

The Name Game – Family Style (aka Round Robin)

This version of the game gets more people participating while working all the same aspects and skills as the traditional ‘name game’.

As before, the Name Game is played with your dog off-leash and in a safe, controlled location. Make sure that the area is clear of loose items on the floor and is not a slippery surface. Measure out your dog’s meal into cups – that way you won’t over feed him.

In the Family Version, you will:

- 1) Have 2 or more people play. Each person gets a small cup of kibble.
- 2) Place people around a room or different places in the yard. Several feet apart is best, maybe 20 feet apart if there is enough space.
- 3) Take turns calling your dog. Smile, say the furkid’s name in a Happy Voice and wait for the pup to turn in your direction. Once the dog looks at you say the cue word “Come” or “Here”. Say the cue word only one time.
- 4) When the dog gets to the person who called, lightly grab his collar while praising him and give him a piece of kibble. Let go of the dog’s collar so the next person can have a turn.
- 5) Mix it up so the dog must wait to see who calls before running to that person.
- 6) If the dog comes to you WITHOUT you calling its name, do not give it a food reward. You can smile and reward the dog with affection but not with a treat. We want the dog to come to the person who called, not the person most likely to give it food. (Let’s be honest, we are all pushovers sometimes.)
- 7) When the kibble is gone, the game is done. Say the release word and put the empty cups away. Your pup should be tired and happy.

Variation:

Once your dog understands the game (and it won’t take long) add obedience skills into the activity. When the pup arrives to the person who called, he must ‘sit’ or ‘down’ before his collar is touched and the reward given. Again, mix it up and ask for different skills that the dog knows and will be successful performing.

Words of Caution:

- Keep in mind that your dog’s name should be associated with positive things. If your furkid gets distracted, cut the session short and/or move to another location.
- Please do not go overboard and make this game too difficult for the dog to receive a reward (food). Remember, this exercise is about reinforcing eye contact with people and responding to his/her name. High success rate means your dog is learning.

VIDEO: The Name Game Family Style – Teach Your Dog to Love Its Name
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5CeyJQGB4Vg&feature=youtu.be>

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