



# The Teaching Lead Method

With Sarah Hodgson



The User-Friendly Guide To A Well-Behaved Dog

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## About Me

My name is Sarah Hodgson and for more than half my life, I've been a translator. My specialty? The language of dogs. I help my clients—both human and canine—engage in two-way communication to establish mutual understanding in a fun and stress-free way.

Traditional dog training philosophy stresses the differences between dogs and people, discouraging the notion that dogs are “furry humans.” I take a contrary view—that dogs are, in many

ways, very similar to pre-verbal children...and science is starting to support my long-held theory! Eager to belong and understand their surroundings, dogs struggle mightily to communicate. How frustrating to lack the words!

Enter, me. I supply the words.

In my books, group classes, private lessons and phone and email sessions, I teach you and your dog to communicate. To bond. To create understanding in a stress-free environment. My unique methods have helped thousand of dogs and people figure each other out—quickly, easily and painlessly.

When I'm not teaching dogs and people, I'm writing or talking about them. I've written nine dog training books including [Dog Tricks for Dummies](#), [Puppies For Dummies](#), [Miss Sarah's Etiquette Guide for Dogs and their People](#), [Teach Yourself Visually](#) and [PuppyPerfect](#). I blog regularly on family and dog-centric topics at [TheEndOfMyLeash.com](#). In between, I squeeze in a variety of lectures and media appearances, too.



## **The History Of The When Dogs Talk™ Teaching Lead**

When I was in my teens, I rescued a Husky-mix dog. Blue-eyed and white furred, I gave her a melodic Hawaiian name: Kyia.

Kyia's background was unknown, but her past had left her frightened and confused. Crating terrified her so I had no alternative but to keep her with me on a leash. When I had to leave, I tied her by her blanket with water and toys.

I began to notice a change in Kyia. She was calmer. She began to greet me with her tail waving, rather than tucked under her body. Leashed at my side, Kyia thrived on the interactivity. Leashed by her bed, Kyia felt secure.

She was responding positively to the structure and interactivity that resulted from being on the leash.

The Teaching Lead philosophy was born.

Years later, I read about similar techniques in books by the Monks of New Skete, Job Evans and Carol Lea Benjamin. I was encouraged to know that others embraced the concept and set out to design a leash and companion training program that would make these methods available to everyone.

## **Finding the Right Training Collar**

It's important to use a training collar when working with the WDT™ Teaching Lead.

Walks should reassure your dog that you are in charge—the competent and benevolent leader. This won't happen if your dog is wearing the wrong collar. Most dogs pull on a flat buckle or chain collar: the constant pressure frustrates a dog and leads to more pulling.

So let's learn how to fit your dog with the right training collar.

## **Conditioning Collars/Harnesses**

Conditioning collars guide your dog to your side, requiring little strength or coordination. They're an ideal choice for dogs and people of all ages and sizes. There are two different types:

### **Head Collar**

The Head Collar lies over a dog's muzzle and clips behind her ears. The leash attaches under the muzzle and guides a dog like a horse on a halter. The collar eliminates pulling and calms reactivity when distractions arise.

### **No Pull Harness**

This harness lies across the shoulders and limits a dog's pulling reflex. Like magic, dogs can't pull and are far easier to manage.

## Correction Collars

These collars fit over a dog's neck. When abruptly tugged, they discourage pulling.

### Martingale Collar (nylon or chain check)

These collars fit over the head like a buckle collar, although they have a slip section that enables a more pronounced tug when a dog pulls ahead.

### Good Dog Collar

Bulky, plastic collars with "teeth." When tugged, they give a feeling of a scruff shake (a corrective grasp issued from a more dominant dog). A dog learns to avoid whatever behavior prompted the correction.



Tip: Until your puppy is 4 months old, don't use a correction collar. Use a regular buckle collar, Head Collar or harness instead.

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## Using The Teaching Lead

There are 3 ways you can use your WDT™ Teaching Lead. They are Leading, Anchoring and Stationing. Each method is easy to understand and use. You'll be communicating your competent, friendly authority in no time!

Take a look at your WDT™ Teaching Lead. It has two clips and a series of belt holes, called grommets. The braided end clip (A) fastens to your dog's collar or harness. The end clip (D) can be secured around you like a belt by clipping to the belt grommets (C) or attached onto the D-ring to create a standard hand-held leash (E). You can also secure the leash to a stationary object by attaching it to the base grommet (B).



Note: The WDT™ Teaching Lead is designed for individuals over the age of 16. It is not a toy and must be used responsibly for the safety of people and pets.

## Leading

When you're a dog, some things are simple: When you're walking on leash, whoever is in front is in charge. Once your dog understands this concept—you lead and they follow—your walks will become companionable rather than combative.

Begin working on these skills indoors where distractions are limited. When you've mastered the techniques gradually work into more distracting areas.

As you get started with your dog, use some basic commands. Familiar directions will reassure your dog and help her recognize what you want her to do. Speak your directions in a clear, deliberate voice, like a dog bark. High pitched or repetitive directions are hard to follow.



