

DOG WALKING SAFETY TIPS

Walking is great exercise not only for people, but for dogs too! Multiple studies show the benefits of walking for both physical and emotional health in dogs and their people, and others point to the role the activity plays in strengthening the human-animal bond.

However, before grabbing your leash and heading out with your pup, here are **10 TIPS** that will make your next dog walk a safe and enjoyable outing:

1

CHECK THE TEMPERATURE



Is it hot? Freezing cold? High humidity? Adjust the length and time of your walk to the conditions outside.

2

MIND THE AIR QUALITY



Dogs are affected by high pollution levels just like people. Take a short walk or wait until the air quality improves before taking your pup out.

3

WALKING SURFACE TEMPERATURE



If your walk takes you on a lot of paved surfaces, consider the temperature. Even on cooler days, the sun can heat up paved surfaces to uncomfortable temperatures. And definitely avoid paved surfaces when the heat is on!

4

PAW SAFETY



Booties can keep winter cold out, and salt and other ice-melting chemicals off feet. If your dog doesn't wear booties, make sure to wipe their feet off as soon as you get home. It takes practice, but many dogs learn to accept their footwear!

5

MEET AND GREET



Although encountering other dogs can be exciting for your dog, some dogs are wary of others and don't enjoy these interactions. Being leashed also makes some dogs more aggressive, so approach any new dog the same way you would for yourself - with caution.

6

KEEP THE DISTANCE SENSIBLE

Before setting out, know your route and tailor the distance to your dog's fitness level.

7

GEARING UP

For some dogs, a harness is a better option for walking than a conventional collar. Ask your veterinarian for guidance and in either case, make sure your gear fits properly and is kept clean!

8

PULLING

If walking is becoming a tug-of-war between you and your pooch, consider some [special gear and extra training](#). The time you put in will not only help your shoulders but will help others who might need to walk your pet in the future.

9

TAKE A SICK DAY

If your pup is injured or under the weather, it might be best to cut your daily work short or take a day off. Many dogs will power through a walk when they're less than 100% but this can exacerbate an injury or prolong recovery from an illness. Your veterinarian can help you make this decision, if needed.

10

BE PREPARED

Check out our [Outdoor Safety Checklist](#) to make sure you've got everything you need for a long walk with your pup.

Learn more about our [canine health studies](#) and [how you can help](#) keep your dog in tip-top shape for all the activities you share together!