Recall- Coming Back When Called

A good recall is an important obedience skill that, at some time, may be crucial for your dog's safety.
Common issues:

Expecting too much, too fast. Many times, the dog has not learned a solid foundation of training.

- Punishing your dog or ending the fun once he or she comes back to you. Would you return if every time you were called back, the fun ended or you were punished? For example- Your dog is playing with another dog. When the dog is called to come, the dog is put on leash and is put inside. Not very motivating! A better solution? Frequently interrupting play, to receive a reward and then sending your dog off to play again.
- Making a recall a game of "Catch me if you can!" - if your dog learns that when he or she does not come back to you, it will result in a game of you chasing him or her.
- Being less exciting than whatever is going on around the dog. Calling your dog in a monotonous or stern voice while standing still is not going to entice your dog to come back to you. Instead, act and sound like you are having a blast!!!

Start in a location with minimal distractions. This could be your fenced yard, inside your home, or anywhere else your dog is comfortable. Have the toy or treats hidden from view. This is so these items will be a surprise reward, instead of a bribe to lure your dog close to you. A long lead can be used to maintain control of your dog until their recall is strong. Allow your dog to wander off. Call your dog in a very happy, excited voice- "PETEY!!!!!!! COME!!!!!!!!" You may need to move backwards and crouch low to the ground.

When the dog returns to you, say "Yes!!", then pull out the toy and initiate play for a full 20 seconds or if you are using treats, begin continuously feeding for the 20 seconds.

After the 20 seconds are up, release the dog. Repeat this several times and then add more distance. As your dog responds well to this and has a pretty reliable recall without distractions, you can add distractions into training such as: a ball rolling across the room, a different environment, or anything that may take attention away from you.

The more you practice, the more distractions and distance you should be able to add. If they are doing well and you are in a safe, contained area, you can remove the long leash.

Why does this method work so well? Your dog is having fun, they are learning that the fun does not end when they come back to you, and it is building a solid foundation of training.