



Rutland Dog Training

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## **Running Away by Adam Beral**

*I have a female terrier cross that is two years old. She finds holes in fences and runs as soon as the front door is open so we end up chasing her. The only way to get her back is to drive after her and she jumps in the car because she thinks we are going somewhere. The other way is to lie on the grass and pretend to cry, she comes to see what's wrong then you can grab her! Any suggestions on her coming straight back would be gratefully received.*

Thanks for writing in. It sounds like you have your hands full and have already thought of some great ways to solve your problem; although I would love to know what your neighbours think when they see you rolling on the grass pretending to cry!

What you have here are a couple of separate problems that should therefore be treated separately. Bear in mind that terriers are designed to find small holes and disappear down them: it is too much to expect a terrier to distinguish between a hole in the fence and a rabbit hole! So first things first, try and limit the opportunity she has to run away. Cover any holes with chicken wire, make sure all gates stay shut and shut her away when the front door is open. A good training tip is wherever possible, set your dog up for success and limit their ability to go wrong!

You have a dog that darts out of the front door, so you need to train her manners in that situation. To do this you should have her on a lead with some really tasty treats. Your aim is to work with her in the hallway with the door open and your dog on a loose lead. Praise her by giving her treats (or a game if she is not fussed about food) only when she is calm and her attention is on you. As she gets better at this, you can increase the distraction outside the door, but only take her out when she is calmly attentive on you.

The other problem you have is that you do not have a dog that reliably comes when called. I mentioned this a couple of weeks ago, but there is no way to teach a recall without using a lead to ensure that if your dog ignores you, it is possible to gently reel them in. Start recall training on a long, lightweight lead by calling your dog's name. This should be done in a quiet, distraction free environment. When your dog comes towards you, repeat their name in a cheery voice with the command "come". When they get to you, go really wild with praise and treats.



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In this case, I would also advise that you pair a really special treat with the sound of a whistle. This can become your emergency backup device. Start training by blowing the whistle and giving her an extra special food treat, repeating a few times a day. Do not ask her to do anything for the treat – she will learn that the sound of the whistle always equals a particularly special treat. Once the association has been made, she will come running back to you whenever you blow the whistle to get the treat she expects!

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