



ACTIVE LINEAR SEARCH

Sniffing, searching and finding is naturally rewarding for dogs. Nervous dogs increase in confidence and anxious or excitable dogs become calm and focused. When dogs are usually highly distracted by the environment, they learn to search without loss of attention.

Linear searches are a great search pattern to start with as they encourage your dog to search methodically and in a concentrated manner so they're less likely to miss the scent later.

Equipment

- 4-6 containers e.g. pots, bowls, bags, shoes. Everyday household objects are fine for this just ensure that whatever you choose is a suitable size for your dog to be able to reach and take a treat from the bottom of the container themselves.
- Food or a toy to hide.

Set up

Place the containers in a straight line, close together and evenly spaced. By keeping the search containers close together, your dog will learn a concentrated and continuous search. Push the containers up against a wall (or large furniture like a sofa) so your dog can only approach the bowls from one side.

Position your dog at the front of the line of containers and ask them to stay/wait whilst you set up.

Alternatively, ask a helper to gently restrain them by the harness or occupy them in position at a snuffle mat.

Positioning at the front of the line will set them up for success, helping them approach the first container straight-on.



Method

1. Place your hide into the first container. Tap that container to show your dog where you would like them to start searching and say your search cue e.g. 'Find it!'. (If you have a helper restraining this is when they should let go of your dog.)
2. Celebrate with them when they find it! If they found food they will eat it, if they found a toy have a game with them.
3. Reposition them back at the start of the line and this time put your hide into the second container. Still start the search by tapping the first bowl and saying your cue. Then celebrate when they find it.
4. Move onto the third container and then the fourth, always tapping the first container as you cue.
5. As your dog becomes confident searching, you can start to mix it up by randomly picking which container to place your hide in. Note: Some dogs when searching proficiently may put their nose in every bowl, some may skim over the top.

ACTIVE LINEAR SEARCH



Top Tips:

- As you move the hide further down the line, your dog may start to miss searching the first containers. If this happens, go back to placing the hide in the first and second containers for a few repetitions to rebuild the reinforcement history.
- As your dog develops their search skills you can up the ante by adding more containers to search or placing occasional hides between the containers rather than inside.
- You can take your linear search out on ugly walks! Hedges, walls, fences and benches make great spots for a linear search, using the surfaces to place some hides above ground height too.



We've been using linear searches on the wall outside our house to keep Harry's attention away from passing dogs.

We started training indoors and then on early morning ugly walks and built up to him searching outside the house with two dogs in sight! Thank you Scentventure!

Emma & Harry

Enjoying Scentwork?!

In Club Dogwood:

- Our Scent Detector course instructs you how to train your dog to search for and indicate (freeze) on a hidden target odour!
- The Scent Award introduces more search patterns, like the Linear Search, so your dog can perform vehicle or area searches!

VISIT WWW.SCENTVENTURE.DOG TO FIND OUT MORE