

Positioning Techniques on Leash for Fearful & Aggressive Dogs

INSTRUCTIONAL GUIDE

Practice these positioning techniques so that you can position your dog in ways that are more comfortable for her when she's exposed to a potentially stressful situation. These techniques can help lessen your dog's reactivity or fearful responses.



Fig 1 ©2007 Margaret Crow

Remember, even when you shorten the leash, try to keep it relaxed as you guide your dog past or away from what stresses her.

Walk in a semi-circle around the trigger to increase the distance between your dog and the stressor as you pass.

Position yourself between your dog and the stressor. This makes your dog feel more secure. Feed her treats as she passes by what stresses her. Encourage her to look at and follow you through the use of food lures, praise, and other rewards such as running and playing tug. (Fig 1)



Fig 2

Positioning yourself between your dog and a distraction will keep him more engaged and focused on you. If he's fearful, he'll feel more comfortable. (Fig 2 & 3)

Position your dog so that her back is towards the stressor. This is a good way to diffuse a situation if the trigger is close by.

When a dog turns her back to another dog or a person, she is signaling that she does not want to interact or engage in a confrontation.



Fig 3

In addition, if she's turned away from the trigger and facing you, she will be more attentive to you and can look to you for guidance.

Give her a lot of treats and praise as the stressor passes.



Fig. 4 ©2007 Margaret Crow

Positioning your dog's back to a stressor will keep him calmer and more relaxed. Providing treats to your dog as another dog or person passes can keep his focus on you so he is less distracted. (Fig 4)

To turn around or walk away or in the opposite direction of something that may trigger your dog, pivot 180°.

Make sure to turn *into* the leash instead of away from it. I call this an 'inside turn.' We tend to turn away from the dog when we want to change direction. Instead, change direction by simply pivoting or turning 180° (an about face) into the leash and to the side closest to your dog. This is a more efficient turn than turning away from your dog and your dog will turn with you. It will be easier to get your dog's attention.

When you're comfortable with the technique, try to get her attention in a positive way before you turn and then reward her for turning with you.

Try to get your dog's attention in a positive way before you turn or change direction. (Fig 5)

Do not use choke, pinch, or shock collars when working with a fearful or aggressive dog. Harsh training techniques and reactive or aggressive behavior from you will only increase your dog's anxiety.

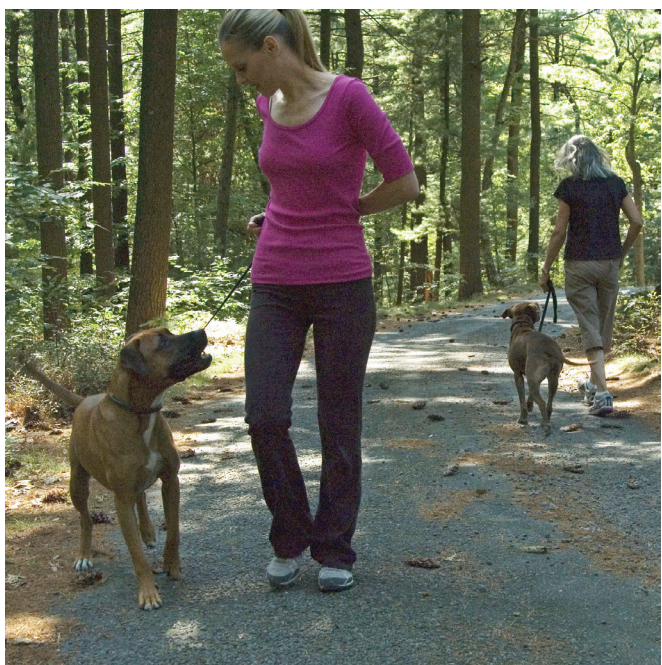


Fig 5



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