

BUILDING RETRIEVE DRIVE AT HOME

PAW TEACH RESPECTFUL BEHAVIORS. BUILD RETRIEVE DRIVE. OBEDIENCE CAN COME LATER. PAW

DO ✓



USE A LONG LEAD

It allows you to guide them in, create success and build desire



MAKE IT FUN

Be excited! Your enthusiasm, Builds their enthusiasm.



WHEN THEY BRING IT BACK

Get down at their level, Pet them. Praise them, Let them hold it for a moment, Make it a celebration!



LET THEM KEEP IT (FOR A MOMENT)

They worked hard to get it. Don't immediately take it away



KEEP SESSIONS SHORT

End while they're excited and wanting more. Leave them ready for the next time.



BUILD CONFIDENCE

Start easy. Set them up to win. Success creates desire



FOCUS ON DESIRE

We're not asking for perfection, we're building WANT!!



DON'T ✗



DON'T RETRIEVE UNTIL THEY'RE BORED

Too Many retrieves = losing drive Always end on a positive note.



DON'T PUT TOO MUCH OBEDIENCE ON THEM

Telling them to be still and then go is hard for them to wrap their mind around, Balance is key.



DON'T IMMEDIATELY TAKE THE OBJECT AWAY

This can create keep-away and decrease desire to bring it back.



DON'T CHASE OR PLAY KEEP-AWAY

It turns the retrieve into a game of avoidance, instead of desire.



DON'T OVERDO REPETITIONS

If the last one is boring, that's what they'll remember.



DON'T CONTINUE WHEN ENTHUSIASM DROPS

Stop and try again another day Protect their desire

RETRIEVES BY AGE

A simple rule of thumb
AGE IN MONTHS = MAX RETRIEVES



2 MONTHS OLD = 2 RETRIEVES

3 MONTHS OLD = 3 RETRIEVES

4 MONTHS OLD = 4 RETRIEVES

5 MONTHS OLD = 5 RETRIEVES

Start with the age guideline, if they're really wanting another, you can add one more, if they seemed bored at the end, drop back down next time.

TEETHING MATTERS 4-6 MONTHS OLD



Puppies are losing puppy teeth and getting adult teeth, Their mouth can be sore and uncomfortable.

If retrieve drive drops during this stage, don't panic, It will pick back up once teething is complete.

WHEN THEY BRING IT BACK.... THIS IS WHERE DRIVE IS BUILT



- ✓ Get down at their level.
- ✓ Pet them, Praise them.
- ✓ Let them hold it.
- ✓ Make it a Celebration.
- ✓ Build the Relationship.

Don't make the retrieve about taking it away. Make it about Celebrating Success!!

IF THEY DON'T WANT TO GIVE IT UP AVOID THE BATTLE



- ✓ Stay calm
 - ✓ Don't chase them
 - ✓ Avoid tug-of-war
 - ✓ Use trades when appropriate
 - ✓ Teach a release over time
 - ✓ Ask a trainer to show you safe techniques if needed
- Never make the end of the retrieve a wrestling match**

THE LAST RETRIEVE IS THE MOST IMPORTANT



If the last thing they remember is, "WOW, that was fun" they'll be excited next time.

If the last thing they remember is, "I'm tired of this" that feeling will carry over to the next session.

PAW *Leave them wanting* **ONE MORE RETRIEVE.** PAW

BUILD DESIRE TODAY. RAISE A RETRIEVER FOR LIFE.

Bearpoint Kennel
Dale and Brenda Merritt

Avoid these common mistakes and help your dog reach its full potential.

Every dog owner makes mistakes during training. The good news is most setbacks can be avoided with a little patience, consistency, and the right approach.

Here are some of the most common training mistakes we see and how to avoid them.

1. Training Too Long

Long sessions often lead to frustration for both you and your dog.

- Keep sessions short and productive
- End on a positive note
- Focus on quality over quantity

1. Repeating Commands

If your dog hears "HERE" five times before responding, they may learn they don't need to listen the first four times.

- Give clear commands
- Follow through consistently
- Reward success
- Don't teach them to count

1. Skipping Obedience Work

Many training problems can be traced back to weak fundamentals.

- Practice recall regularly
- Reinforce whoa and heel
- Build a solid foundation

1. Moving Too Fast

Every dog learns at a different pace.

- Build confidence first
- Increase difficulty gradually
- Celebrate small victories

1. Training Only During Hunting Season

Bird dogs improve through consistent work throughout the year.

- Practice yard drills
- Work on retrieves
- Keep dogs mentally engaged

1. Expecting Perfection

Progress takes time.

- Be patient
- Stay consistent
- Focus on improvement, not perfection

1. Forgetting to Make Training Fun

Dogs learn best when they enjoy the process.

- Use praise and rewards
- Keep energy positive
- End sessions wanting more

Final Thoughts

The best bird dogs aren't built overnight. Consistent training, patience, and realistic expectations go a long way toward developing a confident and reliable hunting partner.