

TOP TIPS

FOR

puppy's first walk



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Congratulations on your new puppy!

It's such an exciting time. One of the big events that most new puppy owners look forward to is taking their pup out and about for the first time.

So, the day has finally come, you've got your pup all togged up with their lovely new harness and lead, opened the door to the big wide world and... NOTHING! They refuse to move and look terrified. Oh... this is not what you had in mind! Should you pick them up? Encourage them along a bit?



It's a surprisingly common issue but the good news is that you can use the time you have while you're waiting for your puppy to be allowed out, to make that first walk as fun and stress-free as possible... setting you and your puppy up for success in the future. You'd be stunned by how many dogs are worried by walks, stemming from issues occurring on those early trips out.

Follow my tips to help your pup to LOVE walks!

Gretta

1 Preparation

Before you take your puppy out, spend time building a trusting relationship with them. You can also introduce them to the equipment that they will be wearing for walks (collar, harness, lead). Handle them gently and feed lots of tasty treats!

Allow your pup to have plenty of opportunities to explore your house/ garden wearing this equipment for short periods of supervised time.

You can also carry your puppy around outside so that they get used to the sounds and smells of outdoors, while in the safety of your arms.



2 Planning

Rather than just heading out, think in advance about the best time of day to do this and where you will go.

Consider factors such as when your pup is generally active, what the traffic will be like at various times/ places, when/ where there might be too many other dogs around for a first time etc.

In most cases, it's usually best if you don't arrange to meet up with another owner and their dog for the first few walks.

Instead, you'll aim to allow your pup to have time to explore and perhaps watch some other dogs from a distance.

Avoid planning your first walk for a time when you have other time restrictions: puppies tend to take AGES to get anywhere much to begin with!



3 Going Out!

It is very common for young puppies to be overwhelmed and nervous about going out for the first time. They might freeze and not want to move on, try to run back home, cower away from (or lunge towards) things that worry them, be wary of other dogs/ people or simply take a very long time to get anywhere!

- Allow your pup to go at their own pace and take time to sniff around.
- Don't put any pressure on them to do anything in particular (this includes luring them with food). Choice builds confidence!
- Reward any moments of engagement with you.
- Help them out if they get worried (it's ok to pick them up and reassure them if they need you).
- Don't worry about them zig-zagging all over the place and getting tangled in their lead. Your priority should be keeping everything fun and relaxed for the first few trips out - training can come later.
- Keep the walk short and sweet - no more than about 15 minutes to begin with.



4 Coming Home

Once home, take your puppy to their toileting area straight away to give them an opportunity to wee/ poo. Whilst this might seem strange (surely they would have gone on the walk?), puppies are often reluctant to 'go' out on walks initially. This is perfectly normal - when they're more confident, they'll be happy to spread their scent around the neighbourhood, along with the adult dogs!

Also make sure that they have got access to some water (walking... or should I say sniffing!.... is thirsty work).

Now it's time for a nap!



ABOUT

The Pitter Patter of Tiny Paws

I'm Gretta... It's great to 'meet' you!

I love nothing more than helping people and their puppies share happy lives together. Working as Clinical Animal Behaviourist and Dog Trainer over the years has been immensely satisfying but I've been struck by how often clients would realise what had gone wrong and say 'if only I'd known earlier'. Every time it happened, I really felt for them – and their dog.

Having had the pleasure of teaching students, trainees and vets how best to prevent and deal with dog behaviour and training problems, I knew that

what really mattered to me was sharing my proactive and personalised approach to puppy raising and training directly with the people who need me most: new puppy owners and those planning to get a puppy....

The Pitter Patter of
Tiny Paws was born.

Gretta x



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