

STOP THE PULLING!

The Pet Parent's Guide
to Loose-Leash Walking

SIMPLE, POSITIVE TRAINING
TECHNIQUES THAT ACTUALLY WORK



Better Walks.



Stronger Bond.



Happier Dog.



by Barbie Klapp, MBA

Founder & CEO of 2 Paws Up Inc

Since 2003



WELCOME 🐾



A Personal Note from *Barbie*



Dear Friend,

First — thank you for picking up this guide. The fact that you're here tells me something wonderful about you: you love your dog enough to want your time together to be better. That's exactly the kind of pet parent I've had the joy of serving for more than twenty years.

I'll let you in on a little secret: I've been on the wrong end of a tight leash too. Anyone who has loved a big or small, joyful, ready-for-adventure dog knows the feeling — one squirrel, and suddenly you're water skiing down the sidewalk! So when I tell you there's a gentler, happier way, it comes from my own heart and my own two hands, not just a training manual.

Here's what I want you to hold onto as you read: your dog is not being stubborn, dominant, or difficult. Pulling is simply a habit that got rewarded — and any habit that was learned can be lovingly retrained. In these pages, my team and I share the same positive, force-free techniques we use on thousands of walks every year, right here in our Gwinnett County neighborhoods.

By the last page, you'll understand why your dog pulls, you'll have a simple five-step method to change it, and you'll hold a 30-day plan with printable tools to make it stick. No pain, no fear, no gimmicks — just patience, treats, and a whole lot of celebrating the small wins.

Your walks are about to become the best part of both of your days. I'm cheering for you — and so is your dog.

With two paws up,

Barbie Klapp 🐾

Barbie Klapp, MBA

Founder & CEO, 2 Paws Up Inc

Professional Pet Care, Not an App.



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*Better Walks.
Stronger Bond.
Happier Dog.*



What's Inside This Guide

Welcome! Whether your walks currently feel like water-skiing or you simply want a little more polish, this guide gives you a complete, positive-reinforcement roadmap to loose-leash walking — the same approach our professional team uses on every walk.

The journey, at a glance:

- **Understand (Chapters 1–2):** why dogs pull, and what it really costs both ends of the leash.
- **Set up (Chapters 3–4):** the right equipment and a calm exit routine that starts every walk on the right paw.
- **Train (Chapters 5–7):** rewarding the right behavior, the Five Easy Steps, and handling distractions.
- **Personalize (Chapters 8–9):** breed differences and the three ingredients of a truly great walk.
- **Practice (Chapter 10):** the 30-Day Loose-Leash Challenge that turns technique into habit.
- **Problem-solve (Chapters 11–12):** quick fixes for common hiccups, and when to bring in a professional.
- **Keep going (Chapter 13 + Bonus):** resources, next steps, and printable tools for your fridge and treat pouch.

How to use it:

- **Read Chapters 1–7 first.** They are short, and the method works best as a whole.
- **Print the bonus tools.** Put the Five Easy Steps on the fridge so everyone in the house trains the same way.
- **Go at your dog's pace.** Two to four consistent weeks changes most dogs — the 30-Day Challenge keeps you on track.

Every walk is a training walk — and every loose-leash step deserves a celebration.



WHY DOGS PULL



One of the biggest misconceptions among dog owners is that dogs pull because they're trying to be "dominant." Decades of modern behavioral science have put that myth to rest.

In reality, dogs pull for much simpler reasons:



They walk faster than we do.

A dog's natural pace is a trot — our stroll feels painfully slow to them.



The world is exciting.

Every smell, squirrel, and new sight is motivation to move forward.



Pulling works.

When pulling gets them where they want to go, they're rewarded for the behavior — and it quickly becomes a habit.



Opposition reflex.

Dogs naturally lean into pressure. When the leash tightens, their instinct is to pull against it, not yield to it.



Think of it this way: every time your dog pulls and the walk continues, they just got paid for pulling. The whole game of loose-leash training is **changing what gets paid.**



The good news is that loose-leash walking is a skill any dog can learn with **consistency and positive reinforcement.**

*Better Walks.
Stronger Bond.
Happier Dog.*





*Better walks,
stronger bond,
Happier Dog*

The Cost of Pulling

Pulling isn't just annoying — it has real costs for both ends of the leash.

