

LOOSE LEASH WALKING

LEVEL ONE

WHY AM I TRAINING THIS?

This is an important and very simple foundation behavior for you to maintain. The stronger this behavior is, the more comfortable you and your dog will feel when out walking together in the real world. This behavior gives your dog a clear cut space to be when walking on leash and the more you reward this behavior, the more they will choose to be there on their own.

GET READY:

- ✓ Yummy treats
- ✓ Leash (Not retractable, 4ft or 6ft)
- ✓ 6 markers of some sort (Cones, cups, plates, etc.) placed in a line 4ft apart
- ✓ This is best practiced, initially, in an open space the dog is familiar and comfortable with, that is as free of distractions as possible. (Backyard, living room, kitchen, dining room, bedroom, garage, etc.)

GET SET:

- ✓ Have your treats easily accessible (pocket, pouch, etc.)
- ✓ Place leash on your dog
- ✓ Hold the leash in a loose "J" shape
- ✓ Start your dog on either your left or right sides

GO:

- ✓ Begin walking to the first marker with your dog, while keeping a loose "J" in the leash.
 - Stop when you reach the first marker and, if there is still a loose "J" in the leash, mark and reward.
 - To reward:
 - Turn towards your dog and toss a treat 1ft behind them so that they have to turn around to get it
 - The idea is to reward your dog so that they are not inclined to do what is called "forging" or inching forward. By rewarding behind them, we are training the dog to keep their momentum back and not forward, which in turn will help prevent pulling.
- ✓ If at any point your dog goes to the end of the leash during your



walk, stop and wait/ask for a sit. Get your dog back into position (turn around or use a hand target) and resume your walk.

- ✓ **Repeat this process until you can walk down and back with a loose “J” in the leash.**
- ✓ **Remove 3 of your markers (not right next to each other) and repeat this process with the new number of markers.**
- ✓ **Once you can walk down and back with a loose “J” in the leash, you can move on to Level Two.**

