**Completed behavior looks like**: A dog that waits in position until released by a cue to search an open field for an object. Dog finds the object and stays with it until human arrives or retrieves the item.

This is also an excellent strategy training game for training your dog to stay nearby and focused on you while off leash. If off-leash is not a safe option, keep the dog on a 60 foot drag line.

**This has got to be one of my favorite training games. It’s useful, fun, and can wear a dog out in just a few trials, even in a small field or backyard.**

Begin with the dog on-leash. Have someone hold or tether the leash so the dog can watch you but can not follow you. Fill a toy with FORSTA treats and show it to the dog, letting them sniff and lick it for a few moments. If they seem uninterested, fill the toy with something smelly, such as tuna.

Tell the dog “wait here” but allow the dog to watch you walk about 15 feet away and drop the toy in the grass. Return the dog, hold their collar but remove the leash and say, “go find it!” If you dog does not immediately run towards the toy, run towards it yourself and show it to your dog.

Allow the dog to have the toy and eat the treats. You can give more treats if you would like for a retrieve.

Set up the trial again but this time when you go to hide the treat filled toy, walk in circles and casually drop it while walking. The dog should be focused on you the entire time.

Continue the practice:

Trial 1: Move 15 feet away in a straight line while dog watches you deliberately drop it.

Trial 2: Move 15 feet away while you walk in circles while dog watches you casually drop it.

Trial 3: With dog next to you, waiting, throw the toy as far as you can. Wait 1 minute before releasing the dog to search.

TAKE A BREAK FOR A FEW HOURS OR A DAY. This is exhausting work for the dog.

Trial 4. With dog next to you, waiting, throw the toy as far as you can. Walk the dog 15 feet in the opposite direction, wait for 30 seconds and release the dog to search.

Trial 5: Move 30 feet away, walking in a zig zag pattern while the dog watches you casually drop the toy. Return to dog and release them to search.

Trial 6: While dog is waiting out of sight, drop toy 20 feet away from starting position. Bring the dog to the field and ask them to search. If the dog is unable to find the toy or is not searching, run a few of the previous trials again.

Trial 7: While dog watches, walk out 15 feet, drop a toy, then walk to the left 15 feet and drop a second toy. Return to the dog and release them to search. Once they find the first toy, give them treats and take the first toy. Run over to the second toy and show them where it is, dropping the first toy in a pile with the second toy and more treats. Allow them to enjoy their bounty!

Trial 8: With dog next to you, throw two toys as far as you can in different directions. Wait 1 minute and release the dog to search. Once they find the first toy, give them treats and hold it for them, cueing them to search for the second toy. Once they find the second toy, give them the first toy too.

Trial 9: A few hours before, drop the toy, filled with their favorite FORSTA treats in the field 20 feet from the starting point. Bring the dog to the field, allow them to sniff and observe for a few moments, and then release them to search.

If you’ve gotten this far with success, you can begin to pair the treat toy with an object such as a dirty T-shirt or a used shoe. To pair them together, simply put them next to each other in the field so they are touching. You can wrap the t-shirt around the toy too. Practice the trials, or a variation of your own trials with the objects paired a few times. Then, beginning with Trial 1, repeat the trial process but with the object instead of the toy. When the dog finds the object though, make a big deal about it; showering them with treats, the treat filled toy and praise.