

## Teach Your Dog to Play Retrieving Games

**Fetch games provide hours of fun for both you and your dog.**

*Liz Palika*

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If you have spent time teaching your dog retrieving, it should be ready to play retrieving games. The games are almost limitless and provide hours of fun for both of you.

Retrieving the newspaper is one of Dax's my 3-year-old Australian Shepherd's favorites. By sending her after the morning newspaper, I can save myself the embarrassment of meeting one of my neighbors. I am not a morning person.

I taught Dax by rolling up a newspaper and throwing it as I would a tennis ball. She was hesitant at first because it didn't look, smell or taste like a tennis ball. But with verbal encouragement, she brought me the paper each time I threw it.

Next I told her to sit and stay and walked away from her, placed the newspaper on the ground about 15 feet away and then went back to her. I released her from the stay and told her, "Get the paper!" She hesitated, so I took a step or two toward the paper and encouraged her, "Get the paper!" When she got it, I praised her enthusiastically and gave her a treat.

In the next step, I put Dax in a Sit/Stay inside the door. I placed the paper where the carrier usually throws it. I went back inside and released Dax from the stay, opened the door and told her to get the paper. When she hesitated, I took a step or two forward with her and offered encouragement. When she dashed to the paper and picked it up, I praised her enthusiastically.

When Dax got the paper from the door, I started putting it in different places because I wanted her to learn to look for it. At first she was confused and came back barking. So I encouraged her to get the paper and walked partway out with her. When she started looking, I praised her, and when she found the paper, I told her she was a wonderful dog.

Before you send your dog to get the paper, make sure it always comes when called or it may run off. Also, this game is addictive. Dax knows her first job of the day is to get the paper. On some Sundays, the paper is so big my husband has brought it in, thinking it was too heavy for Dax. But she was upset and barking, and nothing could calm her except the chance to bring in that big, heavy paper.

Housework is one of my least favorite jobs, so I taught Dax to help me. In the bathroom, I can tell her, "Get the towel," and she will pick up the wet towels on the floor. I can walk her to the laundry hamper and tell her, "Drop it!" and she will put them in the opened hamper. I praise her, and she bounces in delight.