Guide Dogs' Puppy Development Required Outcomes Overview

No.6 Recall and Free Running



Required outcomes

To train guide dog puppies to return promptly to the handler in response to either voice or on hearing the whistle.

Puppies should make contact with the handler without jumping up, at a speed unlikely to result in injury, and then remain close to the handler until commanded to carry out another activity



The dos and don'ts

Only techniques within the guidelines are to be used, in consultation with advice from your supervisor.

Supervisors are to carry out the whistle feeding procedure with all first-time puppy walkers and the supervisor must ensure that the desired response to the whistle has been established prior to the first free run.

Do not free run a puppy without prior guidance and authorisation by your supervisor. The first free run in an open environment **must** be authorised by the supervisor.

Puppies must wear identification discs and a standard collar at all times during free running. Only equipment supplied by Guide Dogs must be used when free running, i.e. standard collar, lead, whistle and identification disc. Additional items may be sourced as required following consultation with your supervisor. You must remember to take waste bags and pick up after your puppy if it spends whilst out free running.

Free running should always be carried out in safe and appropriate environments. Ensure that the free run area is, as far as is reasonably practicable: secure from roads, railways and deep water; free from hazards such as broken glass, litter and syringes; and a safe distance away from children's play areas, picnic areas and livestock. Do not use areas that are isolated or known to be dangerous, and always ensure that somebody knows where you are when free running.

A handler must only be responsible for one guide dog puppy that is running free.

Never allow puppies to run free with more than one other puppy or dog. Pack running can compromise recall training and can be dangerous for the puppy, handler or others. **Always keep a close eye on your puppy and be aware of the danger of collision at speed with yourself, another person, a dog, or an object.**

Free running should be carried out two to three times a week unless otherwise directed by the Puppy Training Supervisor or following veterinary advice.

Prior to free running a puppy, consideration must be made regarding the puppy's health, general physical and mental development and relief routines.

No free running of bitches in season, for two weeks post-spay or ten days post-castration. After this period, gentle free running may be resumed (subject to veterinary advice).

Free running your puppy around feed time can be dangerous, so do not free run your puppy one hour before or two hours after it has been fed.

Puppies infected with kennel cough must not be allowed to free run.

Guide dog puppies must remain on a lead in the presence of livestock.
Guide dog puppies should not be encouraged to go swimming.
Guide dog puppies must not play with balls or sticks at any time.

Any problems with training progression must be highlighted to your supervisor. You must report promptly (within 48 hours) any incident that results in, or could have resulted in, an injury to yourself, your puppy or any other person, to your Puppy Training Supervisor who will then complete an incident investigation with you.



These points must be followed at all times to support the agreed training process within the puppy walking department of Guide Dogs. **Copyright © 2014**

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