



PODCAST TRANSCRIPT

## Canine Master on Pet Life Radio - Episode #14 How to Get Your Dog to Walk Nicely on a Leash

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Hi, welcome to the Canine Master on Pet Life Radio. Today on the show we're going to talk all about leash walking. It's one of the most requested behaviors I get asked to teach my clients is, how do I get my dog to stop pulling on a leash? How do I get them to walk nicely on a leash? It seems to be a really big problem because we see people being pulled down the road and putting themselves in danger, and the dogs in danger, every day. So today we're going to talk about how to get your dog to politely walk on a leash, and we're also going to review several of the popular leash training tools and, which one might be best for you and your dog.

Walking your dog on a leash should be one of the most enjoyable activities you do with your dog. It's supposed to be really fun. When we go for long walks with our dog, it is really a healthy and rewarding experience for us. We get outside, we get to enjoy nature, we get to be social with our friends, and it really becomes a fun thing, if your dog is walking correctly on a leash. However, there are many people out there that actually dread walking their dogs on the leash. It actually becomes a very big anxiety- provoking activity because the dog not only is pulling them but maybe we have a reactive dog, where the dog is lunging and barking and he becomes really hard to control. And many times it feels like even the dog is walking us.

So let's break down the pains, I say the pains, of walking a dog or leash walking. When a dog is pulling, let's break down the pains here. What are the issues that we get? When a dog is pulling, it puts the dog in front of you and he becomes the leader. He is actually leading the hunt. It's not fun when a dog is walking and pulling you like this. It becomes incredibly embarrassing. You're walking down the street and the dog's pulling you and people are looking at like, hey lady, why don't you go get your dog trained? It actually becomes kind of embarrassing.

Many times the dog becomes reactive. And why is he reactive? Because you're putting them in front of you and he's in charge of all the decisions. He determines who's friendly and who is foe. And it also can be dangerous. It can be dangerous because many dogs that are pulling you can pull your right over. I've seen people break hips and elbows and wrists

and things like this. It actually becomes a very dangerous situation. I had a lady last year who had a dog pull her over and she did a face plant right into the pavement, and that did not look pretty when she had broken teeth. Another thing is, it becomes really uncomfortable to be pulled the whole time, it's not a comfortable and enjoyable walk.

The other thing is, is that sometimes, when a dog is on a leash, he may be pulling you but at other times he may actually be putting his brakes on and not moving forward, and that becomes hard. You're sitting there dragging the dog down the road or down the sidewalk. I have seen at other times when dogs become injured from being pulling. We see collapsed trachea. The collapsed trachea... the trachea is the windpipe, it's in the dog's throat, and many times a dog that is pulling will put pressure on that trachea, and what happens is, is that it collapses it. We see this a lot in smaller dogs.

Dogs that are prone to seizures, or have epilepsy, those dogs, you will see a higher incidence of a dog having a seizure after it's been pulling on a leash, and where a collar's around the dog's neck. So it must be something, and I'm not sure why this is, and there might be some studies out there, but why does a dog much more likely to have a seizure after he's been pulling himself on a leash and it's pushing against the windpipe? Maybe it's lack of oxygen to the brain. I don't know. But many dogs will have seizures right after they've been pulling.

Another thing is when a dog is pulling on a leash, you don't have a lot of control, because you can't put slack into the leash, it's harder, and it's hard to get the dog to be redirected. A lot of times you'll see that your hands are getting chaffed and burned, especially with those nylon leashes.

So most of this all comes down to one thing. What is the position that your dog is walking in? If a dog is pulling you, he's in front of you. But if you start out in front of your dog, where you start out where the dog is actually walking behind you, and he's not in front of you, he's taking your lead, he's taking your lead, he's following you. And this is a much more natural position. It's interesting, heel is not a natural position. Heel is a manmade position made up by hunters back in the twenties. They used to walk their labs on their left, because a lot of these guys were right-handed, and they carry their rifles in their right hands. We actually see heel going back to the Vikings where they had their Mastiffs, and they'd go into battle with the dogs next to them. But again, heel is a manmade position. It makes no sense to your dog. Heel is a position that is a conflict position. I'm in charge. You pop your dog to get him back behind you and pull him, and that he's behind you. It's a conflict position. It's a total struggle. It is not a natural position.

