**Walking on a Loose Lead**

* On a lead does not necessarily mean under control. If your dog pulls, lunges, zigzags, trips you up, sniffs, drags behind, jumps up, barks etc. this is not under control.
* It’s important to have control of your dog on a leash whether it is a large or small breed.
* Dogs have a natural instinct to resist pressure and pull against it. This is a survival reflex (if they get trapped, wriggle and pull until they’re free etc.) so is one of the most difficult behaviours to teach and needs to be started early.

***Equipment***

* Harnesses were designed for 2 original activities:
  + Tracking – to give the dog full use of his head
  + Pulling – to allow the dog to use his whole body weight to pull

Using harnesses designed for this is only encouraging your dog to pull you and sniff where he wants.

* ‘No-pull’ harnesses exert the right pressure in the correct places to successfully discourage the dog from pulling but all pieces of equipment should be used in conjunction with training.
* Choke chains, half check collars, slip leads all work on the same principle of tightening around the neck when the dog pulls:
  + Used incorrectly they can cause terrible injuries including spinal and circulation problems, teach your dog to become fearful of wearing collars or having them put on, having his neck touched, and make the pulling worse

Headcollars – these work in the same principles of controlling a horse, you have control over the head so you have control over the whole animal. However, there are a number of different types.

* Halti – gives you full control of the dog’s head, so they cannot use their body weight to pull you. Problematic for short-nosed breeds. Also as the lead originates from under the dogs chin it causes the head to be pulled to one side – not ideal!
* Gentle leader – a better fit for short nose breeds, again the lead comes from the underneath of the dogs head, twisting the dogs neck to one side.
* Figure of eight – a continuous lead that gives equal pressure to all areas of the head and leads from the back of the neck, avoiding neck strain from pulling the head round. These are our favourites due to the even pressure they exert on the dogs head. They don’t pull the head to one side.
* Standard collar and clip lead – most commonly used, but extensive training not to pull with this is needed as the dog can use body strength to pull through the neck

***Getting into Position to Walk***

1. Guide your dog from facing you, round the back of your legs to the point they are facing forwards, standing next to you and reward
2. Repeat step 1, then when consistent, introduce a sit at the end and reward.
3. When consistent, you can add in a command word such as ‘by me’, ‘close’ or ‘heel’

***Walking on a Loose Lead***

1. Guide your dog into position for walking and reward
2. You need to hold the lead in the opposite side to your dog, with it across your body, and a handful of treats in the same side as your dog
3. Hold the treats effectively where you want your dog’s head to be (on the side of your leg), and let them follow it
4. Move 1 step forwards, keeping your dog’s attention on your hand and him moving next to you and reward and stop
5. Reward him for remaining next to you and not rushing in front
6. Repeat until consistent
7. Gradually increase the number of steps you take before the reward
8. When you reach about 5-6 steps, reward intermittently for not pulling