

## Fwd: The beginning steps of tending training....a pictoral tutorial

From: **Binderhaus@aol.com**

Sent: Wed 4/07/10 12:03 AM

To: egtxranch@msn.com

Attachments:

1-The%20recall.jpg (9.1 KB), 2-Show%20border%20on%20leash.jpg (16.9 KB), 3-on%20leash,%  
20power%20to%20move%20sheep.jpg (24.3 KB), 4-%20Border%20off%20leash.jpg (28.7 KB), 5-See%  
20sheep.jpg (13.7 KB), 1-Fence%20walking.jpg (22.5 KB), 2-Learning%20to%20stop-watch%  
20crook.jpg (7.6 KB), 3-Restart%20border%20on%20leash.jpg (32.4 KB), 4-More%20off%20leash%  
20border.jpg (23.4 KB), 5-Allow%20some%20independence.jpg (21.5 KB), 6-encourage%20dog%  
20to%20move%20ahead.jpg (17.2 KB), 7-Showing%20new%20borders.jpg (18.4 KB), 8-Walking%  
20border%20with%20dog.jpg (17.4 KB), 9-Watching%20sheep%20on%20border.jpg (19.9 KB), 10-  
Encouraging%20movement%20around%20border.jpg (21.1 KB), 11-Independent%20border%  
20work.jpg (18.5 KB), 12-Keeping%20eye%20on%20sheep.jpg (18.9 KB), 14-Handler%20has%  
20moved%20back.jpg (19.1 KB), 15-Calm%20border%20work.jpg (22.0 KB), 13-Confident%20with%  
20border.jpg (9.8 KB), 16-Doing%20borders%20on%20own.jpg (15.1 KB), 17-The%20look%20you%  
20want.jpg (11.9 KB), 18-Working%20on%20border.jpg (15.6 KB), 19-Trotting%20GSD.jpg (13.8 KB),  
1-restart%20borders%20with%20sheep.jpg (17.6 KB), 2-drywalk%20course-borders.jpg (17.5 KB), 3-  
showing%20new%20borders.jpg (12.8 KB), 4-first%20walk%20around,%20deep%20border.jpg (22.8  
KB), 5-first%20walk.jpg (23.3 KB), 6-reminder-do%20not%20cross.jpg (18.1 KB), 7-side%20borders.jpg  
(18.0 KB), 8-moving%20more%20freely%20now.jpg (9.3 KB), 9-coming%20to%20pen.jpg (15.2 KB),  
10-praise%20after%20penning.jpg (7.9 KB), 11-2nd%20walk%20through.jpg (12.1 KB), 12-along%  
20deep%20border.jpg (18.7 KB), 13-holding%20corner.jpg (17.2 KB), -respecting%20side%20border%  
20further%20away%20from%20me.jpg (11.3 KB), 15-learning%20to%20stay-hold%20corner.jpg (12.9  
KB), 16-downing%20at%20pen.jpg (22.1 KB), 17-course-graze.jpg (21.6 KB), 18-exiting%20graze.jpg  
(20.8 KB), 19-far%20side%20deep%20border.jpg (16.2 KB), 20-corner,%20dog%20around%  
20panel.jpg (16.3 KB), 21-coming%20up%20side.jpg (21.0 KB), 22-dog%20holding%20corner.jpg  
(16.7 KB), 23-dog%20downed%20at%20pen%20-holding%20sheep.jpg (19.0 KB), 24-dog%20down%  
20at%20pen%20while%20sheep%20exit.jpg (12.4 KB), 25-praise%20after%20run%20in%20down.jpg  
(26.1 KB), walking%20on%20graze.jpg (38.2 KB)

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Eunice--I wrote this to help the majority of our GSD club to understand what 'tending' is and how it relates to the GSD. Since we joined them just to become approved for herding, and are now undertaking putting on our first "C" trial May 2011, we need them on board with us. Thanks for your help in taking all these pix! It really made the story. Feel free to share the tutorial with whomever.

