

LOOSE LEASH WALKING

Teaching your dog to walk with you calmly and comfortably

With leash walking, we are not asking our dog to remain directly by our side like we would want with heel

LEASH WALKING GOALS

- ✓ A relaxed leash
- ✓ Enjoyable walks for both you and your dog
- ✓ Calm movement
- ✓ A dog that pays attention to you

Pulling is normal beginner behavior and does **NOT** mean your dog is stubborn or dominant



Why Do Dogs Pull?

Your dog may pull because:

- They want to move faster
- They want to explore
- The environment is exciting
- Pulling has worked before

Common Mistakes We Make

✗ Pulling Back On The Leash

Pulling back on the leash often creates a tug-of-war game

✗ Continuing To Walk While The Leash Is Tight

If the dog pulls and we continue moving, pulling gets rewarded

✗ Forgetting To Reward Good Walking

Dogs repeat behaviors that get rewarded and acknowledged

✗ Repeating "No," "Stop," or "Come On"

Repeated corrections can become background noise

- ✗ Leash is tight
- ✗ Dog is pulling ahead
- ✗ Walk is stressful



- ✓ Leash is loose
- ✓ Dog walks calmly beside you
- ✓ Walk is enjoyable



QUIET ENVIRONMENT?

Try using these locations in order:

- Inside the house
- Your Yard
- A Quiet Sidewalk
- A Calm Public Area
- A Busy Environment

HOW TO START

Step One:

Start in a quiet environment

Step Two:

Reward BEFORE your dog reaches the end of the leash

Step Three:

Let your dog sniff - Sniffing is important mental enrichment and helps many dogs feel calmer and more satisfied during walks

Step Four:

Keep sessions short and successful - A good starting goal is 3 to 5 minute practice sessions

The Verbal Cue For Leash Walking Is "Let's Go"



Trainer Tip

Be More Interesting Than The Environment

- ✓ Praise
- ✓ Movement
- ✓ Play
- ✓ Treats
- ✓ Happy Voice

Keeping your dog interested in you is an important part of training



1

Dog walking calmly



2

Dog glances at person



3

CLICK!



4

Treat delivered near leg

TREE ROOTS METHOD

Best For

Calm or shy dogs, patient training sessions

Step One:

Tell your dog "lets go" and begin walking

Step Two:






If the leash Tightens - STOP WALKING

Step Three:

Wait quietly for your dog to stop pulling


Step Four:

Click & Reward - Begin Walking Again

<p>1 BEGIN WALKING.</p> <p>Take a step forward and encourage your dog to walk with you.</p> 	<p>2 IF LEASH TIGHTENS:</p> <p>Your dog is pulling or the leash becomes tight.</p> 	<p>3 STOP MOVING.</p> <p>Stop where you are. Don't take another step.</p> 	<p>4 WAIT QUIETLY FOR SLACK IN THE LEASH.</p> <p>Wait for your dog to return or turn toward you and the leash to loosen.</p> 	<p>5 CLICK → REWARD</p> <p>Click and give a treat near your leg. Praise your dog!</p> 
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6 BEGIN WALKING AGAIN.

Take a step forward and continue your walk with a loose leash.



Be patient and consistent. Each successful repetition builds better leash walking!

Quick Tip *The leash relaxing is what makes walking continue*



You should be rewarding your dog within **3 seconds** of good behavior

QUICK TURN METHOD

Best For
Dogs who rush ahead

Step One:

Tell your dog "lets go" and begin walking

Step Two:

Before leash becomes fully tight: turn calmly and walk the opposite direction

Step Three:

Reward your dog for catching up and reconnecting

Quick Tip *Reward the moment your dog chooses to walk with you*

1 WALK FORWARD.

Take a step forward and encourage your dog to walk with you.



2 BEFORE LEASH BECOMES FULLY TIGHT:

Turn calmly and walk the opposite direction. This prevents pulling from getting reinforced.



3 REWARD YOUR DOG FOR CATCHING UP AND RECONNECTING.

When your dog catches up and the leash is loose, click and reward!



Be proactive, not reactive. Changing direction early helps teach your dog that pulling doesn't get them where they want to go!

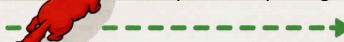
1 WALK FORWARD

You and your dog are moving ahead



2 BEFORE LEASH BECOMES FULLY TIGHT:

Turn calmly and walk the opposite direction. This prevents pulling from getting reinforced.



3 REWARD FOR RECONNECTING

When your dog catches up and the leash is loose, click and reward! Then continue your walk.



