

Learning to come when called

By Sue De Laurentis and Allen Pogue, *Imagine A Horse*, 2015

We all know it's possible to train a dog to come when called but did you ever think it would be possible to train your horse to come? Our veterinarians and farriers too will tell you that even with over 50 horses on the ranch, every single one can be called out of a herd by name.

Every horse can learn his name and to come when called even if he's in a group. Imagine how much easier it could be to catch your horse when he is turned out or has gotten loose!

We use the horse's name every time we are near him, speaking in an affirmative manner with full expectation that he will recognize it. We make it a pleasurable experience for him by adding a food treat. Pretty much the same way we would teach a dog his name. After he knows his name we'll teach him come when he's called.

If you read *Using Treats as a Training Tool* or watched our DVD, you and probably your horse too should already know the cue that means a treat is coming...like "cookie time"

Here are the tools you will need

A treat pouch and your horse's favorite flavor of treats; We prefer Manna Pro's Bite-Size Nuggets or Start To Finish Horse Treats.

Possibly a halter and lead

Because he already understands treats basics we can get his attention with the cue "cookie time." As I approach him, I will cue him for a treat and add his name too. "Cookie time, Marz (one of my horses)" and encourage him to take a few steps toward me.

At first, I may take a few steps toward him but gradually he will come to me from a greater distance.

Each time I repeat the sequence I'll encourage him to take a few more steps. I will also reverse the order of the words and use his name first. "Marz, cookie time."

With a few repetitions a day, he'll soon be coming to me reliably when I call his name even in a group.

After he knows the sequence, try simply rubbing him on the face which is an alternative great reward.

So remember:

Use only the necessary verbal cues

Always make it a pleasant experience for him to come to you

Catch him often just for fun, not work