Thanks again,

Cynthia

I recently went to Texas in Feb, 2010 to learn more about "C" course and the tending style of herding. I have German Shepherd Dogs (GSDs), and they were bred to be 'tending' herders as opposed to working like a Border Collie does. Tending dogs take their flocks on a walk to the fields to graze. They protect the sides of the flock while walking from cars, keep the sheep calm and not too strung out, and help keep the sheep from running into fences, corners, etc as they walk. When they get to the graze area, the dog helps keep the sheep within the defined borders, thus ensuring they eat only the field/crop they are supposed to, and not the neighbor's roses! The

tending dog 'patrols' up and down the borders of the graze to keep the sheep in. Once the sheep realize the dog is there to protect them and respects the borders, they relax and graze.

So obviously the key to the whole thing is to teach the beginning dog what the 'border' is, and how to recognize it, and to teach them to stay on the OTHER side of the border from the sheep. While this sounds difficult as many dogs want to rush in and 'play' with the sheep, the instinctual genes for this type of work are near to the surface in the GSD and it takes only a small amount of teaching to bring this to the surface.

I brought to Texas a young dog named Lana. At the time she was only 15 months old. She had been exposed to sheep, but never to the concept of borders or to anything remotely resembling the tending style of herding. Due to the weather, we had only a small amount of time for lessons on day 1, and then only got a day 2 and day 3 of lessons before snow shut the lesson series down.

In the following series of pictures, you'll be able to follow the Texas method for beginning training of tending dogs, and see the dramatic progress Lana made in only 2 1/2 days.

## Day 1

The key to any livestock work is control and obedience. You need to allow independent thinking and action, but overall there must be underlying control and obedience. So in Texas each session is begun with a sit stay and a recall. During this time there are sheep present on the side of the dog (the dog is in a fenced in corridor between sheep fields), and the instructor makes sure there are sheep quite near. She wants to be sure the dog can obey with distractions.



Then you start to show the dog the border. You do this on leash, and with something that will show clearly--in this case white PVC pipe on the ground. This is a 3 sided border with the fence creating the 4th side of the square. A 3-sided border is easier to start on than the entire 4 sides as the dog can't begin 'ringing' the entire thing which is not desired. To start with the sheep are in an identical 'graze/border' on the other side of the fence. This keeps the dog interested b/c the sheep are there, but not too close the dog is crazed and not able to pay attention to the new command "out, border". Anytime the dog steps over the border, you say "out, border" to remind them.



When you get to the ends near the fence, you show the dog that even BEHIND the border the dog HAS the power to move the sheep--this is very important, the dog needs to know they can affect/control the sheep even from a distance.



Once it looks like the dog may understand the border idea, you drop the leash. In our lessons the instructor wanted to leave the leashes on the dogs to remind them of control, and to grab for if needed in an emergency. I'm happy to say that while Lana's leash got filthy and muddy, we never once needed to use it!





## Day 2

Due to the fact that we didn't have time for much more than one session on Day 1, we worked all day on day 2! I believe Lana had 4 sessions over the day. Each session was about 15 min. We started again with the recall, then did some fence walking. I forget the exact name the instructor had for this, but the point of it was to teach the dog to watch the crook. You walked the dog along the fence (so they couldn't swing their body away) with the crook down, then stopped and raised the crook to cause the dog to stop. The dog is supposed to stop on course when the crook is raised. This gets the dog in the habit of stopping when the crook is raised. Again, this is done in the presence of nearby sheep.



Then repeat yesterday's lesson of borderwork on leash:



Then go again to off leash:



Allow some independence:

And encourage the dog to move forward on own:



At this point we were deemed ready to enter the actual arena where the sheep were. So once again the first step was showing Lana the new borders:



Many young dogs aren't sure what to do because they are constantly being told "out, border", so they will just stop and watch the sheep. You need to encourage them to start moving. Once they realize they have the freedom to move as much as they want as long as they don't cross the border, they will start to branch out and become more proficient.

Lana stopped on border:

Me encouraging Lana to move along border:



Starting independent border work:

Keeping her eye on the sheep:



And here the handler (me) has moved back as she becomes more able to work the border on her own without my constant "out, border" reminders!





And finally the pictures you want to see of calm confidence!  
The freedom to move or be still....



### Day 3

Again the day began with the stay/recall, and then the fence work with the crook indicating when the dog should stop. Today we didn't have to start on the 'dry' border without the sheep, but proceeded immediately to the border/graze area with the sheep in it. We worked for a bit on this graze reminding Lana what the border was.



