

This is a variation of the single off multiple gun set up. In this drill you would set up the field as you would for a single off multiple gun drill, but we will be moving the line as we work the dog. We are not repeating a mark from the same line and by moving the line the dog will see a different view for each mark that may come from a blind a mark was thrown from earlier



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SIMPLE RETIRED/HIDDEN GUNS

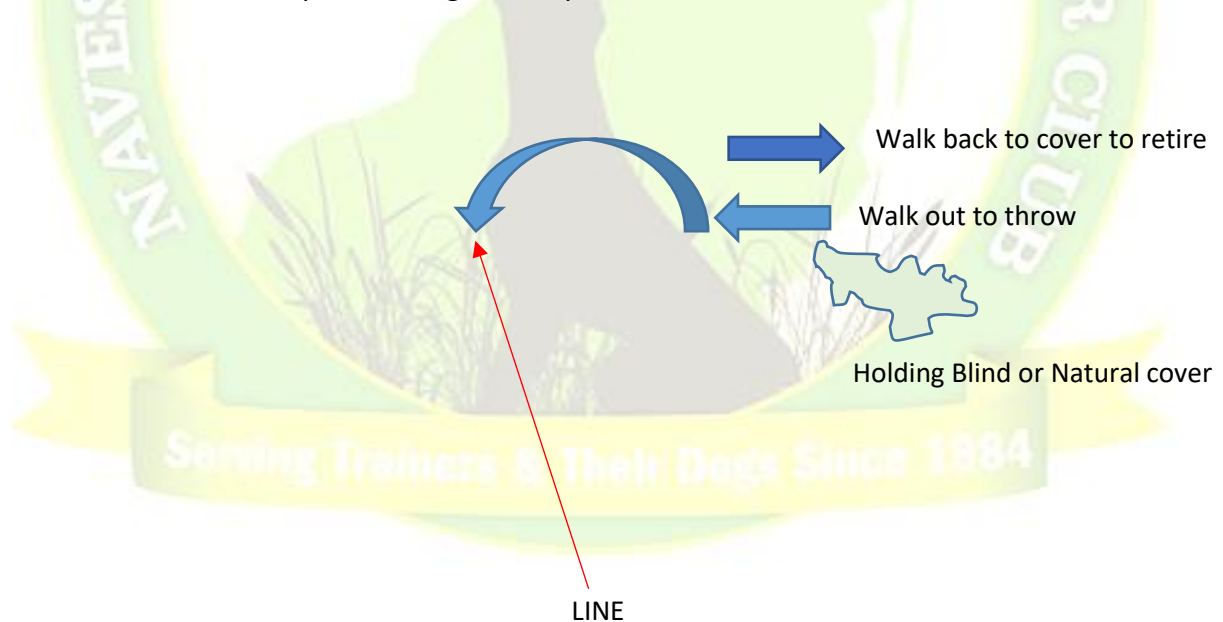
Up to this point your dog has been seeing what are called exposed gunners. This is when the person throwing the mark is not concealed in any way. The thrower is visible to the dog from the time he approaches the line, sits at the line and is making the retrieve. This scenario acts as an aid for dogs while learning to retrieve and while learning new marking concepts.

You are now going to increase the difficulty for your dog by introducing RETIRED/HIDDEN guns. In this scenario there will be no visible thrower in the field while your dog approaches the line and sits waiting for the marks. When you are ready and call for the marks, the thrower will step out from behind some type of concealment, a holding blind or some natural cover, and make the throw while he is visible to the dog. Once the throw has hit the ground, and BEFORE YOU SEND YOUR DOG, the thrower will return to the area he was concealed behind, at this point you will send your dog.

Introduce this concept as singles

This may not seem like a difficult task for a dog that has been doing well with his marking but as you progress into multiple marks at greater distances and making memory birds and retired guns, it will be more difficult for your dog.

Let's look at a simple retired gun set up.



This setup starts with the thrower hidden behind the cover or blind to the left of the line. You will bring your dog to the line, under control. Once you signal for the mark the thrower will step

out from the cover, moving right to left, throw the marks and then move left to right to return behind the cover. Once the thrower is concealed you will send your dog for the retrieve.

Start this on singles and work up to the retired gun being the memory bird in a double and then multiple retired guns in a triple or quad.