ZIG ZAG METHOD

Best For

Dogs who disengage / get bored easily

Step One:

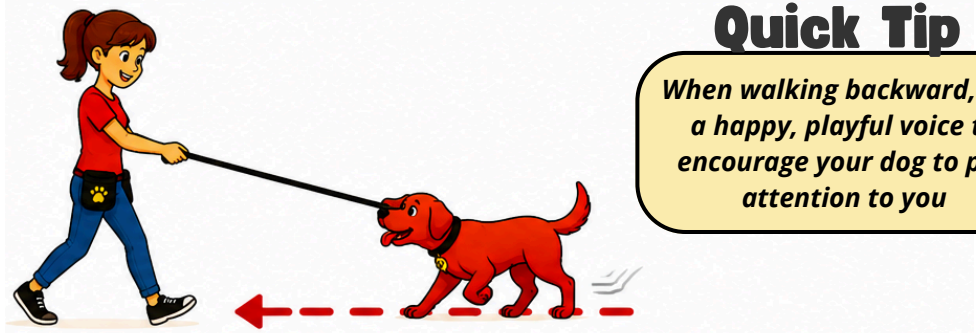
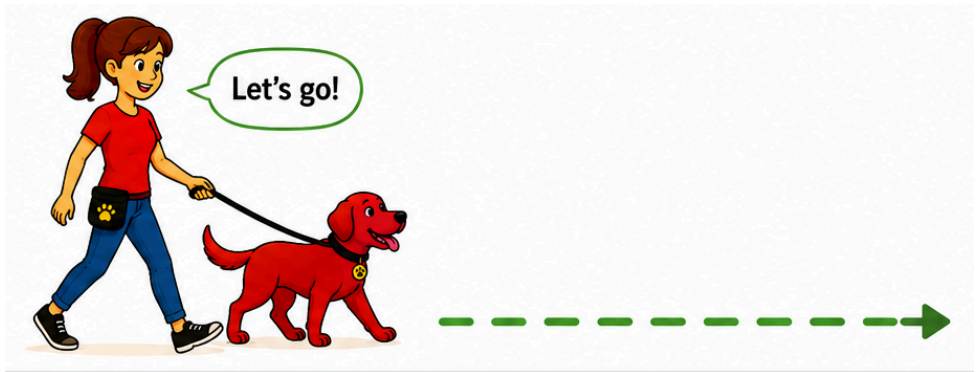
Tell your dog "lets go" and begin walking

Step Two:

When your dog pulls on the leash, begin walking backwards while looking at your dog

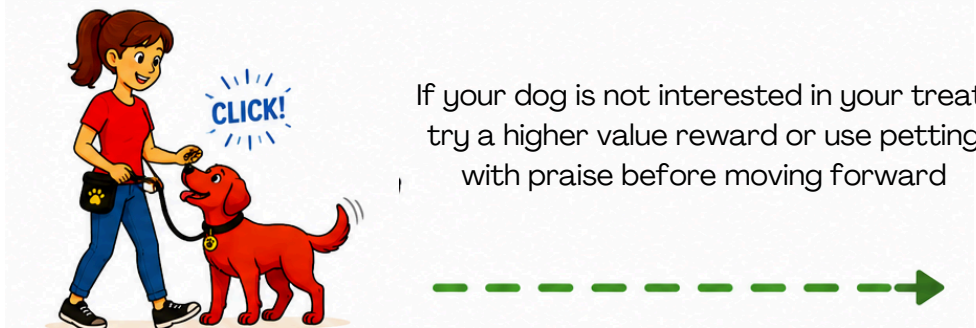
Step Three:

After your dog returns to you, click & reward before continuing walking forward again



Quick Tip

When walking backward, use a happy, playful voice to encourage your dog to pay attention to you

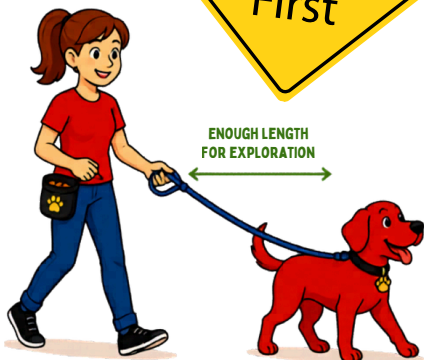


If your dog is not interested in your treat, try a higher value reward or use petting with praise before moving forward

Leash Safety



Place your thumb through the leash handle and grip the leash into your hand.



If the leash is too long, fold the excess length into your hand and grip.

Make sure your dog has enough length on the leash to be able to walk and explore still!



Holding your leash this way can help prevent you from getting injured in case an emergency arises.



This holding method allows the handle to easily slide off of your thumb in case you need to let go.



Leash Walking Tip



Little, short walks are better than nothing. Try practicing your leash walking everytime you go to your mailbox!

THIS WEEK'S HOMEWORK

- Practice Sit, Watch / Focus, Down, and Drop it with verbal and hand signals
- Practice Leave it with items that are more tempting to your dog
- Practice loose leash walking using the methods we learned



Trainer Note

Progress is not always linear

Excitement, distractions, and new environments make training harder. That is normal!

Keep sessions short, positive, and consistent