



Techniques to be Successful with Voice and Sight Control

- Stay alert and attentive to where your dog is and what they are doing at all times. Keeping your dog close and in front of you will help you control him/her immediately if needed.
- Consider your line of sight (like when driving a car): how far ahead can you see the open trail? Keep your dog closer on trails with limited sight lines and when conditions create poor visibility.
- Be proactive by maintaining a manageable distance between you and others. This can give you more time to react when facing a possible conflict with other dogs and recreationists.
- If you see another person with their dog on a leash, leash your dog or keep your dog close to you with voice commands. There is a reason why they have their dog on leash.
- Read your dog's intentions. Learn their body language such as signs of unease, stress, fear, or signs of predatory interest.
- Know when your dog is stressed, excited or in distress by having basic awareness of body signals and fearful behaviors. These can differ from dog to dog. A tail wagging is not always positive and hackles rising (when the hair raises up on the ridge of a dog's back) is not always negative.
- Be aware of the environment and your dog's reactions to it. Are the prairie dogs more active today? Are there many other dogs? Is it so windy your voice will be carried in a direction AWAY from your dog? Are there other dog guardians who seem distracted and unable to control their own dogs?
- In a calm environment with no stimulus factors like other dogs or people, play a call-back game rewarding your dog when they return. After your dog consistently returns, practice the call back game in a stimulating environment where there are other people and dogs around. This can support your dog to be successful under voice and sight control in the most stimulating environments where there are hikers, bikers, dogs, and wildlife.

If you have any doubt that your dog can not meet the voice and sight control standards, play it safe and use a leash. Consider working with a trainer. We highly recommend working with a trainer because it will greatly enhance your relationship with your dog which means both you and your dog will be happier and will have a better time together.