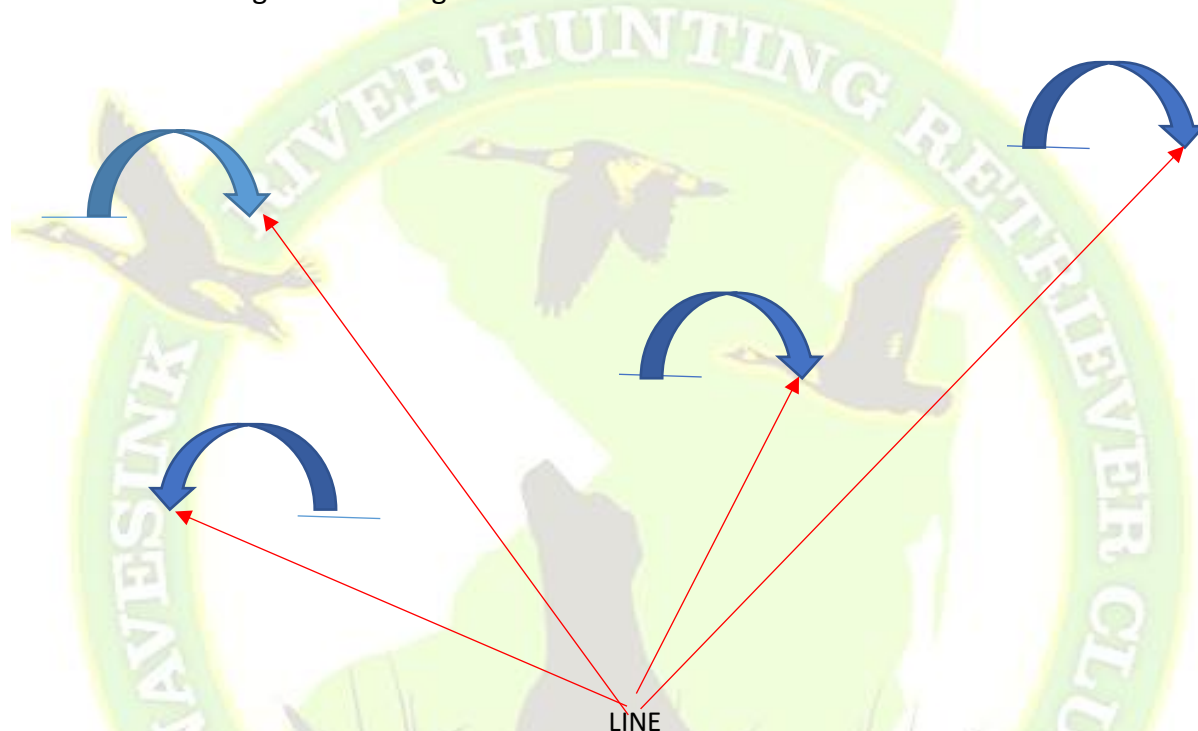


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BIRD IN MOUTH MARKS

At his point your dog should be consistently delivering to heel and hand. The next step will be to introduce a delay as to when you will take the bird from him. This delay, while only a short time, will help him develop additional focus when marking and aid in introducing him to multiple marks.

Start by setting up your field for singles off multiple guns with 4 holding blinds in the field at varying distances from the line but making sure each mark has its own area of the fall and will not distract the dog while making his retrieves.



The order and direction of the marks are up to you; we are concerned with the dog's action when he returns to you. Bring your dog to the line, under control, call for the mark when ready, release the dog when you are comfortable and he is steady.

When the dog picks up the mark you will turn and face the next mark you will be running. Turn yourself so that when the dog comes to heel he is facing in the direction of the next mark. DO NOT TAKE THE BIRD. When your dog is sitting at heel with the bird in his mouth you will call for the next mark to be thrown. Your dog should be focused in the field when he hears the call or shot and sees the mark in the air. ***If he drops the bird make a quick correction. If your dog has been force fetched, this is where you will make a correction according to the FF program you followed. If your dog has not been force fetched, take him by the collar and point to the bird and as you move your dog's head to the bird, tell your dog to fetch it up. Under no circumstances will you pick up the bird and hold it in front of the dog and tell him to take it.***

When he is holding the bird again, notice where his focus is; if he is still indicating he knows where the mark is, send him. If he is showing confusion and shows no focus on the thrower or gives no indication he knows where the mark is, repeat the throw. Make sure he has the bird in his mouth when the mark goes down. It is very common for a young dog to forget where the mark is after you have given a correction.

A few things about this drill. When you turn your body, we expect the dog to return to heel. By moving while the dog is returning, we eliminate excessive moving between marks and increase the chances for success in him holding the bird. This body movement on your part will serve you well as we start to run multiple marks. Making him watch the next mark with a bird in his mouth further instills in him that you control when he retrieves. The distraction of taking the bird while he is trying to focus on where the mark fell is just enough delay to really make him think about where that mark is.

