



Leash Tips for People

There is no question that leash skills can be hard. We have set ourselves up with a bit of a problem with this one, dogs and humans have very different needs on a walk, so it is worth finding a happy balance!

What Dogs NEED

★ **To be able to stop and smell the roses.**

Dogs LIVE through their noses. We know that what they can do with scent, think cancer/search and rescue/ whale poop /changes in blood sugar/etc, is pretty far outside of our realm of understanding. So imagine being able to see the chocolate cake is, but not be able to get to it because you are on a leash. This is the situation we put our dogs in every time we go out on a leash and this is why Leash Aggression/Frustration is one of the most common things I get called for help with! Access to the things dogs love, other dogs, people and smells, is NECESSARY for the well-being of our dogs.

★ **A Longer Leash**, even a couple more feet, will let them get to the smells they want to investigate. Recent studies show that dogs on longer leashes pull less because they finally have access to the *THINGS I LIKE TO SNIFF*. Yes, it may mean that you will stop more often, but isn't this one of the gift dogs bring us, slowing down and enjoying the outdoors?

★ **To Stop and Sniff**. Let them check out that great smell for 30 seconds or MORE. 30 SECONDS! It is not a lot to us, but it is A LOT to our dogs! And yes, over the course of a walk it may add up to 5 extra minutes, seriously not a lot.

How Can We Help

★ **Let Them Sniff**. Sniffing Is Meditation. Research is showing that when dogs are sniffing those deep involved sniffs, their brains go into a state that is similar to mediation in our brains. So really, sniffing will help them calm down! How great is that?!

★ **Bring the Best Snacks!** When you are ready to move along again, you will need to make your dog an offer he can't refuse. You will be competing with Pee Mail and Dead Things, so make it REALLY GOOD.



- ★ **Leverage Meal Times.** Time your best walks to fall before a meal time. This will add value to what you have on offer.
- ★ **Use a Harness that has a back clip AND a front clip.** The right gear is everything! Check out Ruffwear, Balance, Freedom, and Kurgo. Use the front clip on walks to keep your dog steered in the direction you want. I use the back and front clips together for dogs who are freight trains. I use a long line, 15 feet usually, with a carabiner on the handle and clip it to the front AND the back. Holding it in the middle gives me more control.
- ★ **Try to remember that your dog is SO EXCITED** to get out and explore the world! This is completely innocent and in my opinion completely charming, they WANT to be outside WITH US, exploring! It is okay to be excited about it too!
- ★ **Ask Yourself, Whose Walk Is It?** Most of the time, we take dogs on walks because they enjoy and need it. So let them do it the way they like to do it! Why take them out to do what they love and then get angry or frustrated at them for doing just that! And if you need something different from a walk, then consider having a walk for him and a walk for you! It's okay for us to have different needs.

Training Tips

- ★ START EVERY WALK WITH A FEW REPETITIONS OF **JUST GIVING YOUR DOG FOOD.** This will remind them that you have something that they want!
- ✓ Every time you use food, you are reinforcing that thing you want more of. So use that to your advantage by always reinforcing them next to your leg, either one, so that they start to associate being next to you and returning to your side, with good things like steak!
- ✓ Every Single Time your dog looks back or returns for a quick Check-In, reinforce the heck out of that! Combining your steak, with check-ins will get, MORE CHECK-INS!

And finally, be compassionate and patient. After all we have mostly removed a dogs' freedom to roam at will, take as long as they want to sniff, and eat dead things. The least we can offer on balance is that they get a great walk, doing dog things, on a leash. Your dog WANTS to be outside on a walk with you, don't change their minds!

AFTER ALL, YOUR DOG IS A ROCKSTAR

EDUCATE. ENCOURAGE. ENRICH.



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