Then the next step was to expand to the whole arena. The arena we were in was known as a PT arena. This is an arena where dogs can be tested for their PT (or pre-trial tested) herding titles. In the tending style of PT the dog is supposed to take sheep which have just been released from their pen around the edges of the arena and into the graze area. After a short while to allow the sheep to graze and the dog to show he/she knows how to 'patrol' the borders, the sheep are then exited (taken out) of the graze, and walked back along the edges of the arena to their pen, and then repenned while the dog calmly waits on the edge of the border. The sheep have a 12 foot path to walk in around the edge of the arena where the borders are clearly marked, and the dog needs to stay out of this border as well, controlling the sheep's movement and speed, but from the border. There are two panels the sheep walk thru (between the panel and the arena fence) where the dog has to swing to the outside (towards the middle of the arena) and go around the panels.

Again the first step with a young/green dog is to 'dry-walk' the borders. This involves taking the dog on leash around the edges of the arena showing her where the borders are and reminding her to stay on her side of the border.



Then the big moment comes---walking with the sheep AND trying to keep your dog on the 'out,border' area!! The very first border on this course is helpfully VERY deep and the dog would actually have to jump it to cross, rather than just stepping across. This also helps cause them to hesitate to cross it. You can see I have my body between the dog and the sheep in order to better watch/control the dog.



Here I remind the dog to "out, border" .

Going up the far side now:



Moving more freely now:

Coming to the pen:

Praise for a job well done!:



After the sheep were safely back in their pen, Lana got a rest while other dogs worked. Then she got to come out again and take the sheep on her second 'walk-thru':

Oh darn--there's that deep ditch again!



You can see more independence now:

Coming into muddy corner:



Respecting the side border:

Learning to 'hold' the corner as I put her into a down:



When on a course, the dog has to keep the sheep from hitting fences. They do this by standing next to the fence or bridge as all the sheep go by. The sheep naturally give the dog (and therefore the fencepost) a wide berth. The dog has to hold his/her post until all the sheep have past. In addition, when needing to make a turn, the dog functions as the fulcrum of the turn. So in the picture above I'm putting Lana in a down because we are at a corner and I need the sheep to turn the corner without over-running the borders. With the dog 'placed' or positioned at the corner, the turns are nice and crisp.

Here's Lana 'holding' her sheep at the pen while I open the pen gate to let them in:



Once more Lana got to rest and think about what she learned in the above session. When we came out for our last session of the day (little did we know it would be our last overall due to tomorrow's snow!), we were told to demonstrate the entire PT course. So Lana took the sheep from the pen, down the side of the arena, across the deep furrow end, and up into the graze where the sheep were allowed to graze for some minutes while Lana demonstrated 'patrolling' the borders:



Then the sheep were gathered to exit the graze. In this case I have Lana on a down so she's not running up/down the borders still and potentially scaring the sheep and preventing them from leaving the graze.



Then down the deep furrow side:  
the panel:

And here you can see how dog has to go around



Coming up the side towards the pen:



Dog downed/"placed" in the corner:



Holding sheep at the pen so I can open the gate for the 're-penning':



And last but NOT least---praise for a PERFECT PUPPY!!!!



Note that the praise is given while she is still in the down position after the sheep have been penned. Keeping her in the down until after the praise then release will help teach her not to break to follow the sheep into the pen and that her job isn't done until she is released, not just when the sheep are gone.

So there you have it. In just 3 short days Lana went from never having seen a border before to successfully completing the tending style PT in fine form.

Tending is much easier on the GSD than "A" style arena herding because you can work with more sheep, and the sheep stay calm and move slowly, thus not setting off any prey/chase instincts! All

you really have to do is teach the border concept, and then you have it!

Hopefully this will give everyone a better idea about this style of herding.

Yours,

*Cynthia Binder, DVM  
Binderhaus Shepherds*



PS--this was put together to help teach/give people an idea of what tending is and how one starts. Feel free to forward this to any interested parties.

All pictures were taken by Eunice Gerloff at End Gate Ranch where this tending clinic was held.

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