Next time you see a bunch of canines walking, or if you ever get the opportunity to watch wild dogs or street dogs or even wolves, watch how they travel. They don't travel side by side in that heel position. The leader goes first and the rest of the pack follows. What you're going to see is, the other dogs are following because they're taking the leader's lead. He directs the hunt. He's the most experienced. So having dogs walk behind you is a very natural position. Having the dogs walk in front of you is another natural position, but it is not preferable because then the dog starts to pull and becomes reactive.

So we start out with a dog being about 18 inches, or an arm's length, behind you. When the

dog is walking behind you, he can't become reactive. So anybody who has dog aggression issues or dogs that are reactive and go crazy when they see another dog or a person, get the dog behind you and win that position. And guess what will happen folks? I promise you that a dog that is walking 18 inches behind you will not be aggressive on a leash, or reactive. They'll actually become very relaxed. And you're desensitizing him because you're in front. We've talked about this before on other shows. Get the dog behind you and he starts to relax.

This is a natural position for puppies. You go find me an eight-week old puppy, that's with its mother, and you put him on a field, or you walk them down in a yard, watch how the puppies follow mom. This is natural. Mom goes first, she determines all the interactions around her, and the rest of the puppies will follow. So your puppies, at eight weeks old, when you get them, and that's a great age to get your puppies, come pre programmed to follow you. Very interesting.

How many times, when you get an eight-week old puppy and you open up the door and they won't go out the door first, that's because they're waiting for you to go through the doorway first. They are pre programmed to follow you. And here's the trick folks. When they're following you at eight weeks old, keep it going. Keep enforcing that position and your dogs will naturally be good leash walkers.

Again, it needs to be about 18 inches, one to two feet behind you. And there's no gray area here. You really need to enforce that distance. If you could stick out your leg to the side, or you could touch your dog when he's behind you, he's not far enough back. It's very, very important that you're very consistent on this position. Don't let the dog start to encroach on that space, because if he starts getting behind your rear end and he's getting close, he actually doesn't think you have it covered and he's actually fighting to get past you and doesn't think of you as someone that can lead him on the walk. That's where they're supposed to be. And again, that heel position, although it's nice to have the dogs next to you, is a conflict position. It's basically your travel position.

So how do I get my dogs to walk behind me if they're not puppies? If they're puppies, it's really easy because they come pre programmed that way. But if they're not puppies, what I do is, I'm going to grab some treats, I'm going to get a bait pouch, put that on my belt. I'm going to grab some treats and I'm going to lure the dog behind me, with a treat in my hand. And as soon as he goes back behind you, I want you to click and treat, if you have a clicker. If you don't have a clicker, make a marker word, yes, and then follow it by a treat. You're going to use the lure hand to get them behind you, and as soon as he's behind you, you click and you treat. Do that a few times as you start to walk.

Now, I don't want the dog just following the lure because all of a sudden he won't be looking at his space. Pretty soon we want to fade that lure, or get rid of that lure, to where the dogs walking behind me. As much as you can use your marker word, or the clicker, to mark him behind you and reinforce that position the better. Your body language is really important here folks. You need to make sure the dog sees you as someone capable of leading him. So put your back to the dog. Don't turn and defer to the dog when you're leash walking. That will actually make him pull in the opposite direction. Keep the dog behind you. Click, treat, go a few more steps. If he's still behind, click, treat.

And if he tries to pass you or gets too close to you, you're going to get him a guttural tone "ahh ahh ahh ahh". You're going to turn, now you are going to turn and face him, you're going to put a little bit of body pressure on him, sort of leading with your head, not bending over too far, I don't want it to be threatening, but just enough body pressure to get him back. Use your feet if you have to, and continue. And when I say use your feet, to gently nudge him back farther. You can use the leash to keep him back if you want to, but dogs have what we call opposition reflex. And opposition reflex is where a dog pulls in one direction and you pull the other. It actually is one of the great reasons, and we'll talk about this in a little bit, why dogs do pull. So when you pull the dog behind you, make sure it's a pull and then you release. Don't keep tension on the leash.