Do not rush the send for the mark after you take the bird from him. Taking the bird and then immediately sending him could teach him that the second you have the bird he gets to go - NOT TRUE- control the pace at the line with good mechanics. Vary the time between taking the bird and when you send him anywhere from 2-5 seconds. Drive the point that home you are in charge and he goes when you say so.



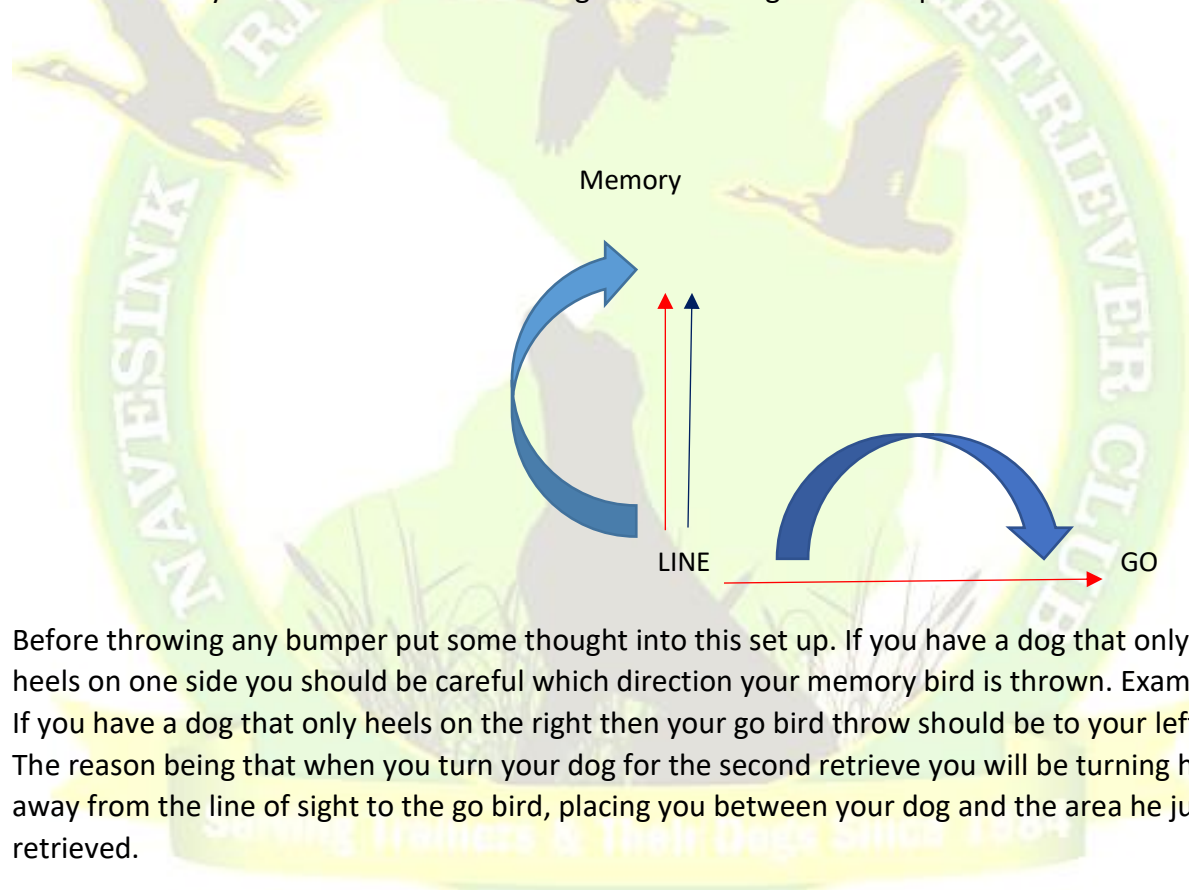
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TEACHING LAND DOUBLES

Once your dog is retrieving single marked retrieves with confidence, we will now move on to introducing him to multiple marks by teaching him to make a double marked retrieve.

A double marked retrieve is when your dog will be required to sit at your side and watch 2 marks, not at the same time, be thrown before we release him to retrieve. This will require the dog to be steady at the line and have good line manners.

When we are starting this introduction, we want to find a field that is flat and featureless; we do not want any factors to influence the dog while learning this concept.



Before throwing any bumper put some thought into this set up. If you have a dog that only heels on one side you should be careful which direction your memory bird is thrown. Example: If you have a dog that only heels on the right then your go bird throw should be to your left. The reason being that when you turn your dog for the second retrieve you will be turning him away from the line of sight to the go bird, placing you between your dog and the area he just retrieved.