For your dog:

- **Neck and throat strain.** Constant pressure on a flat collar can affect the trachea and thyroid area, especially in small breeds.
- **Frustration and arousal.** A dog straining at the leash is often over-threshold, making them more reactive to triggers.
- **Fewer walks.** The hardest cost of all: dogs who pull get walked less, which means less exercise, less enrichment, and more pent-up energy — which causes more pulling. It's a cycle.

For you:

- **Shoulder, elbow, and back strain** — leash-pulling injuries are surprisingly common, especially with large dogs.
- **Fall risk.** A sudden lunge on wet pavement or ice can take an adult off their feet.
- **Stress instead of joy.** The walk should be the best part of both of your days.

The bottom line: teaching loose-leash walking isn't cosmetic — it's a health and safety investment for your whole household.



Choosing the Right Equipment

The right gear won't train your dog by itself, but the wrong gear can work against you. Here's what our professional walkers recommend — and what we ask you to avoid.

Recommended:

- ✓ **Front-clip harness** — when the dog pulls, the leash gently redirects them back toward you instead of letting them dig in.
- ✓ **Standard 6-foot leash** — long enough for freedom, short enough for communication.
- ✓ **Treat pouch** — rewards need to arrive within 1–2 seconds; pockets are too slow.
- ✓ **High-value treats** — pea-sized, soft, and smelly. Save the boring biscuits for the living room.
- ✓ **Comfortable walking shoes** — you'll be changing direction a lot in the early days!

Avoid:

- ✗ **Retractable leashes** — they literally teach dogs that pulling creates more freedom, and they're a safety hazard.
- ✗ **Choke chains and prong collars** — pain-based tools can suppress behavior in the moment while creating fear, and they don't teach the dog what to do instead.
- ✗ **Long lines for neighborhood walks** — great for sniffy field time, wrong tool for teaching leash manners on the sidewalk.

A note on fit: a harness should be snug enough that you can slide two fingers under any strap, with no chafing behind the front legs. If you're unsure, our team is happy to help at your next visit. If you are not in our service area, check with a local dog trainer — they will be happy to help.



Before You Even Leave the House

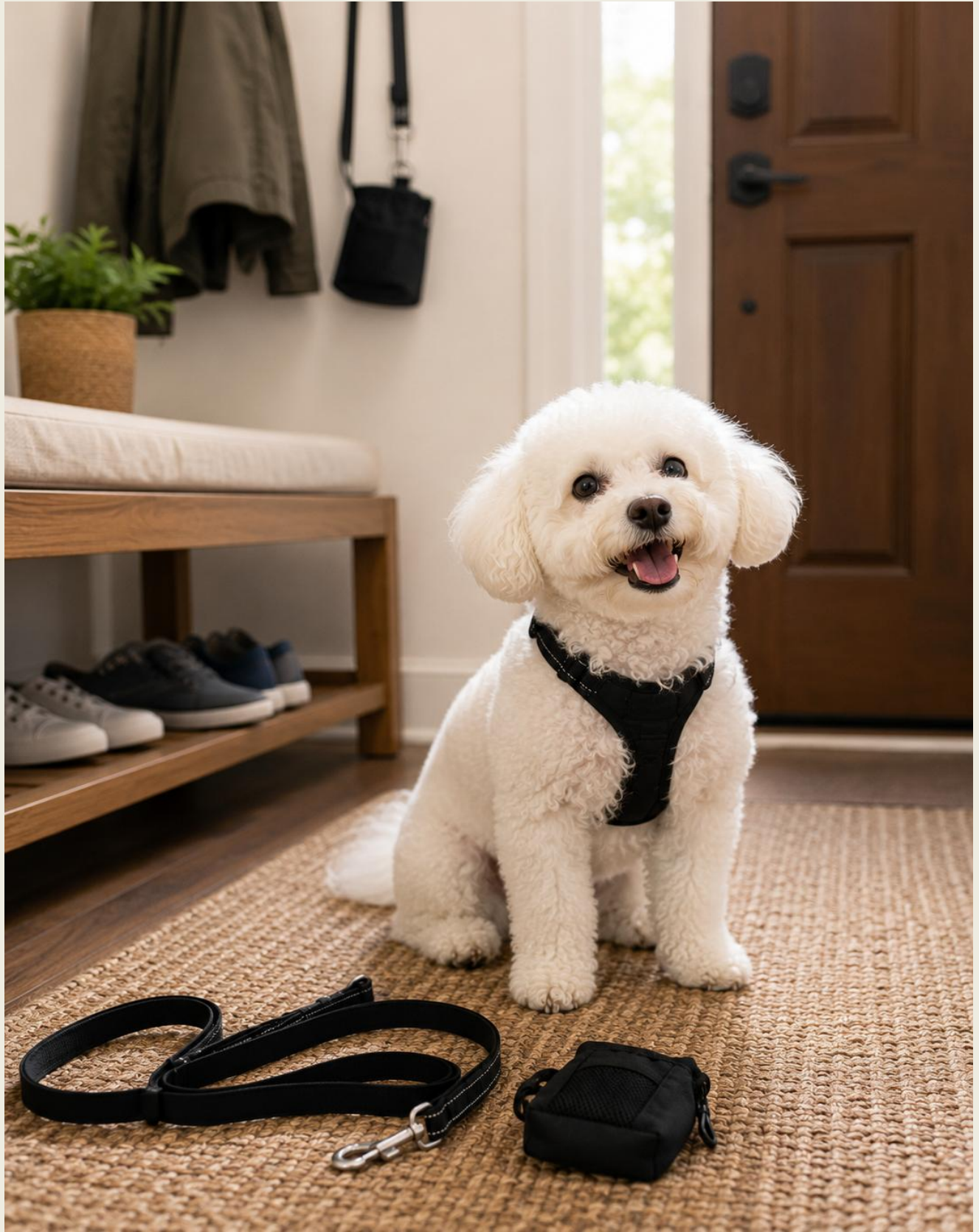
Loose-leash walking starts before the front door opens. If your dog explodes out of the house at a 10 out of 10 excitement level, no training technique on Earth will work on the sidewalk.