So when you're walking the dog behind you, make sure there's no tension in the leash, because if there is, the dog is just fighting you, he's not really learning the new position. So you're going to use your clicker, you're going to use your body language, you're going to use the leash to help guide him that way, and you're going to start reinforcing the dog being behind you.

Now what I do is I start to get a few steps. What I tell people is, start getting like 15 feet. Walk, click, treat. Let's walk. I use the word let's walk, you can use any words you want, with me. Whatever cue you want to use will work. I do use the word "let's walk", and let's walk means walk behind me. It is a travel position. It's a travel position, and there's a beginning and there's an end because, let's face it, just like heel, there's a beginning and an end. Just like sit, there's a beginning and an end. So when I put the dog into the let's walk position, he's in that position until I tell him to get out of that position. I release him. "Free dog", is what I use. It releases the dog out of the position. Some of you will use the word, "okay". I really don't care, but there needs to be a beginning and an end to this cue. And it's a travel position, just like sit is a stationary position, or down.

All right, when my dog is behind me, I'm going to repeat this again, I'm sorry, I just have to do it. Your dog is going to become nonreactive. And it's a natural position that they learned when they were puppies. You're going to have more control, and the dog, guess what, will stop pulling. So, again, no tension on the leash because, opposition reflex, the harder I pull a dog in one direction, the harder they pull in the other direction. It's sort of like a horse. You ever pushed against the horse? I don't know if anybody are equine people out there, but you push against a horse, they push back against you. That's opposition reflex. When I'm pulling on a leash, the dog will actually pull in the opposite direction. It's a natural instinct and we actually are promoting pulling by pulling in the opposite direction. So when your dog is walking forward, use that correct body language. Expect them to follow behind you. If they try to get too close, "ahhh", pull them back. And I say how to pull them back, I'm going to tell you how to do that with the correct tools that we're going to talk about in a little bit.

If your dog sees you as the leader, what happens is, the dog will naturally want to go behind you. You'll find that fearful dogs, when they want to walk behind you, it's actually a comfortable position for them. And once you guide them there, they'll be like, yeah, you go first, I'm scared to death. So for a fearful dog, walking behind you is much easier. For a dog that's more dominant, you're going to have your little battle there. But what I tell you to do is, become your dog's leader. I know that's a bad word for some people out there in the

training industry, but let's face it, it's either you're in charge or the dog's in charge. There is no democracy amongst canines. Have the dog follow you. Take away the decision making of where he goes. Let him follow your lead. He'll actually become really comfortable in this new spot and you'll find that your dog will be much easier to walk. It is a little bit of a battle in the very beginning, but as soon as you win that battle it becomes much easier.

All right, I sort of went through on how to get the dogs to walk behind you in the correct position. Again, that 18 inches behind you. But, there are some tools, some training tools, that will actually help you do this easier. Because some of you are going to say, yeah, right, Chris, there's no way that dog's walking behind me. Okay, so here's how we do it.

First thing you want to get yourself is a nice leather, six-foot leash, six foot leather leash. Why a six-foot leather leash? Because that leather leash, if you take care of it, will last you for 20 years. That's the first thing. If you don't let your dog chew it. The other thing is, it's soft in your hands and nylon tends to slide and burn your hands, and it's hard on your hands, and it hurts. I tell people to get yourself a nice leather leash, break it in, and they work really well. There are those nylon leashes that have little rubber stubble on them, sort of, and that's like a gripping leash. Those work as well, but I find that the leather leash works great. You might want to try to get yourself a traffic leash. We see these in Europe a lot. The traffic leash has little sort of rings on it along the length of the leash, and it allows you to clip the leash around you, to clip it around a pole or a tree. I like that leash a lot, but that's not going to help you with the leash walking. Six-foot leather leash.

