

Teaching an independent back up

Walking backwards **uses muscles your dog doesn't normally use**, so keep the number of reps per session and per day/week low at first to avoid muscle fatigue and soreness. .

- 6-7 reps will activate the muscles needed to do the behavior (start here for 5-10 sessions)
- 8-15 reps actively builds muscles (Stay here for 15+ sessions)
- 16+ reps builds endurance (increase gradually if needed)

You don't need a lot of distance! If you take 3-4 normal sized steps backwards, that's enough.

	Have pup go back and forth in a wide space between a wall or row of boxes and an Ex-pen barrier. I can walk back and forth to drop treats at either end.
	Add more barriers if needed to make a longer channel (equivalent of 3-4 of my steps)
	Make the channel progressively more narrow until pup can't turn around
	Add a barrier just inside the channel (at blue X) that pup won't jump/climb over
	Start by dropping a treat on the open side of the barrier so pup only has to take a step or two to back out. Move backwards next to the pup and encourage him to back up with me then +R
	Gradually move the barrier down the chute so pup is backing up farther and farther with me
	Once the pup understands the pattern, I can stand at the end and have pup 'come front' to a front foot target then back away from me to teach hand signal/verbal cue. Use T&T at far end.
	Teach pup to wait for the back cue/signal.
	Add a target, mat or platform at the end for pup to target with his rear feet or body. Can teach pup to wait there for the recall cue and back up to it when backing. Go to the pup to reward him on it.
	Gradually widen the barriers until pup does the behaviors without them.
	Practice with and without the barriers in several places

