



LEASH WALKING



Walking on a relaxed leash does not mean that your dog is walking right alongside you. This is a casual leash walk which means both you and your dog can stroll along in comfort. With these techniques, our goal is for the leash to be relaxed, not pulled tight. In an ideal world, the leash should form a shape similar to "J" with lots of slack in the leash. For casual training, it is not a requirement, only that your dog isn't yanking your arm out of the socket!

LEASH WALKING MISTAKES WE MAKE

Pulling back on the leash - When we pull back on the leash, we end up playing a never ending game of tug of war with our dog. This actually encourages your dog to continue pulling.

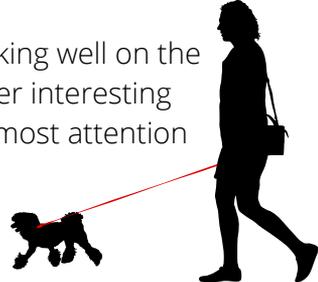
Saying "No" "Stop" or "Bad Dog" - Our voice is one of three forms of attention our dogs want. By rewarding your dog (even if you think you are reprimanding them) we are giving them something they enjoy.

Saying "Come on" - If you often tug on your dog's leash and tell them to come on, your dog will view those words negatively. Us humans need to remember that "come" is a different behavior and we want our dog to listen when we call them. Instead of telling your dog "come on" use a different cue.

Continuing to walk when our dog is pulling - Dogs pull to get somewhere or to something. If we continue to move while they are pulling, we are allowing them to get what they want, which rewards them.

Holding your hand / arm high - Often, when our dogs are pulling, us humans end up unconsciously holding our hands up high or even lifting our entire arm. This position is uncomfortable and will make your leash walking experience unpleasant. Instead of lifting your hand to take up the slack, fold excess leash into your hand (*see: How to hold the leash*). Make sure you are giving your dog enough leash length that they can explore and enjoy the walk too!

Not rewarding good walking - When our dog is walking well on the leash, we humans will start to enjoy the scenery or other interesting sights. This is the time when we should be paying the most attention to our dogs.



SO WHAT DO WE DO INSTEAD?

Don't be your dog's Uber driver! - You are more than just your dog's transportation from home to the park, or other places. Make sure that when you are walking your dog, you use the chance to keep your dog engaged with you! You need to be *as interesting*, or *even more interesting* than the environment. Use your walks as a chance to show your fun side, let your dog know that you are worth paying attention to by petting and playing with them.

Give leash walking it's own cue - Leash walking is a behavior separate from other things you have trained your dog to do, so it deserves it's own cue. Our trainers often use "Lets Go" or "Lets go walk" since these are the easiest ones to switch to.

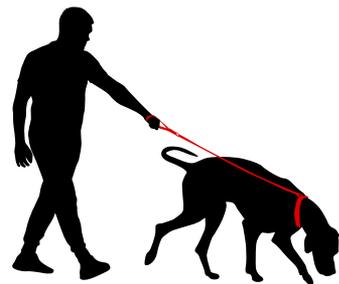
Reward your dog - When your dog isn't pulling on the leash, make sure you are rewarding your dog! Talk to your dog in a happy tone of voice, pet them, most of all, reward them with treats! Rewarding our dogs when they behave is the best way to encourage them to repeat the behavior!

Let your dog sniff! - Scent plays a very large part in how your dog perceives the world around them. As long as your dog is not pulling, you should let them sniff! Sniffing engages your dog's mind and helps to calm them. Sniff walks can help tire down dogs who have a ton of energy too! *Ten minutes of sniffing can tire out your dog as much as a one hour walk.*

Walk a little faster - Dogs have four legs and we have two. They naturally walk faster than us. Put a little pep in your step and you'll both have a better time!

If your dog is ignoring you or distracted

Take a moment to stop and gain their focus through play and training. Give your dog cues they know, like sit, and reward them with treats to get your dog re-focused on you. If they continue to be distracted, the environment may be too exciting to train in. Go to a quieter area, or a place your dog is more familiar with.



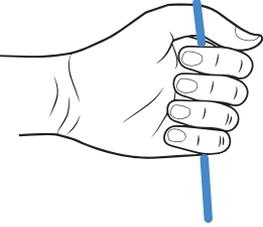
LEASH WALKING SAFETY

Don't put your wrist through the leash handle

Many accidents happen because wrists become stuck in the leash handle. To keep yourself safe, make sure you hold the leash correctly.

HOW TO HOLD THE LEASH:

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 METHODS



1. TREE ROOTS

This method is easier on the owner but takes longer for the dog to understand

- Attach your leash to your dog's collar or harness
- When the leash is relaxed and your dog is not pulling, use your clicker and give your dog a treat
- As soon as your dog pulls to the end of the leash, plant your feet firmly and stand still, ignoring your dog
- Wait for your dog to get bored and give some slack or if they sit down. Once that happens, use your clicker and give your dog a treat
- When the leash is relaxed, begin walking again
- If your dog runs to the end of the leash, stop moving and stand still, ignoring your dog until they return slack to the leash. Repeat the use of the clicker and give a treat every time they return to you

PULLING = 

NO PULLING = 

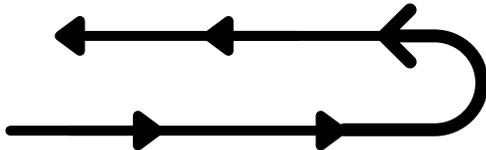
2. QUICK TURN

This method is easier for the dog to understand but can make the owner dizzy

- Attach your leash to your dog's collar or harness
- As soon as your dog pulls to the end of the leash, quickly turn around and start walking swiftly the opposite direction
- While your dog is walking to catch up to you, use your clicker and praise the relaxed leash
- As soon as your dog pulls to the end of the leash, repeat your turn and swift walk in the opposite direction
- When your dog stops pulling, click and praise, walking at a better pace for both of you



When the leash is relaxed, you can walk



When the leash is tight, make a quick turn and go the other direction

3. ZIG ZAG

This method is great for dogs who may be nervous or shy. Additionally, it helps your dog engage with you.

- Attach your leash to your dog's collar or harness
- When you think your dog is getting close to pulling, or is pulling on the leash, begin walking backwards
- Once your dog begins walking towards you, praise them and reward with treats
- When your dog has walked back to you, begin walking forward once again
- Repeat as needed