Also, place at least 90 degrees of separation between the 2 marks; we do not want to have the first mark create a distraction for the dog.

Now that you have a good field, and have thought out how and where your marks will be thrown we can start.

When introducing doubles, you will be throwing both marks; there will be no throwers, or gunners in the field. Start by placing your dog at heel. When he is steady toss a bumper out for him to retrieve; this will be the memory bird in the next step but for if you are comfortable with his line manners send him.

When he returns from the retrieve place him at heel and take the bumper. Now toss a bumper to the same location that the first bumper was. Let him focus on that mark but do not send him. Now command heel and turn 90 degrees into your right or left, depending on what side your dog is heeling on. Toss a second bumper – this is the GO bird - for your dog, send him for the retrieve. He should go to the last bumper that he saw fall but if he doesn't, do not make a big deal about it. On your next attempt increase the angle between your throws. Remember we are teaching at this point.

When he goes to make the retrieve of the GO bird you will turn your body position so that when your dog returns, you and your dog will be lined up for the memory bird. Your dog should have no problem going for this mark as he was there one time already and the bumper should be visible to him. If your dog was successful give him a happy bumper, outside the area where he just retrieved, and move to another location in the field to repeat the process. If you can get 2 good double retrieves on the first day of introducing your dog to this concept, be happy and call it a day. Repeat his introduction for a few sessions and in different location before you introduce throwers in the field or start to increase the distance of the go and memory bird.

Once you transition to throwers in the field repeat the process of throwing and retrieving the memory bird before adding the Go bird. Keep the throwers at a distance like the distance you had been throwing yourself for a session or two then you can start to increase the distance. Keep a large angle of separation between the marks. Now you no longer have to run the memory bird as a separate single, you can run a true double.

Be careful to not get caught up in running a lot of doubles once your dog understands the concept. Run a lot of singles off multiple guns and add in a double once in a while. Too many multiple marks for a young dog can create a bad habit of head swinging and not wanting to go on singles because they are looking for that additional mark.

This will lay the groundwork for future marking setups, including triples and quads. Take your time and teach your dog how to handle this scenario.

Once your dog has a good grasp of the concept of doubles, and has seen several variations of them, moving to water to teach basic doubles should be fairly easy for your dog to comprehend.

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LEAD STEADY>LIMP LEAD STEADY >NO LEAD STEADY

When you have formalized your obedience and start to apply what you have taught our dog you will now transition and apply it in field work.

You need your dog to sit quietly and without movement at the line while watching the marks fall. If he is moving around and head swinging it greatly increases the chance of him missing a mark or seeing only the back end of it when the gun shot pulls him in the correct direction

Step 1

The first stage of this is lead steadiness. This is exactly what it sounds like. You will bring the dog to the line, at heel and under control. If you are using an e-collar he should have it on along with a short lead. When you are ready and call for the marks you will hold the lead taught so that he cannot move forward and he feels the lead holding him back. Keep him under control, with a taught lead until you are ready to send him. Once you say his release command allow the lead to fall out of your hand so he can make the retrieve. Timing is critical, do not release him if he pulling to go. If he decides that he wants to leave prior to you sending him, correct him with a sit command and additional lead pressure. Once you are satisfied with his control you can send him for the retrieve. Continue with lead pressure each time he is at the line watching marks fall. Remember to maintain your mechanics every time you train.

Step 2

When you are comfortable that he is sitting and watching his marks without pulling or attempting to leave on his own you can move to the next step, LIMP LEAD STEADY. You will bring him to the line, under control, and have him sit to watch the marks fall. When you are ready for the marks to be thrown relax the pressure on his lead, but do not let it go. If possible have the lead rest against his shoulder so he feels the lead but not the pressure. Once you are comfortable that he has done a good job being steady release him for his retrieve. At this point mix in some lead pressure steady with limp lead steady work. Just enough to remind him you are still in control. If he breaks, apply lead pressure, tell him to sit and wait to let him make the retrieve.