Do not use a retractable leash to teach your dog how to walk nicely on a leash. You know, I have big problems with retractable leashes, although I see their benefit. Many times retractable leashes are dangerous. The leash or the cord can go around your leg, and if the dog takes off, or go around your finger, there's been some amputations over the past many years of retractables. It's very hard to grip and it's hard to control. So retractable leashes, especially in city environments, are not something I would recommend.

Rope. Some people have those rope leashes. Again, it could cause rope burn. Hard to control. And I've already talked about nylon, where they burn and slide. Cotton can work. A cotton leash, a nice soft cotton leash. I've seen that. Or those hemp leashes are nice. But again, a dog can chew through them very, very quickly, so probably not something I would recommend. Leather leash works great. Chain leashes, total disaster. Talk about hard on your hands. I wouldn't use those. The bungee leashes. You've see in those, very popular these days, they get a little bit of stretch to them. Again, I have a little bit of a problem because they're hard to control. It depends on how far they stretch. But again, it's not an easy leash to control. Those slip leashes that go around the dog's neck and they're meant to choke the dogs. You see those slip leashes at your vet. A lot of times kennels and vets will use those. They're fine for those environments, but they are not fine to walk your dog as it chokes your dogs and collapses the trachea. So, what kind of leash should you get? Six foot leather leash is the best recommendation for you.

How do I hold the leash? Well, the leash has a loop on the end. I stick my thumb through the loop and I gather up the slack. I put my hand around it. I don't wrap the leash around my arm or wrap it around my wrist because, if you fall, you don't want to be dragged down the street. Especially if you have a Mastiff or a bigger dog. They can actually do a lot of damage.

Just stick your thumb through the loop and then coil up and hold around the coil. You want to have the leash in front of your body, where the dog is sort of... I like kind of walking the dogs behind me, but kind of to the left. They say you want to walk into traffic, not with traffic. So if you're walking with traffic, like you ride your bicycle, the dog would be on the inside towards the road. But in the United States, you would want to walk your dog against traffic, where the dog is now slightly to your left, but behind you, and he's away from traffic so he doesn't get hit by a car.

If you're in the UK, I'm not sure which way you should do it. But for the people in America and the rest of those countries that travel in the same traffic patterns, you're going to have your dog walking on your left and behind you again. If you're holding the leash, right hand is what the leash I like to have, and then my left hand becomes my of pull hand. That's what I use to pull the dog back behind me. That should work well. Leash being held in my right hand, left hand is my pull hand.

Okay, now let's look at our collars and their uses. There's a bunch of collars out there, which we use in compulsion training. I'm not a big compulsion trainer, although I do think that in every training practice, a need for a correction is sometimes warranted. But I like to teach in a very positive, motivational way. But if I have a dog that's reactive, I can understand why one would use compulsion, but there are other techniques to actually counter that. Just FYI folks.

A choke collar, that's that chain collar that goes around a dog's neck, is very common. We see these everywhere. They're pretty dangerous actually. I don't recommend using them. The reason why is, is that it actually is causing pain on your dog. No matter what people say, that it's the sound of the clinking chain. That's a lot of, well, it's not true, guess I'll put it that way. The dog is actually getting compression around the neck in a fast way, and it hurts, and it's not nice. And it's compulsion training. It's training your dog through fear and intimidation. Dogs react to compression training around the neck because they try to avoid the pain. The other thing is, very few people know how to use these collars correctly. So I'm going to show you how to use them correctly, or explain it. But again, it's not my preferred method, and I would recommend some of the other methods.

When you go to put your choke collar on your dog and you're facing your dog, you want to make sure that when the collar is facing you, and you're facing the collar, that it forms a P over the dog's neck, not a Q. If a Q, if you put it on, it won't release. A P, when you pop the dog, it actually, the chain will release. So again, if you're facing your dog and you have the collar in your hands, it should look like a P as you place it over the dog's neck. If it looks like a Q, you're putting it on backwards. And then, actually, it's going to strangle your dog.

