

COMPETING WITH YOUR RETRIEVER - "LEARN THE LINGO"

Retriever "Jargon": Glossary of Retriever Training Terms

(Note: This is intended as a terms glossary only and should not be used as a "How to" section.)

AFC - Amateur Field Trial Champion. An AKC title.

AFTCH - Amateur Field Trial Champion. A CKC title.

Amateur - One who trains dogs for the sheer pleasure of it.

Baseball - A beginning drill used to teach the dog to take hand signals. A precursor for blinds.

Big Hunt - When a dog can not find a mark and runs all over the field looking for it. Not a good thing.

Bird Boy - (BB) The person, male or female, throwing the item for the dog to retrieve.

Blind - The art of guiding a dog to an item it did not see fall, through the use of voice, whistle, and body movements.

Blink - When the dog goes by an item that it has clearly seen and is supposed to have retrieved. The dog runs out to the area of the fall, looks directly at the bumper/bird, then continues to hunt around anyway..... "I can't believe my dog has just BLINKED that bird!?!?!?"

Bumper - A plastic or canvas item, usually 2 or 3 inches in diameter, used to train the dog. Available in a wide assortment of colors. White is generally used for marks. Black or Orange Bumpers are generally used for blinds.

Burn - Terminology used to describe a type of e-collar correction. Usually differentiated, in most training circles, from the definition of a "Nick". Used to correct a known command that the dog is choosing to disregard.

Call Back - A list provided by dog game judges prior to the next series in an event. This list denotes those who are invited back to continue participating in the event. Those who do not make the "call back" have been disqualified for some reason.

Cast - To give the dog a specific direction through the use of body movements.

Campaign or Campaigning - The pursuit of a title for a dog. "They will be campaigning several nice dogs this year."

CERF - Canine Eye Registry Foundation. A registry created to evaluate and clear breeding dogs of hereditary eye defects including Progressive Retinal Atrophy and Retinal Dysplasia.

Channel Blind - A water blind run in an area that, due to the close proximity of the bank on both sides, makes it very tempting for the dog to exit the water and get up on land.

Cheating - When a dog avoids cover or obstacles enroute to or returning from an item to be retrieved.

Cold - A term used to define the running of a dog on a concept it is familiar with but the exact placement of the item is new to the dog. When we train, we generally run our

dogs on "cold" marks and/or blinds. Our dogs know how to mark or run a blind, but they don't know the exact location of this specific mark or blind.

Collar Conditioning - A process by which the dog is taught how to turn off the collar stimulation.

De-bolting - A term identifying the process used to teach the dog it can not "run away" from the stimulation caused by the e-collar.

Diversion - A distraction of some sort, including but not limited to a bird, a shot, a person moving, talking, yelling or walking, etc., done in dog games to test against switching, or dropping. Diversions in dog games are commonly a thrown bird as the dog returns from a retrieve. Sometimes these become part of a delayed mark.

Double - Two items a dog sees thrown for it to retrieve. Items are not thrown at the same time. A double tests the dog's memory as it must pick up one item, return to its handler, then go get the other item and bring it back.

Dowel - An item used to teach the dog the "hold" command. Generally wooden and not larger than one-half inch in diameter. The dog should hold the dowel gently but firmly before moving on to the next phase of FF.

Dummy Collar - A collar that is the exact duplicate of an e-collar in size, shape, and weight but cannot produce electrical stimulation.

E-Collar - A tool used by the trainer and worn by the dog that enables the trainer to make an instant correction from a distance through the use of small amounts of electricity. It is an invaluable training tool when properly used. It is also the FASTEST way to ruin a good dog if improperly used.

Fall - (1) (a.k.a. Area of the Fall) - The spot on the ground or water where the item to be retrieved fell. (2) The time of year when we see just how well our training went during the "dog game" / off-season.

FC - Field Trial Champion. An AKC title.

FTCH - Field Trial Champion. A CKC title.

Field Work - Dog training generally conducted away from the area around the kennel, includes concept work or marks and blinds.

Flare - When a dog avoids continuing on a straight line on which he was sent due to pressure applied previously in that general area.