If your dog has been properly conditioned to an E-collar and understands E-collar stimulation for Sit, you can now move to no lead pressure with the E-Collar. This time the dog will come to the line, under control and with no lead but wearing his E-collar. Have him sit by your side and when you are ready call for the marks. When you are comfortable that he has remained in a solid sit without moving send him for the retrieve. If he breaks be prepared to yell 'sit' with a

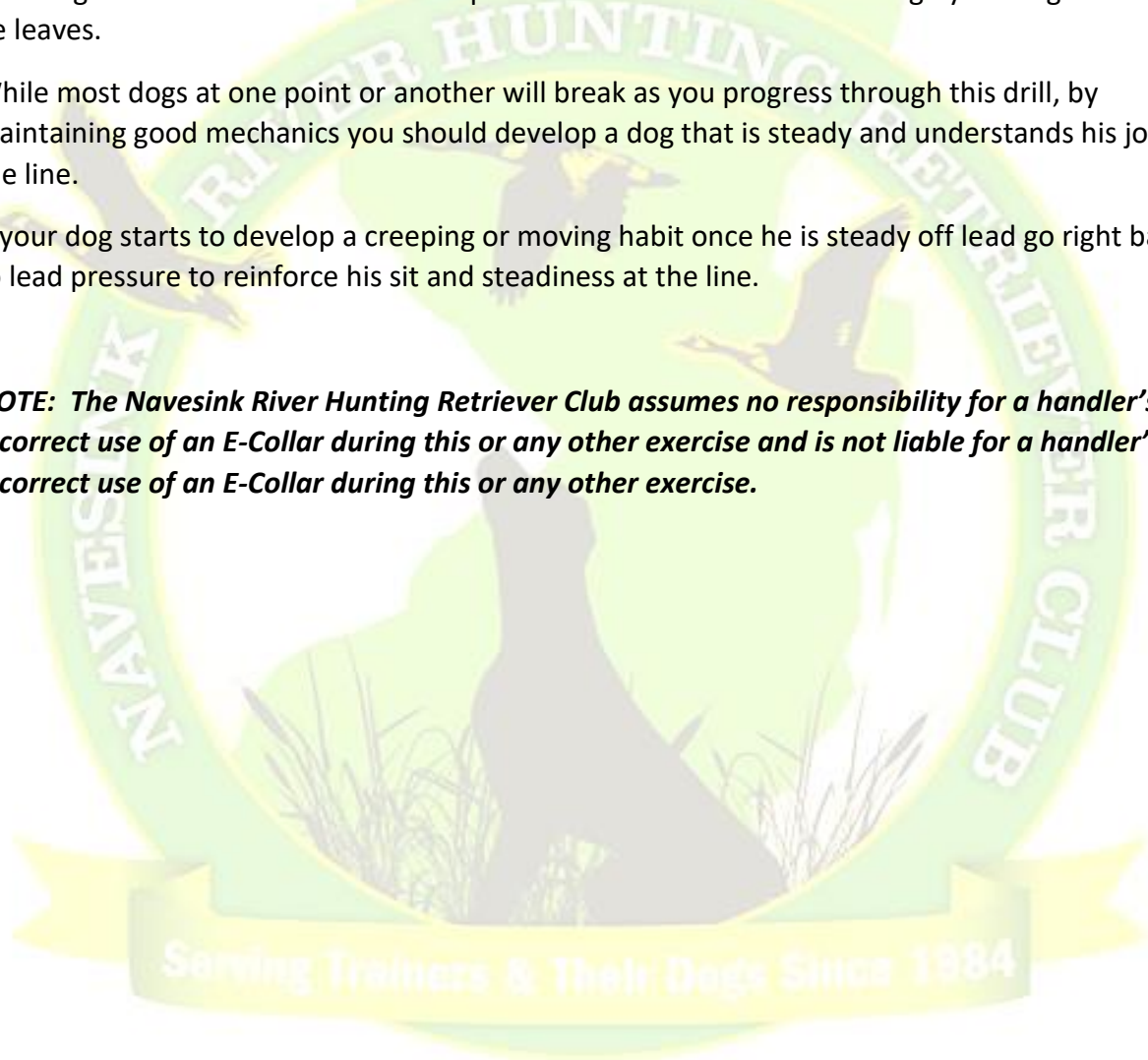
collar correction and then 'here' to bring him back to heel. By now he should understand how to be steady so this is a major error on his part. If this happens, the thrower should pick up the bumper or bird while your dog watches and you should then heel him from the line and not allow him to make the retrieve. Wait a few minutes and try again.

If your dog has not been properly conditioned to an E-collar and does not understand E-collar stimulation for Sit, you will need to do more work on Limp Lead Steady and gradually transition to using a slip line looped through your dog's collar. A slip line is a thin fabric leash that has had the clasp cut off of it. Slip the cut end through your dog's collar and hold both ends in your hand. When your dog is solidly sitting without pulling ahead, let go of the cut end and send your dog. Hold the other end of the slip line. The cut end will slide through your dog's collar as he leaves.

While most dogs at one point or another will break as you progress through this drill, by maintaining good mechanics you should develop a dog that is steady and understands his job at the line.

