



FEATURE

# 5 Tips To Make Dog Walks More Fun

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Taking dogs on a walk every day is necessary, but it can get old if you are walking the same path every day. This is true for both the dog and the owner.

Additionally, what may seem like only a few years to us has been half a lifetime for our dogs! They have been seeing this same trail for a really long time. Dogs have a much different lifespan than people, so their years translate differently. This is commonly called 'dog years' and it seems so fast from our point of view. From the dog's perspective, it is more than time to change things up.



Here are a few ways you can change the routine of your walk to make it more enjoyable for you and your dog.

## 1. Find a place they can be off-leash

Sometimes, just letting your dog run free is the perfect change in routine. An enclosed space, like a dog park, is perfect for letting your companion tire themselves out while also getting to explore and see new things.

This may not seem like a big deal, but letting your dog explore new spaces actually does a lot of good for their mental state. Exploring exercises the mind of the dog, which is a key factor in making them truly tired and content. A dog that isn't getting this may start getting destructive or irritated and the routine walk may stop alleviating these symptoms.

It can also be a chance to practise recall training by having your dog come to you randomly while they are exploring. This will provide both physical and mental exercise. It also gives you a chance to sit down and take a small break while your dog runs like crazy!

## 2. Do tricks along the way

If you can't change the setting of the walk, then you have to change the way that the walk is proctored. As the person holding the leash, you have the power to do this.

Before you leave, get some training treats or cut-up cheese or hotdogs, and put them in a little bag to go on your walk with you. Throughout your walk, have your dog do some tricks. These can be old tricks, new tricks, or anything in between. Something simple like having them sit will change up the routine just as easily as having them roll over on the sidewalk.



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Your dog will be very focused on you and the treats that you have along your walk. They may not even be paying attention to the setting anymore. Most dogs are people-pleasers. They want to be praised and they want that treat. This will make the walk even more fun for them.

They also get in a great training session and dust off those cobwebs that might be growing on those old dogs!

### 3. Change the pace

Walking can be very monotonous, especially for something that can't hold a conversation. Changing the pace of the walk could help your dog to become more invested in the walk and, therefore, more excited.

This can be for the entire walk, such as taking your dog on a run instead of a walk. Obviously, some dogs are not cut out for this. But even just a power-walk can have the same effect. It can be intermittent. Start off walking the trail, then randomly speed up and slow down. Having your dog match your changing pace will not only keep them interested, it is also a great leash training exercise.

### 4. Let them sniff

The walk will be much more enjoyable for your dog if they are allowed to sniff around. If they have been kept strictly to your side, then that is excellent! They have been trained very well. Letting them then sniff around will allow them to see the path in an entirely new way.

Dogs see the world through their noses. Everything they smell tells a different story and leads to new paths. You might think it's weird that your dog tries to sniff that mailbox every time you walk past, but they are just trying to meet the neighbours!

Much like it would a child, letting your dog learn about the world around them will make them happy.

### 5. Bring a friend

There is probably no better way to make your walks more enjoyable than to bring a friend for yourself and for your dog. Not only will you have someone to catch up with as you walk, but your dog will also get a playmate for a time!

Socialisation is extremely important in dogs. First, it helps them to curb any aggressive tendencies towards other dogs. Being around these other dogs teaches them that they don't need to be scared and lash out in fear. Moreover, it lets them play together, getting out their energy in a way that a simple walk will never be able to do.

Just like you want to spend time with your friends, so does your dog. Setting up a walking playdate will make the routine path seem like an entirely new world.

### In Summary

In order for your dog to be as healthy and happy as possible, they need to be physically and mentally exercised.

By mixing up your walking routine a little bit, you will be enriching your dog's life. It will also help you to get more happiness out of the time spent with your furry friend!