The way you use a choke collar, it's a pop, it's not a pull. It's pop, release. You got to start off with slack. It's almost like, when I say a pop, what's a pop? A pop is like taking a hammer and hitting a nail into wood. What you're doing with your wrist and your hand is you're creating a pop and release. Pop and release. That's the motion that you're supposed to use with a choke collar. Again, folks, I'm not really psyched about these collars.

Prong collars - again, you use a popping mechanism. They actually look like Chinese torture chambers. 15 years ago, if you came to my center with a prong collar on, I actually would

send you away and tell you, you can't bring a prong collar into my canine center. I thought they looked horrible. And it wasn't until I started seeing the benefits of them. And for those of you who are against compulsion training, you're going to cringe as I say this, but, I got to tell you, there are times that a prong collar, I think, can be useful. If I have a very, very, very reactive dog, then they can sometimes be useful. If I have a reactive dog and that the person who is the owner is not a strong person, or an elderly person, I have found that the prong collar can be useful.

I'm going to tell you one thing that I think before you start going out and buying a prong collar is that, if you're going to use a prong collar, you better go hire a trainer that knows how to use them correctly. And it is not a collar that you use all the time. And it is not a collar that you just jump to when you're having problems with your dogs. I'm going to give you some other examples today that I think are far better than the prong collar. But if you are an elderly person and you got yourself a big dog, or you're handicapped in some way, or you just don't have upper body strength like some people, a prong collar may be the way to go.

How does it work? It acts like your teeth around the dog's neck. The most dominating place on a dog is around his neck. So if you put a prong collar on and you give a pop on that prong collar, it's sort of like your teeth going around the dog. For a fearful dog, this may be a disaster. You really, again, need to get yourself a dog trainer that knows how to use these if this is the way you want to go. You want to make sure that the prong collar you get is the correct one. It should be a quick release prong collar. And a quick release actually has these little pinchers that allow you to adjust along the way. So when you go to buy one, make sure you get the quick release prong, not the ones that you have to squeeze the links in order to disconnect them. The best brand out there is the Sprenger from Germany, S-P-R-E-N-G-E-R, I believe it is. And that is actually the best one made. The prongs, those little edges aren't sharp, they're rounded, and they don't hurt your dog. If you ever wonder how it feels to your dog, what I tell people to do is stick the prong collar around your thigh, with a pair of pants on, and give it a pop. That's how it's going to feel. It's not so bad, but dogs tend to react very quickly to it.

Another thing is you want to make sure it's fit correctly. If it's too loose, and that's what we tend to do is, oh, I don't want to make it too tight. If it's too loose, it actually becomes less effective and it actually pinches the skin. If it's too tight, it actually goes in straight. So when I say too tight, you should be able to take one finger and stick it underneath two teeth when it's on. If you can do that, that's the right fit. It should stay up high on the neck, not sliding down. And it should stay there, not sliding down all the time. Again, too loose of a prong collar will actually pinch the skin and it will become very painful. So tend to a little bit more of a snug fit, not too tight. Obviously, we don't want those prongs shooting into the skin. But something that's just staying up high on the neck, and that's where we want it. I always tell people, get it fit by a professional.

Here's the other thing is, is that a prong collar, the timing of the correction needs to be done at exactly the right moment. If you correct too late, then the dog gets the wrong message. So any type of compulsion training, if that's your route, the training of the pop has to come at the right time, or you need to use something called a marker that means the pop's coming. You might go "ahh ahh", and then the pop. If you're going to train that way, timing is critical. And it needs to be fast and over with. Again, folks, if you're going to use compulsion

training, work with a professional that knows how to do it and you might try using positive motivational training. I think it actually works better and that's the way I prefer everybody to go.

If you put a prong collar on your dog, people are going to look at you like, oh my God, look what they're doing. You would never stick a prong collar on a puppy underneath six months. Never, never. So if you're going to use a prong collar, make sure the dog is old enough. And if you're going to use it, make sure you know what you're doing because a prong collar in the wrong hands is a disaster. If you have a dog that is really hypersensitive to pain, a prong collar isn't one I would use. Even though the neck is the thickest skin around a dog's body, I still wouldn't use it.

