

# Leash Training for Dogs

Contributed by Admin  
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## Leash Training for Dogs by William Berg

Tired of your dog dragging you out the door and down the street? Are YOU the one that needs a nap after taking the dog for a walk? Maybe it's time to leash train the dog. A little time and a bit more patience can provide a lifelong reward - enjoyable outdoor walks with your dog. But before getting started, let's review a few basic training principles.

It is best train in an area that the dog is already familiar with, such as the back yard. Dogs have a natural tendency to explore, and things will go easier if they are not tempted by this desire. Reward good behavior with praise and treats - the treats can be lessened over time and you will find the dog is more than satisfied with just the praise. Keep the sessions short at first, and fairly often. Also, try to do the training at the same time everyday - this gives the dog an easy routine to follow. Remember to correct, not punish the dog while leash training. Punishment is only used when the dog does not behave as they have been taught, and they have not been taught how to walk on a leash yet. And don't forget that you are learning, too!

A good collar and leash are necessities. A six-foot leather leash is ideal for training. An extensible leash is probably not a good idea for training purposes. They tend to keep a slight tension on the leash, and you want to teach the dog to walk near your side with the leash slightly loose (but not dragging). For puppies, use a regular buckle collar. If you are training an older dog, or one that tends to pull against the leash, then try a training collar. These allow you to tighten or loosen them around the neck to control pulling on the leash.

Now that you have everything ready, it's time to start training. The first two or three sessions can be used simply to allow the dog to get used to the collar. Have the dog sit beside you while you put the leash on. Then let them roam around a little, dragging the leash. This lets them get used to the leash without having to worry about anything else. Try picking the leash up, and when it is about to tighten, give it a slight tug and call the dog to you. After the dog comes to your side, give them a treat and praise them. Repeat this a few times. Next time when you put the leash on and the dog starts walking away, call them back to your side and have them stand there for a bit. They will probably wander a little, but that's ok - just keep an eye on the leash, and when it is about to tighten, give a little tug and call them back to your side. Don't forget the reward and the praise. Your goal is to get the dog used to standing by your side with a loose leash.

After doing only this for a few sessions, you are ready to start walking. After putting the leash on and having the dog come stand beside you, try walking a little ways. Keep your eye on the dog, and if the leash starts to tighten, give it a slight tug and call the dog to your side. You might also try changing directions or simply stopping. If you do this before the leash gets tight, the dog will soon learn that you want the leash to remain loose. The dog will also

learn that you want them to pay attention to what you are doing and follow your lead.

Whenever you feel the dog is doing well with this, then it's time to venture into the real world. Try shorter walks at first, and lengthen them as you both get more comfortable with the leash. If the dog is not cooperating then put an end to the walk. Don't reward their bad behavior by simply extending the walk and hoping they will improve. Let the dog explore their surroundings, but keep calling them back to your side. Over time, this behavior will become natural for both of you. Then YOU can look forward to the walks just as much as your dog!

{mospagebreak title=About the Author}

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