If your dog starts to develop a creeping or moving habit once he is steady off lead go right back to lead pressure to reinforce his sit and steadiness at the line.

NOTE: The Navesink River Hunting Retriever Club assumes no responsibility for a handler's incorrect use of an E-Collar during this or any other exercise and is not liable for a handler's incorrect use of an E-Collar during this or any other exercise.

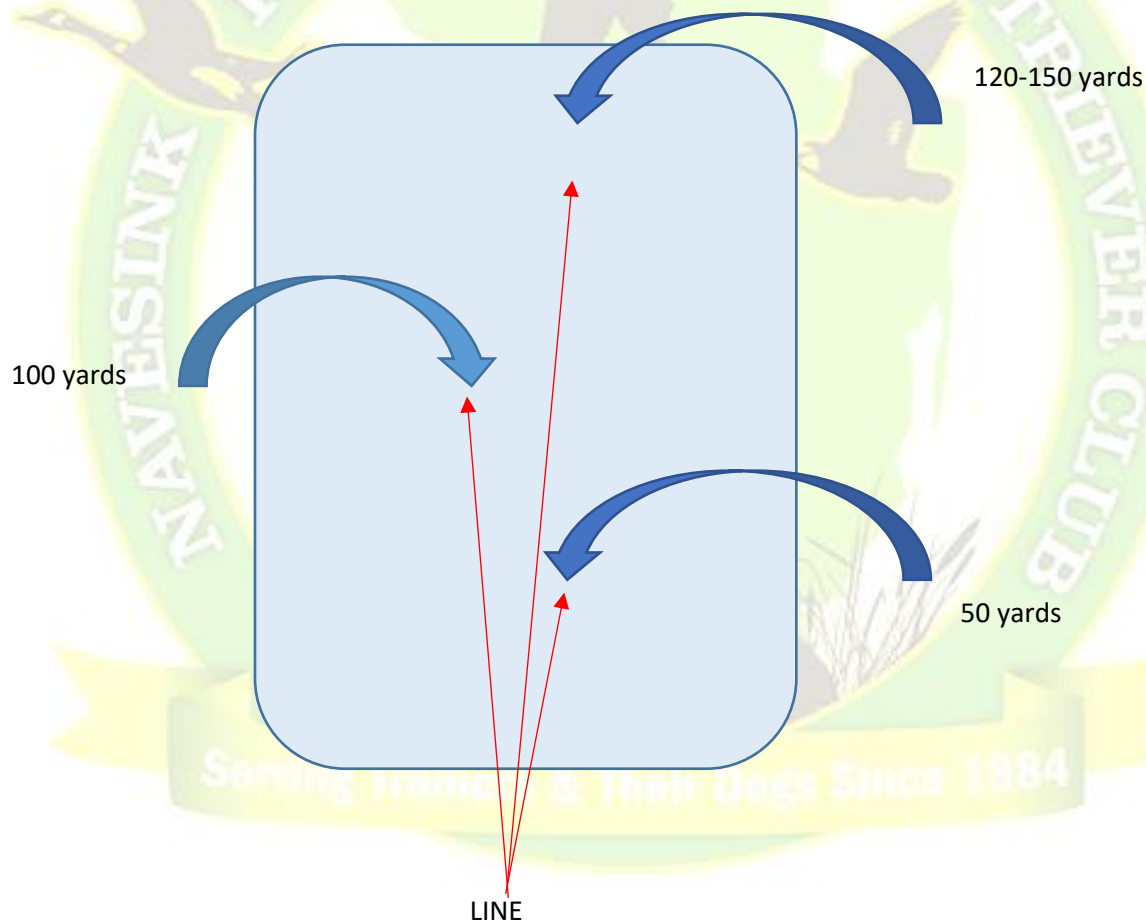


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LONG NON- CHEATING WATER MARKS

While long is a relative term in the retriever world, field trial marks can be out to 400 yards and hunt test marks have grown over the years and can be well past 100 yards. For this drill try to work your dog out to past the 100-yard range. This distance can pose a problem if you cannot find the correct pond to use. We are looking for clean square or minimal angle entries into the water and marks that do not fall close to land causing the temptation for the dog to get out on the return. You have not completed swim by at this point and will have no way to correct your dog for getting out of the water and the chances of him casting back into the water without swim- by or de-cheating will be difficult.

The ideal pond would be rectangular 150 yard long and at least 50 yards wide, wider is better or this drill. If you have one great, but if not be very careful of mark placement and entry angle on a smaller pond.



When stretching the dog out on water throw marks short to long and try to keep the marks out in the middle of the water to prevent the dog from getting on the shore on the return. If the

dog needs help this should come from the thrower, have them get the dogs attention and throw another bumper to the same area as the first.

