



Understanding Leash Pulling

A SHORT GUIDE FOR DOG OWNERS

Most pulling is simply a dog moving at the pace their nose and instincts want to move at, with no reason yet to think walking nicely is worth it. A loose lead isn't about force or control; it looks more like making the walking position the most rewarding option. Dogs are naturally much more at peace when they have a job to do, we must provide that structure.

WHY IT HAPPENS

From the dog's point of view, pulling has always worked. During play as a puppy, through tug, carrying toys around, into the first moment they experience walking with a collar on. If they pulled and were successful in moving forward, they learned pulling wins. Pair that with months or years of pulling and you have a problem which requires a bit more creativity, and a clear change in the relationship between the dog and handler.

THREE THINGS TO TRY THIS WEEK

- 1 The Follow method.** Quite simple, convince them to follow you, first at home then outdoors. If they are not following, you are not moving.
- 2 If that didn't work,** they probably have no idea you are at the other end of the lead! A dog that isn't checking in with you on lead at home needs to first see some value in you. Make yourself interesting and reward any short bursts of eye contact, do this in multiple places, make life boring without attention and harmonious when moving with you.
- 3 Build, then release!** If you get a few seconds of nice walking, reward and break the exercise, extend duration, build proximity to distractions. We are giving them a simple job for the time being, we make the position clear by constantly changing direction, and the job is to walk in a clearly communicated position, nothing more and nothing less. It sounds ambiguous, but no one method is suitable for multiple dogs.

"Real progress, one to one, with real-world proof."

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