

# ELEMENT DOG TRAINING

## Heel

- Definition
  - Teaches your dog to walk on a loose leash
- Purpose
  - Allows you and your dog to safely experience the world
- Process
  - Start training at home by rewarding the dog for being in position (head next to your hip)
  - Add in the command “Heel” and start walking, **mark and reward** after 1-2 steps
  - Continue adding distance until you are able to walk for 15-20 steps with the dog at your side
  - Start to add in changes in direction. Reward often enough to keep your dog excited to follow you, in a heel position, around the house
  - Add in the leash so that the dog gets used to having the leash included as part of the exercise
  - Add in low level distractions like the posts of an awning, chairs, and other items that the dog will be minimally interested in. Continue to **mark and reward** for successfully walking past distractions
  - Slowly start increasing the difficulty level of distractions by using moderate distraction (toys, plants, trees) and then high level distraction items (food, people, dogs) until your dog is able to walk calmly past all items
  - If desired, the dog can be taught to sit each time you stop as opposed to just standing by your side. Do this by first rewarding the dog for stopping, ask it to sit, and then reward the sit. After enough repetitions the dog will start to automatically offer a sit each time you stop walking



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- [TransPaw Gear Loose Leash Walking](https://transpawgear.com/mastering-the-art-of-loose-leash-walking-part-1/)
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- Common mistakes when teaching loose leash walking:
  - Working in too distracting an environment
  - Expecting too much from the dog and not rewarding enough in the early stages
  - Punishing the dog for pulling. The dog should look forward to walks and providing a punishment can create anxiety for the dog when it's time to go for a walk
- Tips for Transitioning Outdoors
  - Remember pulling is a self-rewarding behavior when it results in moving forward
  - The key to working outside is to maintain proper distances from distractions, utilize a "leash walk" and perform a "U-turn" to counteract when your dog becomes distracted
  - Each time the dog pulls – Stop and provide a verbal cue such as "this way", then head in the opposite direction. This needs to start from the moment you start the walk
    - We are teaching the dog that in order to go where they want, they need to maintain a loose leash
    - For dogs that do not turn on command and need our help, use the following procedure:
      - When the dog is on a fully extended leash and pulling – Start with a "Leash Walk":
        - Maintain tension in the leash while working up the leash using a hand over hand motion. This results with you moving yourself toward the head of the dog. The dog should not move forward.
      - Next perform a "U Turn"
        - Now that you are positioned near the dog's head, use your body to slowly turn the dog's head/shoulders in the direction that you want them to turn
      - Release the tension in the leash each time the dog moves in the desired direction