

# Structured Walking

---

Adding structure to your heel command

## What

---

It's your heel command. Used to communicate when your dog is expected to follow your side and practice, implied impulse control.

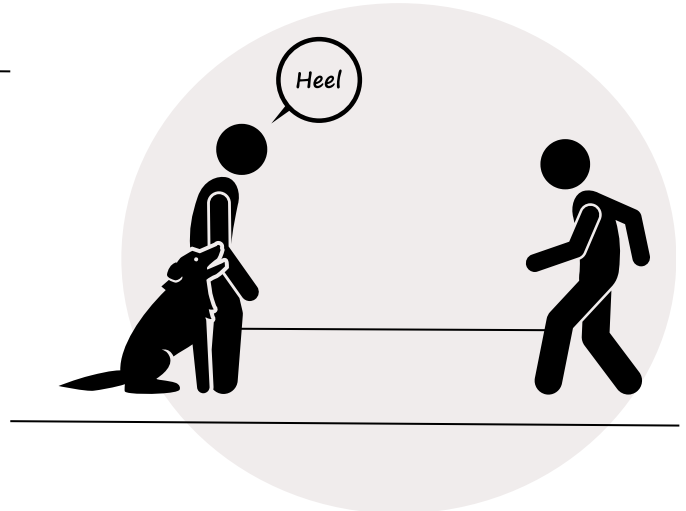
- Your dog does not stop to sniff, mark, or greet people or dogs unless given permission.
- Your dog walks beside or slightly behind you, never pulling or walking far ahead.
- Your dog stays on one designated side, unless you cue them to switch.
- You position your dog on the opposite side of distractions (e.g., other dogs, people, smells).
- Your dog can glance at or briefly sniff things only if they are keeping a slack leash and staying in position.

## When

---

Ask your dog to heel when:

- Passing by others
- Tight/narrow trails
- New places
- If your dog is overstimulated/distracted
- You need them to follow your side



## Why

---

Structured walking is more than physical exercise — it's mental enrichment. It teaches your dog to:

- **Practice impulse control:** They learn when not to indulge in every urge to sniff, greet, or distraction.
- **Follow direction and focus:** Staying in a position with distractions builds handler engagement. They should be focused on following you around.
- **Move through the world calmly:** It sets a foundation for polite leash behavior in public and is an easy way to provide them their need for structure
- **Strengthen your relationship:** You become the center of their attention, not the environment. They learn you have boundaries and rules.

# Break Time

---

Adding free time to your walk

## What

---

It's your break command or release marker. Used to give your dog freedom to sniff, explore, go potty, or socialize on your terms. During a break:

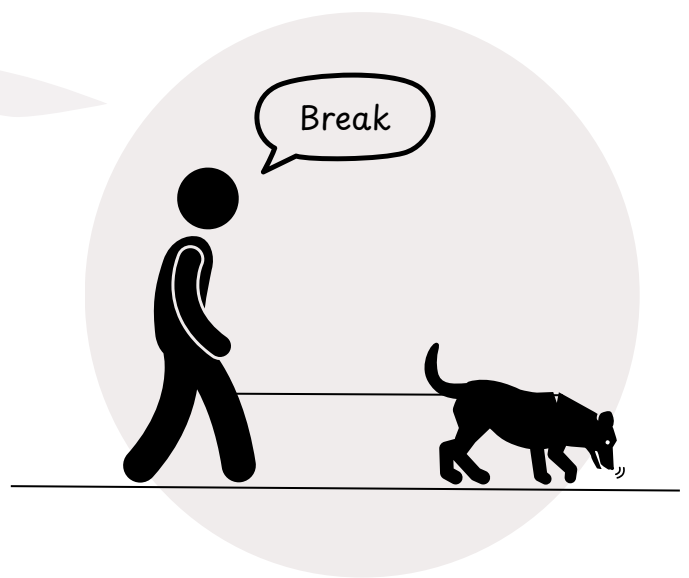
- Your dog can move freely within the length of the leash.
- They're allowed to sniff the ground, grass, trees, or objects.
- They may greet people or dogs only with your permission.
- There's no expectation of heel position or structured pace.
- The break has a clear beginning and end, marked with verbal cues (e.g., "Break!" to start, "Heel" to resume structure).
- They still are not allowed to pull you on leash, if they do, pop the leash or stop them from moving forward.

## When

---

Ask your dog to break when:

- Your dog needs a brain break
- When you're free of distractions
- To reward your dog
- If your dog is settled and engaged
- Allowing them to sniff or greet others



## Why

---

Breaks are essential for a well-balanced walk and your dog's mental and emotional health.

They:

- Give your dog freedom and fulfillment through sniffing and exploration.
- Relieve physical and mental pressure from sustained focus during structured time.
- Act as a reward for good leash behavior or impulse control.
- Encourage calmness by giving your dog a safe outlet to decompress.
- Help your dog transition between high and low arousal in a controlled way.
- Breaks teach your dog that freedom is earned and cued, which leads to better self-regulation overall.