

Your Dog's Homecoming: Maintaining Structure After Training

Your dog has just completed several weeks of structured training and is ready to return home. You've both invested time, energy, and patience into building new habits — now it's time to make sure those skills last a lifetime.

When your dog returns home, the key to success is consistency. By maintaining the same structure and expectations your dog experienced during training, you'll help them smoothly transition back into your home without slipping into old habits.

Before You Begin: Review Your Training Equipment

Your dog will go home with a few essential tools. Each piece of equipment plays a specific role in maintaining control, reinforcing obedience, and keeping your dog safe.

Leashes

Slip Leash – Introduced during early training to ensure safety and control.

Snap Leash – Used with your training collar for clear communication.

Long Line – A step toward off-leash freedom while maintaining safety.

Training Collars

Your dog may go home with a Starmark, martingale, or prong collar. Each collar is a communication tool that amplifies your leash cues — not a form of punishment.

Remote Collar (if included in your program)

If your program included e-collar training, you'll receive a receiver, transmitter, charger, contact points, and optional finger kick. Charge nightly and keep it with your dog during all training and supervised activity.

Finger Clicker & Treat Pouch

The clicker marks correct behavior; the treat pouch keeps rewards accessible and organized.

Place Cot

A critical tool for calmness, impulse control, and problem behavior prevention.

Phase 1: Reestablish Structure (2–5 Days Minimum)

Your dog should be either on leash or in the crate — no free roaming. All food, water, and privileges are earned through obedience and calm behavior. Short, frequent training sessions work best.

Daily Routine Highlights:

- Wait for calm behavior before opening the crate.
- Put on training gear before releasing your dog.
- Maintain structure for water, door manners, and potty time.
- Keep training spaces low-distraction at first.

Training Goals:

Heeling, Sit/Stay (1 min), Down/Stay (3 min), Place/Stay (5 min), Recall (15 ft).

Phase 2: Structured Freedom (7 Days Minimum)

Once your dog meets initial goals, start integrating obedience into your daily routine — meals, computer work, or downtime. Use the place cot or down-stay during these times to reinforce calmness.

Earning Privileges:

Introduce off-leash training in fenced spaces. Reward calm behavior and revoke privileges when standards slip.

Phase 3: Lifelong Learning

Training is ongoing. Maintain structure, use management tools, and reinforce obedience regularly. Remember, training teaches — management prevents mistakes.

Your dog will always benefit from continued practice in heeling, place, recall, and calm routines. The more structure you maintain, the stronger your bond will be.

At Airborne K9, we're here to support you long after graduation. Contact us anytime for refresher lessons, club training, or advanced programs.

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