Build a calm launch sequence:

- 1** Pick up the leash. If your dog goes wild, put it down and wait.
- 2** Clip the leash only when four paws are on the floor.
- 3** Walk to the door. If they drag you, calmly return to the starting point.
- 4** Open the door only when the leash is loose.
- 5** You step out first — then invite your dog through.

The first few days, this may take ten minutes. By week two, most dogs figure out the fastest way outside is calm behavior. You've just taught your first lesson without saying a word.

Pro tip from our walkers: burn off the top layer of energy first. Two minutes of fetch or a quick training game before the walk makes the whole outing easier.



Reward the Right Behavior

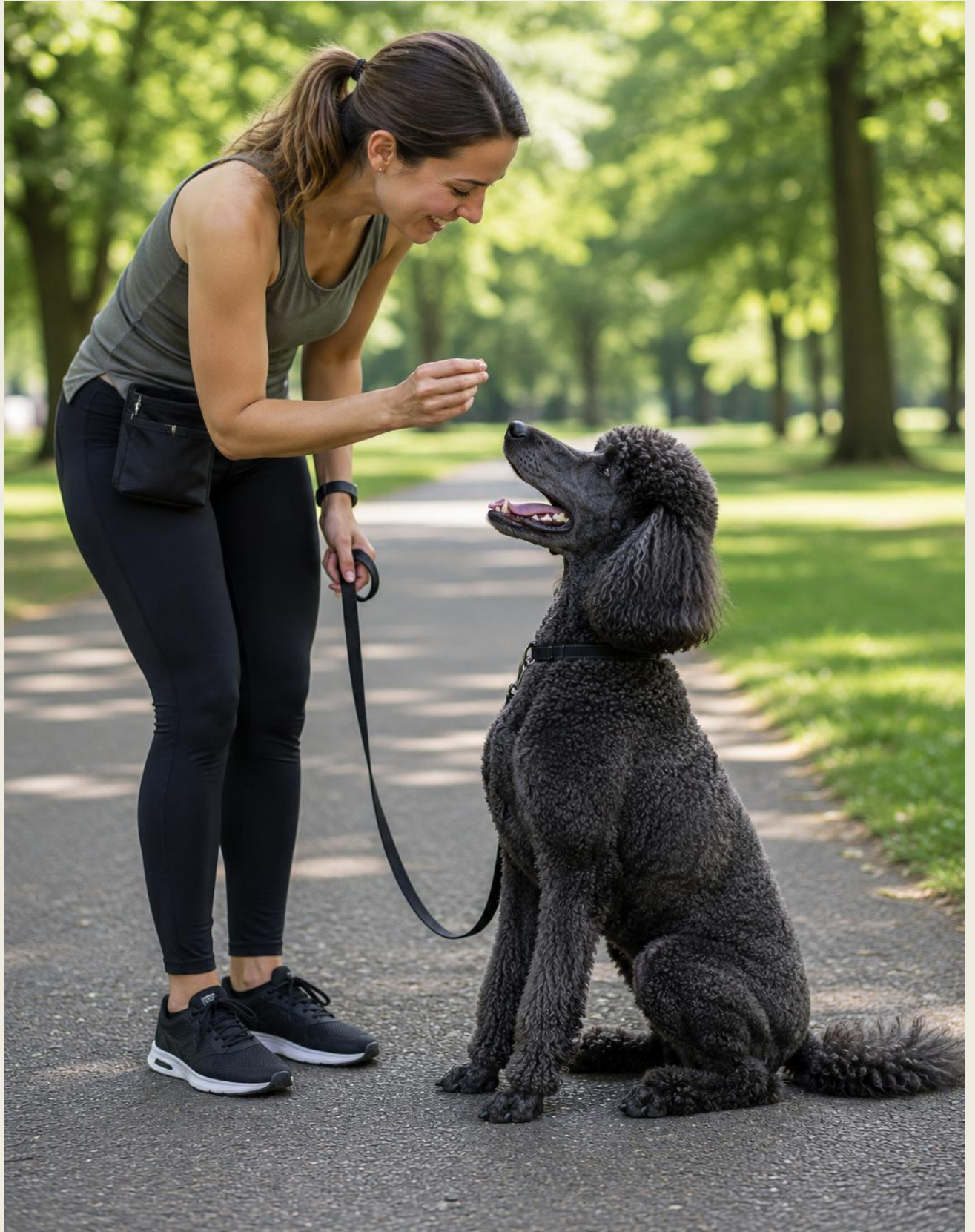
Dogs repeat what gets rewarded. It sounds simple — because it is. The trick is noticing and paying the behavior you want, the moment it happens.

