

Loose Leash Walking (LLW)

The best way I've found to think of loose leash walking is that it's really off-leash walking within a 6 foot radius. The leash is a safety device, not a walking tool. There are many exercises to help with LLW:

- **Following:** in an enclosed space, attach the leash to your dog and let it drag. Feed him treats when he is next to you.
 - This exercise teaches that the best place to be is next to you
 - Commonly used for: teaching puppies and/or dogs to walk on leash, very strong pullers
- **Click for position:** click then treat when the dog is next to you (e.g. his shoulder in line with your hip). If he stays by your side for only a short period of time then try throwing the treat on the ground.
 - This exercise teaches that the best place to be is next to you
 - Commonly used for: All dogs, in conjunction with one of the following exercises
- **Red light green light:** Stop walking when you feel leash tension. Start walking again when the dog gives you eye contact.
 - This exercise teaches that pulling does not get him there faster
 - Commonly used for: mild pullers, semi-focused dogs, in conjunction with click for position
- **Penalty yards:** walk backwards when you feel leash tension. Progress forward when the leash slackens.
 - This exercise teaches that not only does pulling not get him there faster, but he gets further away from what he's pulling towards
 - Commonly used for: mildly distracted dogs, in conjunction with click for position
- **Crazy walking:** walk erratically (e.g. 2 steps forward, 1 step sideways, turn in a circle, walk backwards 5 steps, etc.) for a few minutes until the dog is focused on you.
 - This exercise teaches that the walking path is not predictable (and, therefore, he cannot pull towards the next location) and that it's beneficial to pay attention to his handler
 - Commonly used for: very distracted dogs, in conjunction with click for position or clicking for eye contact

The most important part of loose leash walking is *consistency*. Each time the dog is rewarded for pulling they are more likely to try it in the future and less likely to learn this skill quickly.