

## Target Walking

This exercise is a very structured way to teach your adolescent dog that pulling will not get her what she wants. The reward for NOT pulling can be anything that your dog desires. Typically in the beginning we use a food reward, but favorite toys can also work (followed by a great game of tug or fetch, or toy switching). People (and known friendly dogs) can also be the "target" if your dog likes to pull to greet someone. Later on this exercise can be applied to environmental targets like a friend's house, dog park, a favorite sniffing place, peeing on something, etc.

This exercise uses a lot of mental energy and teaches impulse control - something an adolescent dog must learn, but remember to not over-do it so you avoid over-frustrating you dog. This exercise can be done inside or outside.

### How To Play

1. Place a "target" such as a treat on the ground. Allow your dog to see you do this.
2. With your dog on leash, walk a certain distance away from the target. This is your starting line.
3. Begin with your dog sitting in the heel position. Step off and begin walking towards the target.
4. At **ANY** point, if your dog pulls on the leash, you will turn around and go back to the starting line and begin again.
5. You can voice your disappointment like "oh no..." when you feel tension on the leash and just before you turn around to go back to the start line. You can also use your no reward marker, but neither is necessary. Just make sure not to yank on the leash when you turn around and go back to the starting line - that is punishment enough!
6. The goal of the exercise is to not have any pulling all the way to the treat.
7. Be careful to not allow a pull at the very end to get the treat! If you have a little trouble with the last few inches, extend your own reach so that there is **absolutely no tension on the leash** when your dog gets the target.
8. Over time you can increase the criteria so that there is even more impulse control needed to get to the target: that your dog "waits" before getting her reward, gives you eye-contact, holds for the Premack cue... only taking the reward when given permission to do so.