What earns a reward:

- ✓ Walking beside you with slack in the leash
- ✓ Checking in with you (eye contact) on their own
- ✓ Returning to your side after sniffing
- ✓ Passing a distraction without lunging

How to reward:

- **Mark the moment.** Say a cheerful "Yes!" the instant the good behavior happens — then deliver the treat within a second or two.
- **Feed at your seam.** Deliver treats at the side seam of your pants, right where you want your dog's head to be. Position of the reward teaches position of the dog.
- **Use life rewards too.** Sniffing that fire hydrant IS a reward — release your dog to "go sniff!" as payment for a stretch of lovely walking.
- **Pay generously at first.** Early on, reward every few steps of loose leash. As the habit builds, you'll gradually pay less often. That's not bribery — that's a paycheck becoming a salary.





Stop Pulling in Five Easy Steps

This is the heart of the method — a simple, consistent response that works for dogs of all ages. Every person who walks your dog should follow it exactly the same way.

- 1 Dog pulls.
- 2 Stop walking. Become a tree. No yanking, no scolding.
- 3 Wait for slack in the leash (or a glance back at you).
- 4 Mark and reward. "Yes!" — treat at your side.
- 5 Continue walking.

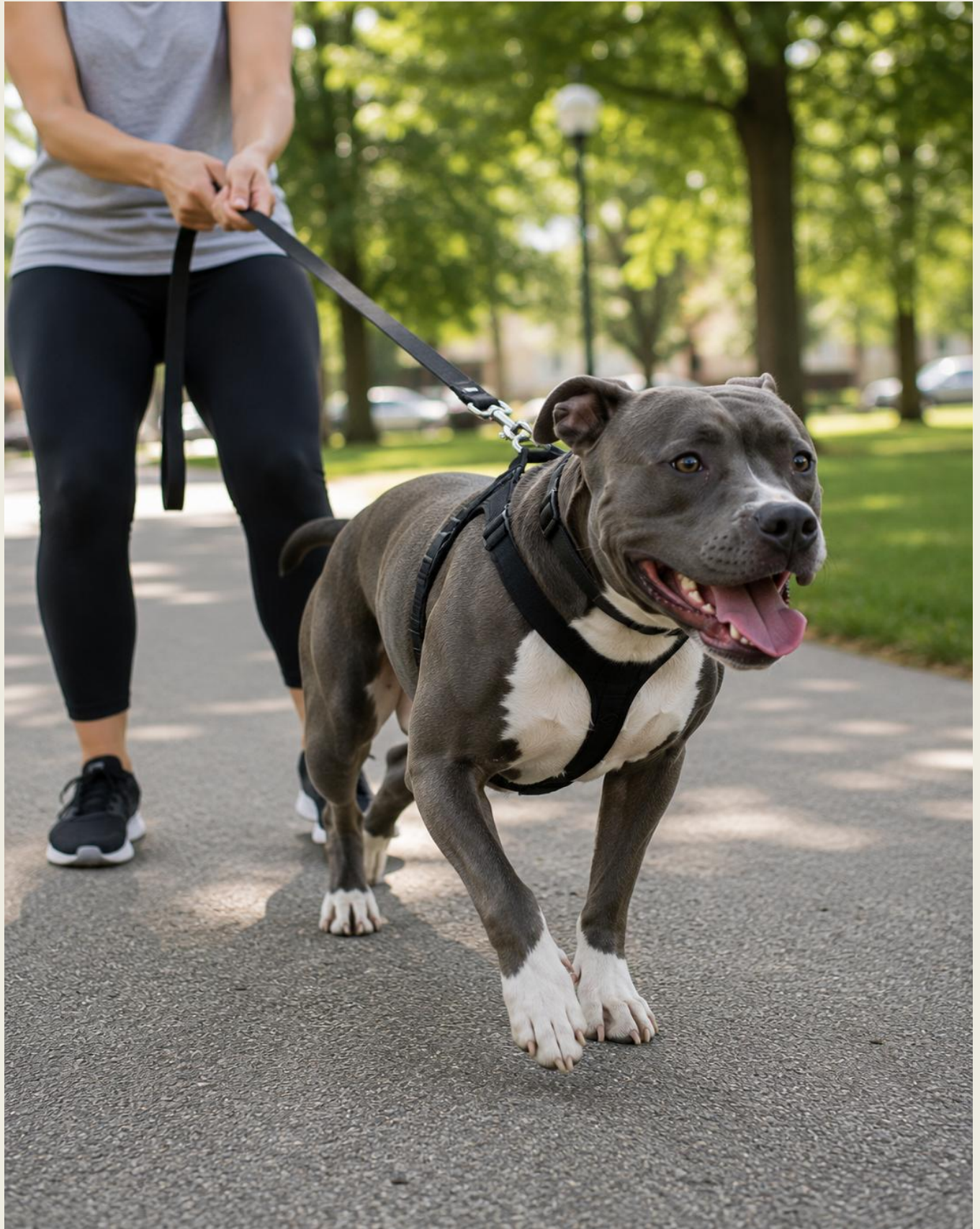
Repeat consistently.

Why it works: the walk itself is what your dog wants most. When pulling makes the walk stop and a loose leash makes it start, your dog learns that **slack in the leash is the gas pedal**.

