

Leash Manners

Teach your dog:

Leave it (or some similar cue to mean let something go by)

Look (or similar cue to mean look your way)

With me (heel or similar cue to mean walk next to you)

At ease (easy or similar cue to mean walk with a loose leash)

Warm up Exercises

30 to 60 second Leave it
30 second Look
5 Touches
Hyper pup? Add 5 Push-up's

Practice

when getting ready for walk
as walk begins and
anytime during walk that dog
loses focus

Warm up Exercises



Begin Walk



Is dog pulling?



Yes

Incorporate one of the following strategies

Crazy Dog Walker

Penalty Yards

Stand like a pole

Attention Exercises

No

Hooray!
Acknowledge her
"Good With me,
Good girl"

Give her a treat on occasion, when she's walking politely

Give 'em a Break!

When you start out on your walk let them have a little time to get their 'dog out.' Let them smell, jump around, and overall be delighted to be going. Don't let them cause an issue, pull you down or be a knucklehead, but allow them a little latitude at least for the first few minutes.

Have they had a chance to run, think or otherwise let their energy out? They REALLY need this to be successful at learning and training.

On your way to the dog park or to meet up with a favorite friend? Set you both up for success and wait to train until after their play time.

Give yourself a break...

Use Management Tools anytime you cannot train:

- Front clip harness
- Belly band
- Gentle leader (head harness) necessary if your dog goes to their teeth

Crazy Dog Walker

Have dog on a 6' leash. Begin walking, as soon as you feel tension on the leash turn in the opposite direction of the dog. Don't warn the dog or try to minimize the impact on the dog or the leash....you're going to feel this exercise in your arm/shoulder.

The goal here is for you to be unpredictable. Every time the dog pulls in one direction, you turn in the opposite. You do this over and over until your pup realizes they need to default to you for direction/speed.

This powerful tool can often be implemented for just 30-60 seconds to remind a dog that you're on the other end of the leash. Think of it like asking a chorus to run through their scales when they lose steam. I find it very useful for high-reactive dogs (orange and reds).

Penalty Yards

Have dog on a leash. Begin walking, as soon as the dog pulls take two steps back and say Uh-oh. Encourage dog to come back to your side and begin again, as soon as the pull happens, take two steps back and repeat your Uh-oh.

I find this strategy works best with those dogs who are pulling toward something specific (versus just a fast walking dog). For example, when pulling toward another dog, a smell or tree, anything. The key to success here is to just keep repeating the exercise without getting frustrated or losing your cool.

The reinforcement for this is permission; permission to smell, or continue, or say hi – whatever they were trying to get to, by walking politely on leash they can get to the thing they were trying to get to.

Stand like a pole

In a similar exercise, leash up your dog and stand still until there isn't tension on the leash. As soon as that happens, begin walking. As soon as you feel tension again, stop. Wait for him/her to release a bit of the tension and begin walking.

I think we end up performing this exercise mostly with shy and nervous dogs – because we have to and mostly the tension is behind us. Waiting for highly-reactive dogs to release the tension in the leash and be impossible for some people and downright exasperating for others.

Attention exercises

Here we ask dogs to look at us (either our hands or our faces) anytime when ask – and we ask, anytime a trigger is present. For this exercise, we first teach the dogs to look us in the face (10 sec minimum) then we practice while we're walking.

My hand signal for look is an index finger moving from the dogs nose up to my temple. When I use this walking, I don't bring my hand all the back to my face, but instead let it float, making it easier for the dog to anchor or latch onto.