

# Loose Lead Walking



## TIPS

### Why bother training it?

To spare your arms, shoulders and back—and your dog's trachea. It is not fun or safe for you to have a dog take you for a walk. Pulling while wearing a collar can also damage your dog's throat.

### Why do dogs pull?

To get to whatever is out ahead: Great smells, other dogs, other people, the park, fun and adventure.

Pulling gets dogs to what they want, and it generally works. Even if we don't like our dog pulling we still walk forwards with them and they get wherever they were going. It's a behaviour that becomes habit very quickly as it is so often rewarded, but don't despair even if you have an expert puller. All dogs can be taught loose lead walking.

### How to train it

#### Step 1: Teach your dog to stand calmly next to you without pulling away.

Load the hand on the side closest to your dog with treats.

Praise and give your dog a treat when he is by your side and calm. (You can use a clicker or other marker to make it clear to your dog what has just paid off).

If your dog moves away from you, don't yank him back with the lead. Instead stand still and wait for him to come back to your side, then praise and treat again.

If your dog is very distracted and doesn't come back to your side, call his name, and use the food in your hand to guide him into the position you want.

#### Step 2: Teach your dog to stay close to you while you step forwards.

Reward your dog a few times as in step 1, then take one step forward. As your dog moves with you, praise and give him a treat for being at your side.

The trick here is to reward quickly before he has the chance to dash ahead.

Take another step forward and praise and treat.

Repeat, praising and treating each step forward to begin with.

#### Step 3: Teach your dog to stay close to you while you walk forwards.

Once you can take 10 individual steps forward successfully, take 2 steps forwards before praising and giving your dog a treat.

Then take 3 steps forwards, then 4, gradually increasing the number of steps you take before praising and treating.

Keep your dog guessing when he will be rewarded by sometimes giving him the treat after 1 step, then after 5 steps, then after 2 steps, then 7 steps etc.

### Training Tip:

Practice in quiet areas initially where your dog will be less distracted and for short periods of time.



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