What to expect:

- **Days 1–3:** Your "walk" may only cover one block. That's normal — you're training, not exercising.
- **Week 1:** Your dog starts offering slack faster after each stop.
- **Weeks 2–4:** Stops become rare; check-ins become frequent. Now you're walking.

Consistency is everything. If pulling works on Tuesday but not Wednesday, your dog will gamble — and gamblers pull harder.



Handling Distractions

Distractions are normal! The key is to help your dog learn how to make good choices even when exciting things are happening.

Common distractions:

- Other dogs
- Squirrels & wildlife
- Children playing
- Bicycles and cars
- Birds
- Delivery drivers

The distance rule:

Every dog has a threshold — the distance at which they can notice a distraction and still think. Your job is to work **under** that threshold. If your dog can't take a treat, you're too close. Add distance, let their brain come back online, and try again.

The "Look at That" game:

- 1 Your dog notices the squirrel/dog/bike at a distance.
- 2 The instant they look, say "Yes!" and treat.
- 3 Repeat until your dog sees the distraction and looks at YOU.

You've just turned every trigger into a cue to check in with you. Over weeks, work gradually closer. Rushing this step is the #1 mistake — distance is your best friend.



Breed Differences

Different breeds have different motivations. Understanding your dog's natural instincts helps you train more effectively — and choose the right rewards.

