

Lise Lausiva, CCS  
Certified Dog Trainer  
1310 Lombard Ave.  
Everett, WA 98201



Office: 425-252-8096  
Cell: 425-350-5288  
[lisel@pawsafoot.com](mailto:lisel@pawsafoot.com)  
[www.pawsafoot.com](http://www.pawsafoot.com)

## How to turn Tug-of-War into a great walk

Dogs are great trainers. I know many owners (including myself) who have been very well trained by their dogs! So let's level the playing field and learn how to train them, too. If you're asking "Why does my dog do that?", "How can I fix it?" and "What's going on with my dog's behavior?", then submit your dog behavior and training questions to me and find your answers here. Let's get started!

**Question:** *"I can't get my dog to stop pulling me all over the place when we go for a walk. I've tried everything from choke chains to prong collars – You name it, I've tried it. They work for a while but then he starts pulling me around again. What's left?"*

**Answer:** Ah – The old "My dog's dislocating my shoulder when we walk" question. It is one of the most common complaints I hear. The choke chain, prong collars and E-collars (electronic shock collars) are fast ways to get your dog to stop pulling, but the reason why they work is simple – It hurts and they create fear. However, dogs can get used to the pain and stop showing their fear (but they still feel it) to the point that they don't pay attention to it any longer and start hauling you around again. This often starts problems developing in other areas. Use the prong collar in the garage to hang your tools on, try zapping flies with the E-collar and turn the choke chain into heavy metal jewelry for your teenager. Here's the answer that will work for the long haul (no pun intended!)

**Invest in a true "anti-pull" harness.** There are lots of products that claim to be anti-pull harnesses but the true ones have you clip the leash onto an O-ring located in the middle of your dog's chest, rather than from his back of his harness. Premier makes a great one. Believe me, it can make a huge difference.

**Purchase a 4' to 6' leash for training.** The retractable leashes are not good training leashes because they don't give you enough control. Yes, you can lock them during training sessions, but it's very confusing for a dog to try and figure out when he's not supposed to pull and stay by your side and when he's allowed to run when it's not locked.

**Use treats that your dog would learn to do a Rumba for.** My favorite is Natural Balance Dog Food Rolls, which is available in several pet stores. Cut it up into pea-size pieces for treats. Cheese – The stinkier, the better! Cooked chicken, beef or pork cut up into small pieces. Make lots and be very, very generous with them to start off with.

So what does your dog want when he pulls? He wants to go forward. Wow – Big surprise! Dogs do what works, so if you stop him from getting what he wants, he'll start trying to figure out how to make you give him what he wants. Here's how to do it:

**Practice “Red light, green light” walking.** The instant you feel any pressure on the leash, stop. Plant yourself solidly and act like a tree trunk. Act like you don’t have a dog with you – don’t look at, talk to, or respond to your dog in any way. Ignore the shooting pains from your shoulder to your hand. Wait him out and as soon as you feel the leash slacken, give him a treat and start walking again. If he pulls again (he will immediately– guaranteed), stop and do your best tree trunk impersonation. Start treating and walking as soon as he gives a little on the leash. At first, it may take you an hour to get from your front door to the bottom of your driveway with all the stopping and starting, but I promise it’ll improve with practice!

You’re teaching your dog that by keeping the leash loose, he gets what he wants – to go forward. When he pulls, he doesn’t get to go anywhere. It will take some time of practicing red light, green light walking every time you go out but with some patience and a lot of consistency, you’ll have your dog walking nicely and all those great treats will have him thinking that you are the center of his universe! Once he’s figured out the lesson, you can slowly start to phase out the treats until you don’t need them anymore. Walks together are great for both of you and they shouldn’t cost you the price of a shoulder surgery!