

# Good Dog Works!

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## **Loose Leash Walking with Eye Contact and Focus-The Handout**

### **The Basics**

**1-**Start each exercise in a low distraction environment.

**2-**Use a high rate of reinforcement.

**3-**Feed the reward to your dog in the position that you are reinforcing

**4-**For most dogs a polite walk around the block is rather slow and boring and if their energy level is high they will want to spice up the experience by barking, lunging and carrying on-make sure your dog has a chance to run and play in a safe fenced yard.

### **The Beginning**

**Step #1** In a low distraction environment start by walking backwards, when your dog looks at you click and deliver the treat right near your body. Keep treats in your pocket or behind your back until you deliver. Repeat until you are getting 100% focus.

**Step #2** To teach your dog to walk on your left. Put your food in your left hand. Start to walk sideways (grapevine) to your right. Click and treat, otherwise keep your left hand behind your back. Repeat until you are getting 100% focus. To teach your dog to walk on your right reverse the instructions.

**Step #3** You walk forward normally, your dog is on your left and click and then give him a treat with your left hand.

### **Many Other Options**

**Here by My Side-** Initially use a treat or toy to lure your dog into heel position. Reward. You are teaching them that in this location good things can happen! **Fade the lure and use your hand signal without the lure to guide them into place. Reward!**

**Treat at arm's length** - Hold a treat at arms length out to the side of your body. When the dog looks at your eyes instead of the treat, give your reward mark (click or "yes") and give up the treat. When the dog is staring at your eyes in order to earn the treat, begin walking and reward for walking on a loose leash.

**Red Light, Green Light** - When the leash is tight you stop. When the leash is loose you walk.

**Penalty yards-**Give your dog about 4 feet of leash. When the leash is tight, hold even pressure without jerking on the leash and back up 6 steps. Your dog will turn to look at you. You can click for them turning and they can come to you for the reward. "Lets go"

**About Turn** - Begin with your dog sitting on your left hand side. Start in front of your crate, home or car, whichever you are using as "home base". Give the cue "let's go. When the dog forges ahead of you, *before the leash goes tight*, cue the dog and quickly turn in the opposite

direction. A lure can be used to lure the dog into the turn. Keep turning as the dog forges, gradually moving further from home base as the leash remains loose. As the dog comes up from behind you it must pass you in order to forge ahead. When the dog is beside you in heel position, give your reward mark and reward the dog for walking on a loose leash.

**Speed Changes** - Constantly changing your speed will teach the dog to focus because your movements are unpredictable.

**Step and Sit** - Begin with the dog sitting on your left hand side. Use a lure as you take one step and immediately stop and sit the dog. The lure becomes a hand signal. When the dog is able to control himself with one step and sit, take two steps before stopping and signaling the dog to sit. When the dog is able to control himself with two steps and sit take three steps before stopping, and so on. If the dog loses control go back to your last point of success and begin again.

**Keep Away** - This exercise must be performed in a secure environment. Begin with the dog sitting on your left side. Show the dog the reward then run away from him. As he catches up and comes into position on your left hand side, click and treat, then run away again.

**Watch Me** - Teach the dog to “watch me” on command. Begin with the dog sitting on your left hand side. Move very slowly using the treat to lure the dog’s focus up to your eyes. When the dog is able to stay in position gradually integrate about turns speed changes.

**Throw Reward** - Begin with the dog on leash. At the beginning the dog will look at whatever is interesting in the environment, just ignore him. When he looks at you say “yes” or click and toss a treat reward on the ground. The dog learns that if he looks at you something good will happen. The idea of this exercise is to wait until the dog offers the behaviour rather than you asking for it.

**Crate Control** - Begin with the dog in a crate, gradually open the door when the dog is sitting calmly and quickly closing it when he gets up. When door is open and dog remains sitting invite him out.

**Targeting** - Teach your dog to touch your hand or if you have a small dog use a target stick or an extendable pointer on your left hand side. Use the target stick to teach your dog the position while walking and gradually fade the target.

**Shaping** – This is an awesome way to teach heel. Catching your dog getting it right. In a safe, low distraction environment with your dog off-leash click and treat them for ending up on your left side. Use highly desirable reinforcements.

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