## “Follow”

Also known as “heel,” this direction says I’m the leader, follow me! Say it with authority as you walk your dog. This exercise reassures your dog that you know where you’re going and that you’ll protect and guide her. There will be

times when your dog disagrees—a darting squirrel may look way more fun, but persevere. Go forward as though you were on a mission and encourage your dog along.

1. Put on your dog's training collar, then connect the braided end of the leash (A) to it. Slide the leash around your waist like a belt, or hold half the length in your hands.

2. Start in a hallway or open room. Walk forward, saying, "Follow!" If your dog moves ahead of you, turn away and walk in the other direction. Once your dog is back at your side, praise her. After a few trips back and forth, your dog will begin to get it. Staying near you is good. Running off, not-so-good.

Now that you're walking together, lead your dog around the house. Set aside 10 to 20 minutes a day to practice the directions listed below. Once your dog catches on, use this technique to handle your dog when people visit and outside during your walks as well.

### **"Name"**

When your dog hears her name, her reaction should be the canine equivalent of "Yippie!" It should not be associated with anything your dog may perceive as negative. Isolation, corrections and going inside when there is still a photon of light outside for play fall into this category. Here's how to reinforce the "Yippie!" factor.



Put some treats in plastic cups and position the cups around the home. These "Treat Cups" have many uses, starting with name recognition. Shake your cup and call your dog's name throughout the day. Wait until your dog is still or sitting to reward her. Gradually, fade off the treat cups — but not the praise.

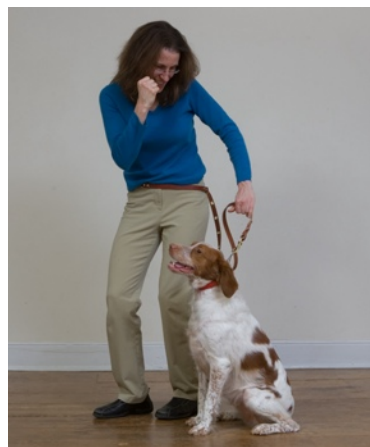
Also use your "Treat Cup" in these situations...

- When introducing your dog to visitors and friends. Encourage her to sit to say hello and reward her when she does.
- To teach your dog everyone's name. Call out a name as that person shakes the cup and calls your dog.
- Play games like Hide-n-Seek and the Run-n-Follow, described in full in any one of my books.

## "Sit"

A well-executed "sit" is the canine equivalent of "please." Use it as an alternative to jumping, nudging, crotch prodding and object grabbing.

To help your dog understand the unique benefits of sitting nicely, use this direction when offering food, a toy or loving pats. Give the direction once, signaling upwards with a sweeping motion. Position your dog if she doesn't comply—and remember if you expect her to "Sit," please don't ask her to "SitSitDownC'monSit."



## **“Wait and OK”**

When you’re going for a walk with your dog, does she drag you out the door? When you try to leave without her, do you have to crack the door and squeeze out sideways?

Remember, leaders lead. They do not jockey for position, sneak out the back door or tumble down the front steps at the tail end of the leash.

“Wait and OK” are the dynamic duo of dog management. “Wait” will stop your dog from darting out doors, racing downstairs or bounding out of the car. “Okay” will release her. Here’s the new plan.



1. As you bring your dog to the door or threshold, instruct, “Wait.”
2. Stand still for a moment.
3. If your dog pulls forward, tug her back inside.
4. Repeat this until she stands still or looks up at you.
5. When she pauses, say “OK” and either release her into an enclosed yard or walk out the door first.

Use this same method when exiting the car, approaching stairs or crossing a street.

## **“Excuse Me”**

Dogs get bored. One very creative way to get attention is to place themselves underfoot. While effective, it's not safe or acceptable.

Say “Excuse me” whenever your dog crosses in front of you, steps on your feet or blocks your path. If she won't move, maneuver her with the Teaching Lead™ or shimmy your feet beneath her.

Note: If your dog growls in this instance or any other, call a professional immediately. Aggression is serious.

## **“No”**

Show of hands please...How many times have you said this word to your dog today? This past week? More than you've used your dog's name perhaps? When over-used, dogs think “No” is interactive, not instructional.

Many people shout “No” to stop a behavior and become frustrated when the behavior continues or even escalates. The problem? Your dog cannot link your sudden outburst to their behavior and they are left wondering—why is this person yapping at me? Is she playing? Threatening? Should I engage her? Hide?

“No” should let your dog know that a behavior is wrong, not that she is bad. Properly taught, “No” will teach your dog to stop and focus on you for direction and reassurance, not run away or cringe.

Teach “No” in a lesson format. Offer your dog reassurance and direct her to a more acceptable alternative--licking rather than nipping, grabbing a toy rather than jumping. Your dog will learn quickly that “No” is a good thing: a positive redirection, not a punishment.

1. When your dog is out of the room, place a tempting object—maybe a sock or a tissue—on the floor.
2. With your dog on her WDT™ Teaching Lead and training collar, walk into the room and up to the object.
3. The moment your dog alerts to the object, pull back on the leash abruptly and say “No.”
4. Then yell at the thwarted treasure. This is really fun to do: “Bad sock! Shame on the sock!” Be sure you’re looking at the sock, not your dog.