So how do I do a pain threshold test? I'm going to tell you. You put the dog next to you, seated on the floor. We do this in puppy testing, and it gives me an idea of how sensitive my dog is to pain. I'm going to take my thumbnail in the webbing of the foot and I'm going to start off very softly, barely feeling it, and I'm going to count to ten. One, two, three, as I increase the pressure of my nail into the webbing. If I can get to three and the dog is pulling away his paw, that dog is sensitive to pain. Don't use a prong collar. If you get to six, seven, eight, nine, 10, your dog has a higher pain threshold, and maybe a prong collar would work for you. But you better understand your pain sensitivity of your dog before you jump into that kind of thing.

Okay, a flat collar. A flat buckled collar, used with a clicker, body pressure, is the best way to go. That's how I tell my clients to come to class. I want to make sure that the collars fit correctly. Two fingers snug underneath the collar. The other one that we see people take is the Martingale. The Martingale is fine. It does constrict around the neck. You would never leave a Martingale collar on all the time. It's only meant during training. It does give compression around the neck. It works. It's not my preferred. A rolled leather collar is very dangerous. I've seen dogs actually strangle when playing with another dog. So the flat buckle collar is a big winner for me.

The other one is a harness. A front clip harness is the best one. It clips on the front and as the dog pulls, you pull the dog back towards you. It reorients the dog. I think the front clip harness is a great way to go if you have a pulling dog. Again, using the clicker, works fabulous. And that's one of the ways I would absolutely go.

Another one that we use at the canine center a lot is the gentle leader, or the Halti, made by my friend Dr. Roger Mugford at Company of Animals. The Halti, or the Gentle Leader, some people call them a promise collar, works incredibly well. It acts like a horse halter. And, where the horses head goes, the body must follow. Same thing with dogs. It actually redirects the dog. It helps control, it puts pressure around the muzzle and the back of the neck when you pull, which are the two most dominating parts on a dog. And what happens is, is that the dog gets redirected where he's going. The only thing I find with these kinds of head halters, and gentle leaders, is that many dogs fight them like crazy and they have a hard time. So, you've got to adjust the dog. Put them on, give some treats, take them off. Put them on, work up the time, more treats, take it off. Until the dog is really comfortable with it coming on and off then take your dog on a short walk. Again, keeping it really positive. And I would use a clicker to teach the position.



The Gentle Leader works fine, the front clip harnesses work fine, and a flat collar works fine as well. Those are the ones I'm going to recommend. Remember, your dog should take your lead and keep your pace and the leash walking should be on your terms, not on the dog's terms.

I want to tell you that these tools, that I've just talked about, are training tools. The clicker, the gentle leader, the prong collar, if necessary, the harnesses, these are actually tools to help you accomplish a good leash walk. These are not tools that you should be using for the life of your dog. By using positive motivation, by clicking and treating the precise moments, by fading your treats, fading your lures, what happens is, is that your dog quickly understands this new position and gets to understand that this is a very comfortable leash walking position. He'll like being in this position, he doesn't have to worry about things. You've taken the lead. This is your new relationship. You will find that your dog walks nicely on a leash and there's no more pulling, no more reactivity. And what you're going to find is that your dog enjoys the walk more than you think he would. He doesn't have to walk in front of you or next to you to enjoy his walk. You're his leader, he takes your lead and he's just going to enjoy the new position that you've put him in. And it really is a nice, nice way to walk your dog. So, these tools are just that. They're tools to help you teach your dog the correct position, but they are not tools that you use for the life of your dog.

Jaimee, do we have any questions today from any of our listeners?

**Jaimee:** We sure do. This is a very popular topic. Our first question comes from Hank from Florida. "Hi Chris. I have a very stubborn English Springer Spaniel who likes to put the brakes on when we walk. He simply just will not come with me on leash if he doesn't feel like it. How can I coax him?"