- **Sporting breeds (Labs, Goldens, Spaniels):** Love to explore and carry things. Use sniff breaks and fetch as rewards; watch for bird-driven lunges.
- **Herding breeds (Aussies, Border Collies, Corgis):** Love to work. Give them a job — pattern games, direction changes, and "find it" keep that busy brain on you.
- **Hounds (Beagles, Coonhounds, Dachshunds):** Follow their nose. Schedule dedicated "sniffari" time as a major reward, and use extra-smelly treats.
- **Terriers:** Bold & determined. Short, punchy training sessions with high-energy praise beat long drills.
- **Working breeds (Shepherds, Boxers, Huskies):** Strong drive and strong bodies. Front-clip harnesses matter most here, and mental work tires them faster than mileage.
- **Toy breeds:** Never underestimate them — small dogs pull too! Protect delicate necks with a well-fitted harness and kneel or use a treat wand to reward without constant bending.

Every dog is an individual. Breed tells you where to start — your dog tells you what actually works.



Building Better Walks

Once your dog understands the loose-leash game, the goal shifts from training walks to **great** walks. A great walk balances three ingredients:

1. Structure

A predictable rhythm — calm exit, loose-leash walking on sidewalks, released sniff breaks in grass — tells your dog what's expected where. Many of our clients use a cue like "with me" for focused walking and "go sniff!" for free time.

2. Enrichment

Sniffing is your dog's social media, newspaper, and podcast rolled into one. Five minutes of dedicated sniffing can tire a dog as much as twenty minutes of marching. Build sniff time into every walk — it lowers arousal and rewards good leash manners.

3. Variety

New routes, new neighborhoods, and adventure outings keep your dog's brain engaged and prevent route boredom (and route-specific bad habits, like That One Yard With The Cat).

This is exactly why our clients love mixing professional dog walks and enrichment outings into their week — variety, structure, and one-on-one attention are the recipe for a balanced, happy dog.



THE 30-DAY LOOSE-LEASH CHALLENGE



Consistency is the key to success! Follow this daily plan to build better walking habits. Use the printable workbook pages at the back of this book to track your progress.



WEEK 1 — FOUNDATIONS (DAYS 1–7)

- Practice the calm door routine every single exit.
- Two 10-minute training walks daily using the Five Steps.
- Reward generously — every 3–5 steps of loose leash.



WEEK 2 — CONSISTENCY (DAYS 8–14)

- Extend training walks to 15–20 minutes.
- Add the “Look at That” game with mild distractions at a distance.
- Begin rewarding every 8–10 steps instead of every 3–5.



WEEK 3 — REAL WORLD (DAYS 15–21)

- Take your show on the road: a new street, a quiet park.
- Practice passing distractions at your dog’s success distance.
- Use sniff breaks as your primary reward.



WEEK 4 — PROOFING (DAYS 22–30)

- Busier locations, longer walks, fewer treats — more life rewards.
- Have another family member practice the same five steps.
- Day 30: repeat your Day 1 route and celebrate how far you’ve come!

DAILY HABITS ALL MONTH:



Short,
positive training
sessions



Real-world
practice



Celebrate
small wins



Keep track of
your progress

You’ve got this!



30-DAY CHALLENGE

ONE STEP. EVERY DAY. BETTER TOGETHER.



1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

YOU'VE GOT THIS!





Troubleshooting Common Problems

"My dog only pulls at the START of the walk."

Classic excitement overflow. Double down on the calm door routine, and burn two minutes of energy with a game before you leave. Consider a short "boring loop" near home before the real walk begins.

"He's perfect with treats, terrible without them."

You've faded rewards too fast. Go back to frequent paychecks for a week, then thin them gradually — and replace food with life rewards (sniffing, pace changes, praise) rather than removing rewards entirely.

"She stops and refuses to move."

Freezing is communication — often uncertainty or fear, not stubbornness. Never drag. Add distance from whatever worried her, get happy, and reward brave steps. If it's frequent, talk to a professional.

"He lunges at other dogs."

Work the "Look at That" game at a distance where he can stay calm, and manage walks to avoid close passes for now (cross the street, use driveways). If lunging includes barking, growling, or panic, skip ahead to Chapter 12 — reactivity deserves professional support.

"My kids walk the dog and everything falls apart."

Everyone must play by the same rules or the dog gambles. Post the Five Steps on the fridge, and have kids practice in the yard before graduating to the sidewalk.



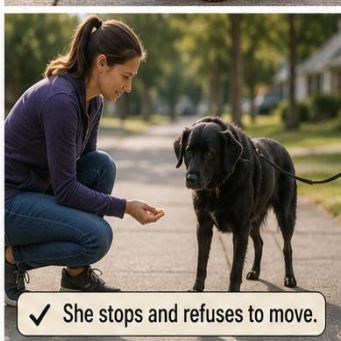
✓ My dog only pulls at the **START** of the walk.