Keep in mind that water will hold scent on its surface so don't set up a situation where the line to the marks are tight to each other. It's better to run two marks that are wide than three marks that are tight. Remember to maintain all your mechanics, getting to the line, steady at the line and proper delivery to hand. Do not let your mechanics vary regardless of the drill. While you may never require your dog in a test to make a water retrieve in excess of 100 yards it will not hurt to train at longer distances



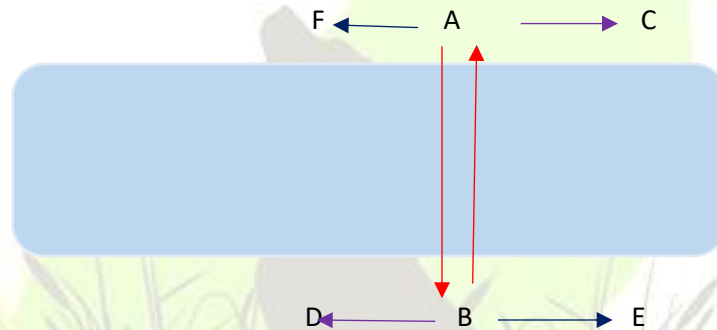
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SIMPLE DE-CHEATING/SWIM TO ME

Cheating on water can develop into a major problem for retrievers. The act of cheating is when the dog, going for or returning from a retrieve, decides that he will not get in the water but instead run along the shore or around the corner of a pond.

Formal de-Cheating will take place later and is more complicated, but for now you can lay the groundwork with Simple De-cheating. Once your dog has a solid sit/stay, recall and has been introduced to water, with no aversion to getting in, you can start Simple De-cheating.

Find a pond that will allow you to sit your dog on one side and you to walk around to the other while holding the long line. To start make sure you have a long line on your dog and start close to the water's edge.



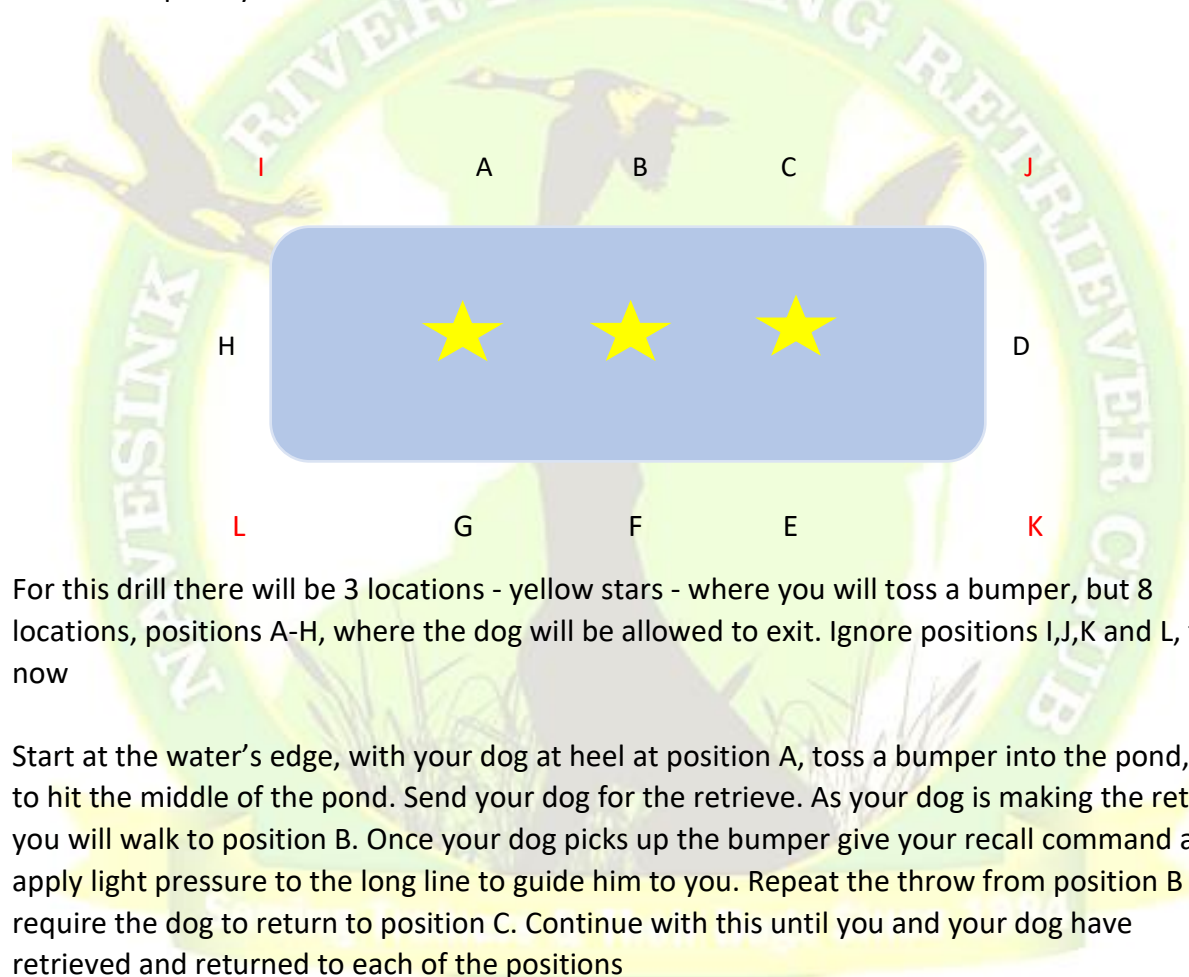
To start you will sit your dog at position A and walk around the pond to position B, holding the long line. For the first session leave plenty of distance between position A and the shoreline, 25-30 feet, to the dogs left. You want to have as much early success in this drill as possible. Once at position B you will recall your dog and apply pressure to the long line, just enough to guide him to you on a straight path. Most young dogs, especially after seeing you walk around the pond, will start to move toward position C. When this happens you need to increase the pressure on the long line, command 'HERE' or whatever your recall command is, and start to move in the opposite direction toward position D. The dog should understand the pressure and enter the water.