**Chris:** Ah, this is great. Okay. One of the things that you want to do is that, when you're walking your Springer, make sure that you have slack in the leash. So pulling the dog will put that opposition reflex. Make sure you have a clicker. What I would try doing is taking a lure, taking a treat in your hand, and luring him with you. What he takes up a couple of steps, click and treat, but make sure that your back is to your dog. So it gets a little tricky. You're going to start off, you've got a bait bag, you've got a clicker in your right hand. I know this is... you're holding a lot of things here, and you start walking. You are going to click and treat any step in your direction. But, if you start pulling the dog, he's going to put the brakes on. And here's the other thing is, if you turn to face your dog when he's doing this, he's definitely going to put the brakes on because then you're actually deferring. So put your back to your dog and expect him to follow you.

One of the other tricks that I have done, if I have a real dog that is really stubborn in this way, is that I pull the dog a little close to me, and there you are pulling, so he's going to fight you, then put slack in my leash and then I talk to him, come on buddy, come on, let's go, let's go, and I start walking. He will start following you for a moment. Click and treat that free movement. Reinforce with a clicker and treats any movement in your direction and you will fix this problem.

**Jaimee:** Our next question comes from Debbie from Connecticut. She says, "Hi Chris. I have two Poodles who do walk behind me." She's actually an old student of yours, so she knows

how important that is. Her question is, "When is it okay to let them walk ahead of me and sniff freely to go to the bathroom? My dogs do not like going to the bathroom in the let's walk position."

**Chris:** Okay, so let's walk is just that, it is a training position. It's a walking position, and there's a beginning and an end. So people say, God, I don't want to walk with my dog all the way behind me all the time. Well you don't. It's just when you're in the let's walk position. Maybe you're on a power walk, or you're walking in a city, or you're walking down the sidewalk, the dog should be in the let's walk position. But let's say you come to your potty area, you release him, "free dog" or "okay", and off they go and they can meander and you can sort of meander along the way. The dog could be anywhere in that position. So, let's walk is not a permanent position, there's a beginning and an end. Take your dog to the potty area, release them out of the let's walk position, let them go to the bathroom, and then back to your let's walk again as you continue your power walk, or whatever you're doing.

Okay. I guess that's it. Is there any other questions, Jaimee?

**Jaimee:** All right, so Alison from New York writes, "Hi Chris. I'm concerned. I have a rescue Lab mix who is just so strong on leash no one wants to walk her. We let her out in our backyard, which is fenced, and I fear that if we don't continue to teach her now the proper way to walk, it will just continue to become more difficult. She is too strong and too distracted by other dogs on the leash. She just wants to jump on everyone she sees. It's become impossible to walk her. Help."

**Chris:** So, Alison, I get this. Sometimes it's just easier to let the dog out the back door and not even worry about walking your dog. But it's just not realistic, we do need to walk our dogs. I think... you know, dogs are really social animals, they like to get out and walk and meet people. And gosh, didn't we get a dog to be our companion, to go with us to ballgames for our kids, and bring him places, to the bus stop. So I think teaching your dog to walk on a leash is a really, really important thing.

What I would do, Alison, is, A. I'd get enrolled in a dog class. I also would probably get them used to the gentle leader or the front clip harness, as this is going to really help leash walking. Just having those tools are really, really going to effect the way in which you walk the dog. It's going to be much nicer. And of course, get that six foot leather leash. That's helpful too.

What I would do, Alison, is go get enrolled in a class, even work with a private trainer, that helps sometimes. That actually is much more effective. A one hour or two hour private lesson, sometimes that really makes you go farther faster. Those are the things that I would do.

Okay, well that's it for today. And I really hope you guys found our show to be interesting. I'd love to know your comments and have you join the conversation. Also, you can always visit us on CanineMaster.com. That's C-A-N-I-N-E master.com, and let me know what works for you, and what is working for you, and what's not working for you. And tell us about your leash walking challenges that you may be having. Send me your videos and photos so I can see what's going on with your dog and let me help you solve your problems.

Good-bye for now, and see you next time on Canine Master Radio, where I will continue to help you master the relationship with your dog.

*Master* the relationship with your dog!