

Dog Walking Checklist

A dog walking checklist for owners covering gear, route, weather, etiquette and cleanup.

Gear and supplies

- ☐ Fit a comfortable collar or harness that will not slip.
- ☐ Use a sturdy leash suited to your dog and route.
- ☐ Confirm ID tags and microchip details are up to date.
- ☐ Pack enough waste bags for the walk.
- ☐ Bring water and a collapsible bowl on warm or long walks.
- ☐ Carry a few treats for training and recall.

Plan the route

- ☐ Choose a route that matches your dog's fitness and age.
- ☐ Pick quieter paths if your dog is nervous or in training.
- ☐ Note shade and water stops on longer walks.
- ☐ Avoid areas with known hazards or aggressive dogs.
- ☐ Vary routes for enrichment and new sniffing spots.
- ☐ Tell someone your route if walking somewhere remote.

Check the weather

- ☐ Check the forecast and temperature before heading out.
- ☐ Walk in cooler hours on hot days to protect paws.
- ☐ Test the pavement with your hand for excess heat.
- ☐ Add a coat for cold-sensitive dogs in winter.
- ☐ Wipe paws after walks on salted or icy ground.
- ☐ Shorten or skip walks in extreme heat or cold.

Ask your veterinarian about safe exercise in extreme weather.

On-walk etiquette

- ☐ Keep your dog leashed where required by local rules.
- ☐ Give space to other dogs, people and cyclists.
- ☐ Ask before allowing your dog to greet others.
- ☐ Keep your dog off private lawns and gardens.
- ☐ Reward loose-leash walking and check-ins.
- ☐ Stay aware of traffic and hazards along the way.

Cleanup

- ☐ Pick up waste promptly with a bag.
- ☐ Tie bags securely to avoid leaks.
- ☐ Dispose of waste in an appropriate bin.
- ☐ Carry extra bags in case of a second stop.
- ☐ Use hand sanitizer or wash up after the walk.
- ☐ Keep public spaces and trails clean for everyone.

After the walk

- ☐ Offer water and let your dog cool down and rest.
- ☐ Check paws for cuts, debris, burrs or salt.
- ☐ Look over the coat for ticks after grassy walks.
- ☐ Wipe down muddy or wet fur as needed.
- ☐ Watch for limping, excessive panting or fatigue.
- ☐ Important: This is general information, not professional advice. Consult your veterinarian about safe exercise and a professional trainer for leash or reactivity issues.