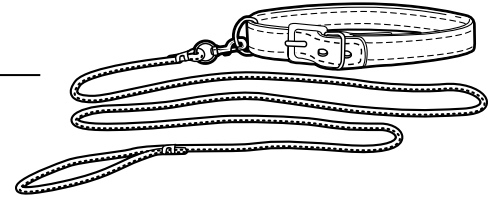


Introducing Leash Pressure



What is the Leash

The leash serves as a key communication tool between you and your dog, acting as a "translator" for clear, consistent signals. Since a dog's first language is touch, the leash helps us convey messages through varying levels of pressure. More pressure, signals the dog to stop, while less pressure encourages them to keep going. It's important to teach your dog how to respond to leash pressure, allowing for effective and reliable communication during training.

Why your Dog Ignores the Leash

Dogs often ignore leash pressure if they've learned that pulling allows them to move forward, which reinforces the behavior. This is linked to a natural instinct called the *opposition reflex*, where dogs push against pressure. While the term isn't crucial, knowing how to avoid this reflex is key to successful leash training.

How to Prevent your Dog Choking on the Leash

Using the right equipment, like a slip collar, or starkmark collar helps minimize pressure and reduce this reflex. Collars must be positioned high on the neck to be effective. It allows for better control and to steer the dogs head in a direction that redirects their focus away from what they are pulling towards. In contrast, harnesses encourage pulling by covering more surface area and only controlling their torso making leash training more challenging and potentially unsafe.

Steps

Set Up:

Work in an open area. Begin with the dog on 6ft leash and properly positioned collar.

Walk and Observe:

Start walking casually in your open area (aiming for a figure-8 if space allows). Watch the leash — the moment it starts to tighten, stop walking. Don't wait for a full pull.

Apply Gentle Pressure:

Hold steady, gentle leash pressure back toward you. Tug the leash — think of it like a, increasing "tap on the shoulder". Stay calm and encourage with your voice or food lure while you slowly increase pressure.

Release and Reward:

The moment your dog softens, shifts weight, or takes a single step toward you — Release the pressure immediately. Mark and praise ("Yes! Good!") Offer food if the dog can take it.

Reset and Repeat:

Walk forward again and repeat the process throughout your pattern. Over time, your dog will start keeping the leash loose and responding to light tugs before pressure even happens.