**How to Train Guinea Fowl to Come when Called**

Adapted From the Internet

Training Guinea fowl to come when called is an important and worthwhile task for the Guinea fowl keeper. When Guinea fowl are trained to come when called, they can easily be removed from places where they don’t’ belong. Also, it’s immeasurably easier to get the Guinea fowl back into their coop for the night when they are trained to come to a call or sound. Almost all Guinea fowl keepers prefer that their birds be in the coop during the night to protect them from predators and severe weather.

Training Guinea fowl to come when called is not as difficult as one might think. Training a Guinea fowl is a bit different from training a dog, and it does take more repetition. However, several minutes each day for a few weeks will yield the desired result, and save countless exhausting hours of ‘chasing them down’ during the life of the Guinea fowl.

Training Guinea fowl to come when called only requires the following: 1) A training plan. 2) Some white proso millet. 3) A dispenser/shaker for the millet. 4) Some Guinea fowl keets. 5) Some kind of noise maker – this is optional, but recommended by this writer. 6) A few minutes each day to spend with the Guinea fowl keets. (“Keets” are the young offspring of Guinea fowl.) It is easier to train Guinea fowl keets than it is to train Guinea fowl adults.

You can purchase white proso millet at many locations, but it’s usually least expensive at a feed store. Feed stores sell large bags of millet, and it goes a long way, so be prepared to store it in something.

A dispenser/shaker for your white proso millet can be made from any number of things. Some extra large size spice containers are perfect for this task as they already have holes in the tops. You can also drill some ¼” holes in the top of an old potato chip can, or coffee can.

I use a cowbell for a noisemaker. The noisemaker is not required, but I prefer one. The Guinea fowl will wander up to a ¼ mile away from the coop – sometimes further – and I don’t like to have to scream their call to come. A good whistle would also work quite nicely.

**Schedule for training Guinea fowl to come when called:**

• First 14 days: 3 times per day. Early morning, midday, when it’s time for the birds to get into the coop.

• Second 14 days: 2 times per day. Midday, when it’s time for the birds to get into the coop.

• Final 30 days: 2 times per day. At an arbitrary time, when it’s time for the birds to get into the coop.

It doesn’t matter much what word or words you use to train your Guinea fowl to come when you call them. I simply say “Guinea, Guinea, Guinea.” I repeat this as necessary. When you are picking your training word(s), be sure to make it something easy to say and something you can say loudly.

**The training exercise:**
Grab your noisemaker and millet shaker and get in proximity to the Guinea fowl keets. Use your noisemaker and repeat your call as you sprinkle out some millet for the birds. Young keets will not yet know the delights of millet, so be sure they can see the millet and easily get to it. If the keets are on pine shavings, for example, sprinkle the millet on paper towels. When the keets are finally allowed outside the confinement of the coop, just sprinkle the millet directly onto the ground. Here’s a link to a short video that shows the first millet training of some keets: http://mymilescity.com/guinea/tv.html#episode2.

Once you’ve sprinkled the millet – sparingly – quit using the noisemaker and simply repeat the call just loud enough so the birds can hear it. Don’t give them too much millet. You want them to learn that “He who hesitates is lost.” This inspires them to hurry along when you call them. Late arrivals won’t get any millet.

If the keets won’t approach the millet, back away from it slowly. Not too far. Keep up your call. If the keets do not start to eat the millet within about three minutes, you’re done and can leave. They will eventually get to it, eat it, and love it! Guinea fowl can’t resist eating anything on the ground around them.

Repeat this training exercise in accordance with the above training schedule.**Exception:** Once the keets know the taste of the millet, do not worry about getting in close to them to start – make them come to you. With each exercise, the keets will come in quicker and quicker to the call. By the end of the training schedule, they’ll race to you. Each Guinea fowl will be eager to make sure it gets its fair share of the delicious millet. Here’s a link to a short video that shows millet training of some keets several weeks into the training program: http://mymilescity.com/guinea/tv-p3.html#10.

When you complete the above training schedule, your Guinea fowl keets should be nicely trained to come when you call them. You likely will not be allowing them out to free-range for a few more weeks. Keep training them once or twice a day during this period. During this period I suggest the following:

• Mix it up a bit – use either the call or the noisemaker, not always both.
• Always put them in the coop using their call and/or noisemaker.
• When outside, call them to different locations inside their fenced area – not the same location each time.
• Occasionally, but only rarely, give them an extra large serving of the millet. Not too much, but enough to keep them guessing and make sure everyone gets some.

Congratulations – you have now trained your Guinea fowl to come when called. Training your Guinea fowl to come when called is something that you will reap benefits from for the life of your birds. Guinea fowl are very fast runners with the capabilities of short flight and long glides. Training your Guinea fowl to come to you when they are called is eminently more desirable than chasing one down in the brush. Two of us have spent as long as three hours catching one uncooperative Guinea fowl. It is an exhausting and frustrating adventure, to be sure. And one that does not endear the Guinea fowl to its keepers.

I like to say “A trained Guinea fowl is a happy Guinea fowl – with a happy keeper.”