

## Loose Leash Walking

- Hold your leash on the opposite side of your body from your dog. The leash will go across your body in front of you. This ensures your hand closest to your dog is able to deliver food rewards.
- Anchor your leash hand at your hip bone. This will help you to be aware of how you are holding the leash and will ensure it is not you who is putting tension on the leash. Any tension comes from your dog.
- Prepare a handful of small (m&m sized) holding them in the hand closest to your dog.
- Ask your dog for a Sit, then say your cue “Heel” or “Let’s Go” As you walk, bring your hand down every single step to reward your dog. Once they have had a treat, bring your hand back up to your hip bone. Bringing your hand up to your hip bone becomes a visual cue for your dog to fall into position and stay close and focused.
- Encourage your dog with vocal praise as well as you go along.
- Once your dog is successful with every step you will now reward with every second step, then every third step and so on. It is important to keep the rate of reinforcement high to start in able to teach your dog successfully.

## Pulling

It is important that we are not adding tension on the leash - all tension comes from your dog and can be worked through as follows:

- If your dog pulls ahead, simply stop and anchor yourself as a tree so you can’t move forward. This teaches our dogs that the walk only moves forward when there is no tension on the leash. Once your leash goes slack or your dog checks in with you and comes back you can begin to reward them as you walk together.
- Always ensure your rewards are given while you are walking together as a team. Be wary of your dog becoming a yo-yo and going to the end of the leash and back to gain rewards.

## Go Sniff Cue

There will be times that your dog will need to sniff, investigate things such as objects or the ground. Giving a cue such as “Go Sniff” gives your dog permission to be free to do this. Sniffing is an important way of how dogs learn and should be incorporated on walks.

## Automatic Sit

Ask your dog for a Sit each time you stop. With repetition, your dog will start to sit when you stop without you asking. This is a great safety skill to have. Practice an Automatic Sit before crossing a street to build a safe habit for your dog.

## **Leash Weaving**

Sometimes it may seem that no matter what you do your dog won't budge from a place they are sniffing. A handy tool is Leash Weaving - simply run the leash through your hands a few times to create a vibration. The vibration will often get your dog's attention. When they look up, look to you or move into the vibration say "Yes!" and reward them and carry on with your walk

Practice these skills in your house first and then in your backyard, gradually increasing distractions for both of you.

We discuss and help you work through ways to walk your dog nicely on leash in the Calgary Humane Society's Polite Pooches and Walk Nicely class. Please see [www.calgaryhumane.ca](http://www.calgaryhumane.ca) under Behaviour and then Obedience classes.