



THINGS TO CONSIDER FOR SCENT WORK

Choose the right scent for you and your dog. Just like people dogs have aversions to some scents. Notice your dog's reaction to each scent. Remember their noses are stronger than ours and they only need a minute amount of scent for a second or two to get the "scent." If they pull away don't bring them back, they've probably "got it". If you and your dog complete all the scent discrimination badges your dog will have learned to find a minimum of four scents plus your own.

Training for Advanced Scent

Review Imprinting odor and Indication under Scent Discrimination.

Finding Scent on a person: Essentially the dog is following at least 3 scents (person 1, person 2, scent) and they need to break out the "scent" you have trained them on.

BUILDING CONFIDENCE WITH FINDING SCENT ON A PERSON: Hide your dog's favorite toy on yourself and ask him to find it. Next hide it on someone he knows. At first let the dog see the toy being hidden. The person should stand or sit still and not help the dog in any way. Repeat using your "scent." When your dog is confident in finding scent on someone he knows, hide it on someone new.

When the dog is successful and quick finding, alerting, and indicating, you can add distance. Again, start with hiding the scent (visible to the dog) on a person around the environment. At first, the dog will see where you hide it and be able to see the person it is "hiding" spot. The dog should go to the person, touch them with his nose and offer the indication behavior.

Next step is to add a 2nd person standing or sitting a couple feet apart. Have the dog take scent, find the person and indicate on the correct person. Lastly, have the dog find & indicate after 2 people leave together walking approximately 10' down trail and split ways. One going right, the other left perpendicular to the trail about 5' away from the trail. Both people should stand still and not talk to the dog.

Review the Squeeze game: You can use the target plate with scent attached to the back and have a person hold it to help with the find, alert, & indication. Attach a scent to the back of a target plate. Place the target plate on the floor at the end of a hallway. Start off close to the plate and step back further each time. Release your dog to go to the target plate, follow in and reward once your dog reaches the plate – feed treats on the plate. How far away can you start from the plate and successfully send your dog to the target? Don't lead your dog to the plate (so don't increase distance too soon) – the goal is to encourage and allow your dog to move ahead of you and to build confidence in moving into narrower spaces, followed by being rewarded at the source of odor on a person.

INDICATION BEHAVIORS: The behavior you have your dog do to indicate the target has been found is up to you. However, the indication for finding scent on a person should be something that does not require the dog to jump up on or grab a person.



Dog Scouts of America
Training & Safety Information

Advanced Scent Discrimination

Added Distractions: Once your dog is successfully finding and indicating the scent, add the distraction of the out-of-doors. Make sure the person with the scent on them has the scent receptacle at waist level or below on their person, but not in their hands. Also make sure they have no treats on them or residual pieces of treats in their pockets.

On the road: When the dog is successful and quick with that, you can add new environments and an additional person that doesn't have scent on them.