Force Fetching - (a.k.a., FF, Forcing, Force Breaking, Conditioned Retrieving) Teaching a dog through the use of classical conditioning (stimulus/response) methods to pick up and hold an item until told to release it. Generally accomplished after the adult teeth are in place in the 6 - 8 month age range.

Force to a Pile - An extension of Force Fetching. Pressure of some sort is applied in association with a command to go. This process is done in some circles to prepare the dog for running blind retrieves.

GMH - Grand Master Hunter. A CKC title.

GMHR - Grand Master Hunting Retriever. A NAHRA title.

Go Bird - The last item the dog sees thrown. In a multiple mark situation, it is generally the first item a dog will pick up.

GRHRCH-Grand Hunting Retriever Champion. A UKC/HRC title denoting that a Retriever has qualified in the annual HRC Grand event.

Handler - The person releasing the dog to make a retrieve.

Hand Signals - A series of hand/arm motions used to indicate to the dog which way you desire it go.

Hard Mouth - The action said to occur when a dog uses too much force in picking up or holding a bird. This action renders the bird unfit for human consumption and is a major problem. Difficult, but not impossible, to cure once the habit has been formed.

Heeling Stick - A riding crop or other item carried and used on the dog to remind it of its proper place. This is not used to abuse the dog, rather provide a gentle, but firm, reminder of the place.

Hold - A command used during conditioned retrieving by some to insure that the dog knows that he must hold, in his mouth, any object placed there.

Hidden Gun - A mark thrown by a BB when the BB is totally concealed from the dogs view. The dog hears a shot or call and sees the item to be retrieved thrown by does not see a BB.

Holding Blind - The only spot in the world your dog can lose its mind and you can't do a thing about it. A blind or series of blinds erected prior to the "line" in an effort to keep dogs and handlers available to run the test.

Honour - When a dog must observe another dog making a retrieve. An honouring dog should watch the entire sequence of birds decoying, flying, being shot and falling without interfering through sound or motion with the "working dog".

HRCH - Hunting Retriever champion an UKC Hunt title.

HR - Hunting Retriever an UKC title.

Indent - A term used to identify the placement of a shorter mark in relation to the other marks in the field. A triple is thrown, the first is 200 yards away, the second is 100 yards away, the third is 250 yards away. The second mark is called "indented" because the dog must go long, then short, then long again. A difficult concept to teach.

JFTR - Junior Field Trial Retriever. A CKC title.

JH - Junior Hunter. A CKC title.

Line - (1) The starting point for dog tests, trials, and training. (2) The line segment from Point A to Point B from the starting point of tests, trails, and training (Point A) to the item to be retrieved, be it for marks or blinds (Point B).

Line Manners - A term used to describe how a dog acts while sitting at the "line" under judgment. "That dog really pinned that mark, too bad he has the line manners of a goat!"

Literal Casting - A cast that, if taken properly, would lead directly to the blind.

Mark - An item a dog sees thrown for it to retrieve. Usually a game bird or a training bumper. A foundation task for dogs.

Memory Bird - Any item in a multiple mark situation, other than the last item, a dog has seen thrown for it to retrieve.

MH - Master Hunter. A CKC title.

MHR - Master Hunting Retriever. A NAHRA title.

Money Bird - The absolute last item, in a multiple mark situation, the dog picks up. Called "Money Bird" because in a Field Trial, if your dog doesn't get it, you get no money!

NAFC - National Amateur Field Champion. An AKC title.

NAFTCH - National Amateur Field Trial Champion. A CKC title.

NFC - National Field Champion. An AKC title.

NFTCH - National Field Trial Champion. A CKC title.

NMH - National Master Hunter. A CKC title.

Nick - A correction applied with an e-collar set to a "Momentary" setting or a tap and immediate release of the button for those e-collars without a "Momentary" setting.

North American Hunting Retriever Association - (NAHRA) A non-for-profit organization set up to provide the average hunter a place to show case his/her retriever in a non-competitive environment.

Obedience - (OB) THE foundation task for dog training. Comprises a broad spectrum of commands some of which include: Sit, Here, Kennel, Heel, Down.

OFA - Orthopaedic Foundation for Animals. An organization which maintains a registry of hip and elbow data to help determine that joint confirmation is ideal and free of hereditary defects. Typical OFA hip ratings, in order of preference are: Excellent and Good followed by Fair. Initially spawned in an effort to curb the prevalence of Hip Dysplasia occurring in many large breed dogs.