✓ He lunges at other dogs.



✓ He's perfect with treats, terrible without them.



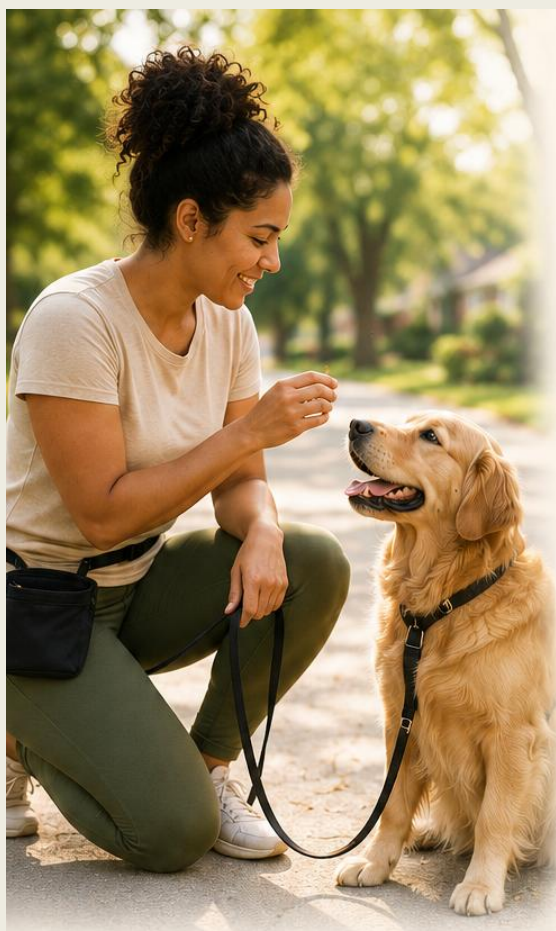
✓ She stops and refuses to move.



✓ My kids walk the dog and everything falls apart.



TROUBLESHOOTING COMMON PROBLEMS



WHEN TO HIRE A PROFESSIONAL



Sometimes our dogs need a little extra help — and asking for it early is the smartest, kindest move a pet parent can make. Consider professional guidance if your dog shows:



Severe reactivity toward dogs, people, or vehicles



Fear-based behavior — trembling, freezing, or panic on walks



Any growling, snapping, or aggression



Persistent pulling despite 30+ days of consistent training

A professional can help you and your dog succeed!

WHAT TO LOOK FOR IN A TRAINER:



Positive-reinforcement, force-free methods (no pain, no fear, no intimidation)



Credentials and continuing education — certification programs, not just confidence



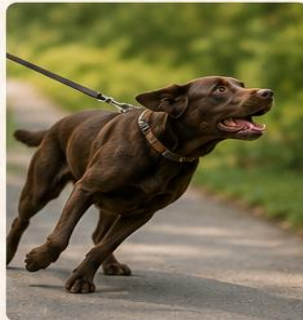
A clear plan with homework for YOU (training the human is half the job!)



Insured professionals who welcome your questions



At 2 Paws Up Inc, dog training is one of our core services — delivered by our professional, background-checked W-2 team, right here in Gwinnett County. If you're stuck, reach out. We're happy to help you decide whether training sessions, structured professional walks, or both are the right fit.





Resources & Next Steps

Congratulations — you now know more about loose-leash walking than the vast majority of pet parents. Here's how to keep the momentum going:

Your 30-day starter kit:

- ✓ Print the Walking Log, Weekly Progress Tracker, and 30-Day Challenge pages at the back of this book.
- ✓ Put the Five Easy Steps on your refrigerator so every family member trains the same way.
- ✓ Schedule your walks like appointments — consistency beats intensity.

How 2 Paws Up Inc can help:

- **Professional Dog Walking** — one-on-one walks with GPS tracking and photo updates, where our trained team reinforces these exact techniques.
- **Dog Training** — personalized, positive-reinforcement training for leash manners and beyond.
- **Pet Sitting & Cat Sitting** — professional care that keeps routines consistent while you're away.

Since 2003, our background-checked, insured W-2 team has helped Gwinnett County dogs become the best walkers on their block. We'd be honored to help yours. And if we are not in your service area, we can try to help you locate someone in your local area — just reach out.

Ready for better walks?

Call (770) 695-3096 or visit www.2pawsupinc.com for a free consultation.

Better Walks. Stronger Bond. Happier Dog.



