

## Introduction to Box (April 19, 2017)

This is for the first time(s) you start to use a box. You will build on this simple routine.



**Step 1.** Place the dog on the box and hold her. Use the term “PLACE” while stroking her. Don’t rush this step as it establishes a bond.



**Step 2.** Give the pup a ball to hold. Try not to do this when it’s hot as the dog will drop the ball. Let the dog hold the ball for at least a minute.



**Step 3.** While holding the pup, give a short toss to the right.



**Step 4.** Say the pup's name to "RELEASE". Over time, begin to loosen the tension of holding the pup, building up to the point you are not holding or touching the pup before releasing her.



**Step 5.** You might have to pick the pup up and place her on the box when she returns with the ball. The important element is to have the pup bring the ball directly back to you and the box. Let the pup hold the ball while you get her to "HUP" and settle. This will help you to have a nice retrieve in later stages. After she is sitting, gently take the ball. Repeat several times.



**Step 6.** If you feel your pup is progressing, try tossing the ball in the opposite direction. If successful, add several different directions.



**Step 7.** Also try throwing two balls one at a time about 10 feet away as close to each other as possible. While tossing, say the word “MARK”. Then, send the dog to fetch one of the two balls. Using the word “BACK” send the dog for the second ball. Build up the distance over time. Later, vary this by tossing the ball further apart which will eventually become different directions.



**Step 8.** Begin to lengthen the time from the “ball toss” to the RELEASE to get the retrieve. During that wait, try to lessen your hold on the pup. Your goal will be to toss the ball **without** touching the pup. You should try to build up to 15 seconds at this point of training. Toss the ball in several directions. Also, try tossing 2 balls.



**Step 9.** Assuming you can now toss a ball without restraining the pup, try to stand. You might want to put a lead on the pup during this step to keep it from jumping off the box for the retrieve. Again, build up the time from the toss to the release. Then try to take several steps away from the box when you throw the ball.