Pattern Field - A series of bumpers placed in the same location every time, generally in the shape of a (T) or a double (T) where two lines, separated by 40 - 50 yards intersect the center line. Used to teach handling skills to dogs.

PennHip - An alternative registry/database to OFA. This method utilizes a "predictive test" testing the "play" or joint looseness by manipulating a joint to measure looseness. While not a commonly accepted as the OFA, PennHip is considered by some advocates to be more predictive of future issues. PennHip scores ratings on a "living percentile" rating current tests against the existing database of previously analyzed animals.

Pin - When a dog runs directly to the fall and picks up the item without a hunt.

Pointing Lab - (PL) A lab that points at birds during an upland hunt instead of flushing them as regular labs (RL) do.

Poison Bird - A mark the dog must ignore to successfully complete the assigned task, usually a blind. It is fairly common in the FT and upper levels of HT games to see this concept. It's called "poison" because, in a Test, if the dog picks it up, it might as well be dead because it will be out of competition.

Pop - When a dog stops and looks back to the handler for guidance or direction without being commanded. A bad thing.

Professional - One who derives any portion of their income from the training of dogs.

Premium - A notice sent out by the Club holding an event. This notice usually includes the time/date/place of stakes being held, entry cost, Judges names, directions and other information concerning the event.

Punch Bird - A term used to identify the placement of a longer mark in relation to the other marks in the field. A triple is thrown, the first is 100 yards away, the second is 200 yards away, the third is 125 yards away. The second mark is called a "punch bird" because the dog must go short, then short, then long and "punch" through the short bird marks.

Retired Gun - Used in multiple marks. After the BB has thrown the item to be retrieved, the BB moves to a concealed location so when the dog returns to the line and looks out to their mark, they are hidden from view.

School or Schooled - Running a dog on a mark or blind that it has run in the past. "Yes, I'd like to do this mark as a double, but let's school the memory bird first."

Secondary Selection - When the handler decides which bird will be picked up next.

Used mostly in Field Trials but is a useful tool in the Retriever Training Tool Box.

SH - Senior Hunter. A CKC title.

SR - Started Retriever. A NAHRA title.

Steady - (steadiness) The term used to describe when a dog sees a bird or birds fall while remaining in the position commanded by the handler. A steady dog should remain steady until commanded to do otherwise by the handler. Usually, a steady dog, commanded to do otherwise is told to complete the retrieve with a "go" command.

Switch - A dog is sent to mark, establishes a hunt, then leaves that area and establishes a hunt in the area of another fall.

Tight Hunt - When the dog runs directly to the area of the fall and after a short hunt in a small area directly around the fall, finds the item. A very good thing.

Triple - Three items a dog sees thrown for it to retrieve. Items are not thrown at the same time. A triple tests the dog's memory as it must pick up one item, return to its handler, then go get the other item, bring it back, then go get the third item and bring it back.

Two-Down-The-Shore - Generally, a water double thrown so as after picking up the go bird, the dog must swim by the go bird fall area and pick up the memory bird. This is a tougher concept than it sounds and is a basic concept for advance dog work.

UH - Upland Hunter a UKC title.

QFTR - Qualified Field Trial Retriever. A CKC title.

Quad - Same as for double and triple only now you are throwing four items.

Under-The-Arc - When the line to a blind takes the dog between a mark and the BB who has thrown that mark, the dog is said to have run "under-the-arc."

Walking Singles - A single mark thrown by a BB for a dog and, as the dog is released, the BB walks away from the area of the fall. This teaches the dog to concentrate on the item thrown and not the BB.

Walk Up - A mark or marks that occur while the dog is in motion, progressing with the handler. A typical walk-up will expect the dog to cease progress upon the first mark and shot, usually in a sitting position, and to remain there until all marks have fallen and the handler commands the retriever to pick up a mark.

White Coat - A term used to identify those people who participate in Field Trial events. Used because, in part, handlers wear white coats so as to be easily identified by their dog when the dog is a great distance away.

WR - Working Retriever. A NAHRA title.

Yard Work - The term used to describe any number of drills that can be done in and around the kennel area. Baseball and OB are but two examples.