

INTRODUCTION

HOW THIS BOOK CAME TO BE

My main purpose for conducting dog obedience classes was to teach basic obedience, but then I started to get a lot of requests for off-leash classes. I also received a great deal of feedback on my second book, *How to Train Your Dog Before Your Dog Trains You*, with many people suggesting I write a follow-up book dealing with off-leash obedience. My on-lead class requires the dog to understand and respond to its handler's body language and, to a lesser extent, verbal commands. The method I created for off-lead, however, relies heavily on verbal commands and the timing of those commands. If on-lead obedience is done correctly, many owners don't want or need off-leash. However, for some handlers, off-leash is important because of where they live. They may not have a fenced yard and/or live in a high traffic area. If their dog should get out of the house without a leash attached, having off-leash training could save their dog's life.

After deciding that I would write a book on off-leash obedience, I had to think of the title. In March 2006, I had a book signing in conjunction with an Ultimate Air Dogs Event in Grand Rapids, Michigan. I was speaking with a Paws with a Cause trainer, Kelly Scudder, and she mentioned that her dog did agility and ran "naked" through the course. I had never heard that term before, and she informed me that "naked dog" was a term used in agility to indicate that no leash or collar is attached to the dog during an agility trial. This is done so the leash does not get caught on the agility equipment. I was drawn to that term since off-leash obedience is just that: no leash or collar. However, while no collar is on a "naked dog" during agility, I do require having a collar on the dog during off-leash training, in the event the dog has to be grasped and for identification. Most city, county and state laws require dogs be licensed and have the license on their collars.