



ADVICE SHEET 3

Making Walks More Enjoyable For You And Your Dog

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Introduction

We all know that regular exercise in the fresh air is important for us and our dogs, helping us stay fit and healthy and lowering our stress levels. But does walking your dog sometimes feel like a bit of a chore?



Want some ideas for having more fun with your dog when out on a walk? Why not try some of these:

Explore new locations

Varying where you walk adds interest. Dogs like us, enjoy exploring new places. They particularly like to investigate novel scents, sights and sounds. New locations also mean that your journey is different. The terrain is different and often the length of the walk is different from your usual walks. For sources of information and ideas for new walks check out:

The Forestry Commission –

www.forestry.gov.uk – Large, interesting spaces for dog walkers. Look out for Coatham Wood, Teeside with its own dog activity trail, which includes tunnels, steps, posts and hurdles your dog can try out.

National Trails –

www.nationaltrail.co.uk – National Routes (Scotland) National Trails are long distance routes for walking, cycling which have been created by linking existing local footpaths, bridleways and minor roads and by

developing new ones where there were gaps. Great views and varying terrain. Add in activities for dogs who just love to play in water. Lots of information about canals, rivers and lakes available at www.waterscape.com

And for beaches where you can walk your dog see www.dogfriendly.co.uk

N.B. take care of your dog near water, know their limits. There can be some strong currents in rivers and along the coast.

Remember!

Always choose walks that will suit your individual dog. The amount and type of exercise a dog needs will vary over their lifetime and varies according to their health and breed type. For example, a lively 11 month old Labrador will need a very different exercise regime compared to an 11 year old German Shepherd suffering from arthritis.

Read the Countryside Code to keep your pet safe and protect the environment. When you take your dog out for a walk make sure he/she wears a collar and ID tag stating your

name and address (this is a legal requirement). Always take poo bags with you so that you can dispose of your dog's mess safely and cleanly. Take water for your dog, treats and a toy. Keep your dog under close control to avoid disturbing wildlife and farm animals.

Find a walking buddy

It makes the walk more of a social event for you and your dog. You have someone to chat to and your dog has another dog to play with, explore the environment and get more exercise.

Some ways to meet other dog walkers in addition to the park include:

- Dog training clubs
- Breed specific activities e.g. Gundog trials or organised dog activities e.g. Rally
- Through an advert in your local paper or a dog magazine or noticeboard.

Intersperse your walk with fun activities

Safety first! Choose activities that are safe and fun for your dog.