

Leash Training: Doberman Puppies

For a great leash training foundation, follow these steps:

- First leash experience: First, bring a light vet style slip lead out and provide treats when the dog sees the leash but does not bite on to it. Then, loop the lead around the collar (not as a slip on the neck - we don't want it tightening on the neck yet). Let the lead drag around with the puppy for a couple days before you attach a hand or pressure at the end of it.
 - If the puppy tries to chew the leash they are dragging around, use toys to redirect the puppy. If this doesn't work, a very light chain leash may work instead.
 - The biggest thing here is that we want the first experience with a leash to not have any physical pressure.
- Other end of the leash: Next, it is time to show them what happens when something is at the other end of that leash. Bend down, and apply slight pressure on the leash in a pulling motion, towards you. Offer the puppy a treat and verbal praise so he/she learns towards to come TOWARDS the pressure. Practice this quite a bit!
 - Start to incorporate walking away and if the puppy follows you and the resistance they felt, keep walking and treating. If they pull against the resistance, go back to the last step.
 - Try turning this into follow the leader; straight lines, circle eights, turns, and more. We are not at all worried about perfect heel position right now. Just a loose leash. Reward following of the leader.
 - Next, add in some distractions, and when the puppy is distracted, pull a bit on the leash, bend down, and become more important than the distraction (with your voice and treats) so that your puppy voluntarily returns to you and a loose leash.
- Leash walking on a more advanced level will also be covered in your basic obedience group classes. It is important to sign your puppy up for a group class as soon as your puppy has all its vaccinations! Reach out to DHDR if you need any ideas for class locations.
- Early leash training, without too much pressure and correction, will help avoid future leash reactivity. However, if you start to notice any leash reactivity, consult a trainer immediately. These articles can be helpful on [understanding leash reactivity](#) and planning to [address leash reactivity](#).

