

# WALKING ON LEAD

Animal Welfare League of  
SA Inc

Most dogs forge ahead when on a lead which can make walking a chore for the owner and uncomfortable for the dog. The dog is pulling ahead for only one reason - the dog wants to get where he/she is going more quickly than the person holding the lead. Remember, dogs repeat behaviours that are rewarding - if pulling on leash gets the dog where he/she wants to go then that it is a big reward!

## EXERCISES TO HELP LEAD WALKING

Gain control before the lead is on the dog. Ask the dog to sit quietly while the lead is being attached to the collar. If the dog loses control when they see the leash do lots of exercises with the lead - e.g. picking it up, putting it down, picking it up, walking to the dog, putting it down, over and over again. Having done this until the dog barely responds to you picking up the leash ask the dog to sit and try putting it on. If the dog gets excited and doesn't want to sit then don't attach the lead. Put the lead down again and try



again shortly after. Consistency is the key. Do these exercises when you are not in a hurry so you can spend as much time as necessary to ensure your dog is calm before the walk.

Do not tolerate pulling AT ANY TIME. When walking, you should stop every time the leash is tight and proceed only when the leash is slack. This can be frustrating and you may find you only get a foot at a time but this method will work eventually. Remember, consistency is the most important thing when training your dog. Don't forget to praise each time the dog is not pulling and continue to go forward.

A Halti or head collar is a worthwhile investment for very strong dogs and/or dogs that have a long history of pulling on the lead – we will help you with this.

When you are stationary do not allow the dog to have a tight lead. Have the dog sit quietly next to you rather than straining on the end of the leash.

Do lots of leash walking in the backyard or somewhere else which is familiar and fairly boring to your dog and praise profusely for not pulling.

Do lots of exercises without the lead in the backyard where you can encourage the dog to follow you using treats and praise.

Remember consistency is the key to successful lead walking.



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