

10 Tips for Walking Your Dog

By Tri-Rehab



Walking your dog in the summer months is excellent exercise. A recent study performed by the University of Missouri-Columbia study found people who walk their dog 20 minutes a day, five times a week lost an average of 14 pounds after 50 weeks; so here are 10 tips for safely walking your dog.

1. Be prepared to walk, be sure to eat a meal or snack and drink water before you begin your walk.
2. Wear proper clothing and shoes; remember your feet swell while walking so the shoe should be a little big. If you are walking in the evening remember to wear reflective clothing and place a reflector on your dog's collar and/or leash as well.
3. Remember your ID. You should have your ID with you and your dog should also be wearing his ID with your contact information engraved into it. Many pet stores and veterinarian offices offer to make pet ID tags for \$5 or less.
4. Warm up. You want to avoid injury should the unexpected occur so be sure to stretch your calves, hamstrings and do some shoulder and trunk rotations too.
5. Avoid peak heat times when you walk. Remember, your dog overheats faster than you do. When you do walk during the summer months, remember to bring water for you and your dog.
6. Be aware of your surroundings. Dogs may pull or chase another dog, rabbit or squirrel, so be aware of your environment. Keep your dog at your side and give a command such as "sit" or "down" to force your dog to focus on you instead of other distractions.

7. Try to avoid uneven surfaces which compromise your balance.
8. Start with short distances. Don't plan to walk a marathon your first day out, start small and gradually build you and your dog's endurance. Also, keep your dog's breed in mind; small dogs have short legs and walk much shorter distances than a larger, working breed.
9. Rehydrate! After exercise, be sure you and your dog drink plenty of water.
10. Have fun!