Now that the dog has reached your side of the pond move to position B and repeat the drill. If he goes toward position E when recalled you move toward position F, increase long line pressure

and repeat your recall command. Do not apply so much pressure on the long line that you appear to be dragging the dog, just enough pressure to guide him in the desired direction.

Once the dog is recalling, with no signs of cheating from positions A and B you will increase the difficulty and temptation to cheat. You will now place the dog at position C and you will walk to position E. These positions should now be about 15 feet from the shoreline the dog may want to cheat around. Repeat the same mechanics when you recall your dog.

After a few sessions your dog should have a basic understanding of getting in the water and returning to you on recall and now you can move to SWIM TO ME DRILL. For this drill you will use the same pond you did simple de-cheating in but now you will be asking the dog to go out for a retrieve at a short distance and make the right decision to return directly to whatever position around the pond you're at.



For this drill there will be 3 locations - yellow stars - where you will toss a bumper, but 8 locations, positions A-H, where the dog will be allowed to exit. Ignore positions I,J,K and L, for now

Start at the water's edge, with your dog at heel at position A, toss a bumper into the pond, try to hit the middle of the pond. Send your dog for the retrieve. As your dog is making the retrieve you will walk to position B. Once your dog picks up the bumper give your recall command and apply light pressure to the long line to guide him to you. Repeat the throw from position B and require the dog to return to position C. Continue with this until you and your dog have retrieved and returned to each of the positions

Aside from starting to understand he has to come straight back to you regardless of the route, this drill will also start to teach your dog to look for you.

Notice that the positions you have asked the dog to enter the water are not on any angles, but the exits are. Keep his entries square to the pond for this drill. Also notice that on the return he

has only been presented with one visible shoreline. Now you will ask him to start returning to the corners of the pond where he will be presented with converging shorelines and a greater temptation to not take a straight-line return.

DO NOT THROW ANY BUMPERS FROM POSITIONS I-L

For this next part you will start with your dog at heel at position A. Toss the bumper into the pond and you will now move to position I. When your dog makes the retrieve give him your recall command and apply long line pressure to guide him to the corner of the pond.

Now you will move to position H, DO NOT THROW FROM POSITION I. Heel your dog, toss the bumper and stay at position H, allow him a square entry and exit on this retrieve.

While you are still at H toss the bumper and you move to position L for his return. Once the retrieve is complete move to position E and repeat the drill on the other side of the pond. Remember to give him a square send and 1 square exit while at positions H and D.

If your dog is exiting well at all locations including the corners of the pond you will now introduce the entry from positions I, J, K, and L.

The next part of this drill is to start at position I, J, K, and L. For this part you will send and have your dog return to the same location. We are now starting to introduce angled entry into the picture.

Once your dog has completed being sent and returning from all locations to you, you can start to gradually increase the distance from the point you send the dog from to the water's edge. Do not be too concerned about increasing to any great distance for your dog's entry. If you can work your way back to 15 feet from the shore you will have had success at this drill.