BONUS ••

Printable Tools & 30-Day Challenge Workbook

The following pages are yours to print and use — as many copies as you need. Tape them to the fridge, clip them to your treat pouch, and celebrate every small win. Progress you can SEE is progress that sticks!

- **Walking Log** — capture each training walk while it's fresh.
- **Weekly Progress Tracker** — check off daily habits, Monday through Sunday.
- **30-Day Challenge Tracker** — one box per day; watch the month fill up.
- **My Goals** — write down your "why." You'll want it on the hard days.
- **My Notes** — breakthroughs, questions for your trainer, and proud moments.



WALKING LOG

DATE: _____ TIME: _____
LOCATION: _____
LENGTH OF WALK: _____
FOCUS TODAY:
☐ Loose Leash
☐ Distractions
☐ Calm Start
☐ Other _____
WHAT WENT WELL: _____
NOTES: _____

WEEKLY PROGRESS TRACKER

WEEK OF: _____

	M	T	W	TH	F	SA	SU
Training Walk	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Five Steps Used	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Loose Leash	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Look at That Game	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Sniff Break	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Calm Door Routine	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Life Rewards	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Notes	_____						

30-DAY CHALLENGE TRACKER

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	★				

YOU'VE GOT THIS!

MY GOALS

My "Why": _____

What I Want for My Dog: _____

What I Want for Us: _____

We Will Get There By: _____

MY NOTES

BREAKTHROUGHS: _____

QUESTIONS FOR MY TRAINER: _____

PROUD MOMENTS: _____

PRINTABLE



Walking Log

Date: _____

Walk Duration: _____

Location: _____

How did the walk go?



Great



Good



Okay



Challenging

Wins from this walk:

Notes:

WALKING LOG



DATE: _____ TIME: _____

LOCATION: _____

LENGTH OF WALK: _____

FOCUS TODAY:

- ☐ Loose Leash
- ☐ Distractions
- ☐ Calm Start
- ☐ Other _____

HOW DID IT GO?

Circle one:

GREAT



Lots of loose leash success and positive moments!

GOOD



More good than challenging. We're improving!

OKAY



Some challenges, but we kept going. Room to grow.

CHALLENGING



Tough walk today, but we did our best.

NOTES:

TODAY'S WIN: _____



Celebrate
Small
Wins!





WEEKLY PROGRESS TRACKER

SMALL HABITS. BIG CHANGE.



WEEK OF:

DAILY HABIT	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
 Leash & Harness Check	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
 Calm Start at the Door	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
 Five Steps Used	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
 Positive Reinforcement	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
 Enrichment or Sniff Time	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
 Training Walk Completed	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
 Wins Celebrated	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

WEEKLY WINS



What went well this week?



FOCUS FOR NEXT WEEK



What will you focus on?



CONSISTENCY TODAY. BETTER WALKS TOMORROW.





Small **Habits** *Big* **Changes.**



*Consistency Today,
Better Walks Tomorrow.*

PRINTABLE



30-DAY LOOSE-LEASH

Challenge Workbook



A STEP-BY-STEP PLAN FOR BETTER WALKS & A STRONGER BOND.

CHECK OFF EACH DAY YOU PRACTICE — EVERY BOX IS A PROMISE KEPT TO YOUR DOG!



DAY 1 ☐	DAY 2 ☐	DAY 3 ☐	DAY 4 ☐	DAY 5 ☐
DAY 6 ☐	DAY 7 ☐	DAY 8 ☐	DAY 9 ☐	DAY 10 ☐
DAY 11 ☐	DAY 12 ☐	DAY 13 ☐	DAY 14 ☐	DAY 15 ☐
DAY 16 ☐	DAY 17 ☐	DAY 18 ☐	DAY 19 ☐	DAY 20 ☐
DAY 21 ☐	DAY 22 ☐	DAY 23 ☐	DAY 24 ☐	DAY 25 ☐
DAY 26 ☐	DAY 27 ☐	DAY 28 ☐	DAY 29 ☐	DAY 30 ☐



YOU CAN DO THIS!



REWARD FOR FINISHING ALL 30 DAYS: _____





30-DAY CHALLENGE

ONE STEP. EVERY DAY. BETTER TOGETHER.



1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

YOU'VE GOT THIS!





MY GOALS



Every step forward is a step toward a better life for you and your dog.



I want to:



Why this is important to me:



How I'll celebrate when we get there:



