

# VGP Training Schedule

- Overall      You must be able to stop your dog (Halt, Whoa, Etc)  
Your dog must be force broke including the fox  
Healing on & off lead
- Phase 1      Winter months / obedience & searches / review phase 1
- Phase 2      Spring months / blood tracking / review phase 1 & 2
- Phase 3      Spring & early summer / water work, drags, review phase 1, 2, & 3
- Phase 4      Summer / start cross training / review phases 1-4  
Blood tracking 1 per week / age the track  
Be done training 2 -3 weeks prior to the test / avoid burn out

## Halt

- 1) The dog needs to lay down & stay upon command
- 2) Overlay your down command with the whistle
- 3) Overlay the whistle with pinch collar for a quicker drop
- 4) Once you get a quick drop with the whistle go to the e-collar  
Blow the whistle and reinforce with the e-collar
- 5) While out exercising or different searches when the dog is within 10 feet of you blow him down and use the collar
- 6) Lengthen the distance but always use the collar to reinforce
- 7) Make the dog stay for at least 30 seconds, vary times  
do not let him get into a routine, walk over & around the dog shoot around him a lot while in the down position
- 8) Every time he sits up or leaves his spot = whistle & e-collar

## Obedience

- 1) Your dog will heal every time you set him up for these drills
- 2) Down stay, drive hunt, steady to shot, steady to wing & fur
- 3) The dog will encounter a tremendous amount of shooting, people, game, and commotion, in other words stay put no matter what or (HALT)
- 4) The key is if you have drilled Halt into the dog you have an effective way to control the dog

## Searches

- 1) Independent forest search is nothing other than a BTR, use the same commands and cues for the Independent water as you use here
- 2) Diamond set up with bumpers, fox trainer, and game fox, rabbit, pheasant, and duck
- 3) Dense cover search, come up with a softly spoken command that you can control your dog with and keep him within gun range
- 4) Field searches along with the steadiness work should be done consistently once the weather permits. Steadiness is the most common reason for failure of the VGP. With all of the obedience work you have been doing, dogs tend to get “sticky” they don’t want to range out very far. Use these searches to keep the balance between obedience & independence.

## Blood Tracking

- 1) This time of year is great for this, cool weather, leaves & brush are not in full bloom, you are rejuvenated because winter is finally over, and you are ready to move onto something else because you sick & tired of obedience training!!
- 2) Run 2 to 3 tracks per week until the dog consistently working them. Do them in different areas, fields, woods, combination, Tracking is Tracking regardless of where you do them.
- 3) Always successful with a big reward at the end.
- 4) Age the tracks, more turns, greater distance for more difficulty and increases concentration.

## Water Work

- 1) This the same as the HZP with the addition of a search without a duck
- 2) Train the independent search the same way you trained the BTR & the independent forest search. Use the same set up and command.

## Drags

- 1) Don't waste much time on these, if your dog struggles with this it is a force fetch issue not a drag issue
- 2) 1 – 2 drags per week varying the species from now until test day should be sufficient
- 3) Have people and other distractions around, just like test day

## Retrieving

Fox over obstacle  
Fox drag  
Rabbit drag  
Phez drag  
Free search of phez  
Duck

## Obedience

Drive hunt  
Down stay  
Healing on & off  
Steadiness  
Manners  
Pointing

## Searches

Independent forest  
Heavy cover  
Independent water  
Field search

Previous to this you trained 1 thing at a time now it is time to tie them together.

Cross training: Think about this way, it is only 3 categories not 27 individual subjects

This is a way to get your dog accustomed to shifting gears like you will encounter on test day. When training make sure you hit subjects from each category.

### Example of a session

Walk your dog out on heel on lead  
Release him for an independent forest search, have a rabbit out there to find  
Walk off lead with a gun, many shells, and a fox  
Put him in a down stay (draw a circle around him) and do a fox drag  
When at the end fire your gun 2 – 3 times  
Now simulate a drive hunt when walking back LOTS of shooting  
Send the dog out on the fox drag  
When walking back to the field do a Heavy Cover search  
Put him on lead back to the truck

Something like this takes the dog through the highs and low of test day, takes only about 1 hour, and covers almost 1/3 of the required subjects.

Be creative and have fun, this really breaks up the boredom