Tip: Only use the “No” command to prevent a behavior. It is not effective if you’ve caught your dog in the act or after the fact. Using “No” in these situations will confuse your dog and lessen the effectiveness of the direction.

Once you’ve shouted at six to ten inanimate objects, you’ll notice your dog is more responsive to this direction. Use “No” out of lesson time to discourage other unwanted reactions like chasing cats or kids, or jumping on the furniture.

## **“Settle Down”**

This direction encourages your dog to relax. Use it when you’re occupied or whenever she needs to calm down.

Once your dog learns “Settle Down” in your house, you can use this direction in more challenging environments. Use “Settle Down” when you station or anchor your dog as described below.

### **Anchoring**

As you’re leading your dog around the house, you’ll naturally sit down to watch TV, work on the computer or answer the phone.

1. Each time you sit down for any length of time, place a familiar blanket or bed next to your side, offer your dog a tantalizing chew toy or bone, and tell your dog to “Settle Down.”

2. Sit down and busy yourself! If your dog fidgets, slide a portion of the leash under your backside, giving her just enough room to lie comfortably and focus her on her bone or toy. Calmly pet and praise your dog when she relaxes quietly.



As your dog becomes familiar with this technique, use it when you're out and about. Try it at the veterinarian's office or at an outdoor café.

## **Stationing**

Chances are, you sit in the same kitchen chair every day. Watch television from the same spot on the couch. Why? Because those are "your" seats, right? Comforting and familiar. Creating comfortable stations for your dog in rooms you share follows this same train of thought.

Stationing may seem restrictive, but it actually gives your dog more freedom. A dog who learns to relax in specific areas, whether in different rooms of your home, out on the town or when visiting other places, will be welcome everywhere!

First set up comfort stations in every room you share. Place a bed or blanket to help your dog identify his area and spruce it up with a chew/toy.

Direct your dog to these areas and she will learn to lie quietly or chew her things while you work, eat or watch television.



1. Point to your dog's area, telling her to "Settle Down" as you lead her there. Be consistent—every time you enter the room, direct your dog to her station.

2. At first, she may not stay. If she fidgets, secure her to an immovable object near the bed. Attach the braided end clip (A) of your Teaching Lead to your dog's training collar and slip the end clip (D) around a stationary object. Choose a grommet that allows your dog no more than 3 feet of freedom. Make sure the station base is strong enough to hold your dog and that it is distanced from ledges, entanglements or cords.

3. If your dog chews the furniture or leash, spray these objects with a non-toxic deterrent. For truly determined chewers, use a short chain lead in place of the WDT™ Teaching Lead. Tantrum throwers may benefit from a Head Collar, a humane method of control.

4. When leaving your dog, tell her to "Stay." Begin with short departures to get your dog used to being alone at her station.

If she is excited when you return, calmly ignore her. Soothing a nervous or hyper dog will only reinforce her separation anxiety. Gradually extend the time until you can be gone up to 15 minutes.

## **Problem Solving With The WDT™ Teaching Lead**

The Teaching Lead can also help you to condition or restructure good manners.

### **Housebreaking**

When it comes to housebreaking, the WDT™ Teaching Lead is like a compact, portable crate. It follows the same logic: dogs don't like to soil their immediate areas. Use the Teaching Lead™ to prevent your dog from wandering freely and having accidents.

By keeping your dog near you with the WDT™ Teaching Lead, you will become aware of her needs—especially her need to eliminate. Most dogs communicate this urge by acting restless, chewing or nipping. Think about that humming or leg-jiggling thing you do when you're stuck in traffic...same thing.

### **Jumping**

When someone arrives at your door, you look out the window and identify your visitor visually. Dogs are near-sighted and odor dependent, so they handle things a little differently. To make a positive ID, dogs relying on close facial interaction and a thorough olfactory once-over. A dog may jump—sometimes spectacularly—to get just the right perspective.

With the WDT™ Teaching Lead, you can handle your dog's jumping behavior calmly without physical involvement that often encourages more of the same. To prevent your dog from jumping, use your Teaching Lead™ and training collar to hold her behind you and/or tug her down abruptly.

### **The Little Nipper**

Nipping is to puppies as crying is to babies. It's their way of communicating needs.



Your puppy is trying to tell you something, and it's your job to interpret her signals. Nipping happens most often when your pup is over-stimulated, tired or needs to go outside.

To discourage nipping, encourage alternative behaviors. Tie a bell near the door and teach your puppy to ring it when she needs to go outside. Routinely place her bowls in the same place so that she can stand near it when she wants more. Provide comfortable resting areas and encourage her to go there for naps.

To prevent interactive mouthing, spread a little butter or peanut butter on your hands and repeat "Kisses" when she licks you. Say "Enough" when you'd like her to stop and redirect her energies to a toy.

Use the “Three Strike Rule” if your puppy’s nippiness escalates. If redirecting or attending to her needs doesn’t calm her down, crate or isolate her with a toy for 20 minutes. Do it calmly. Don’t be mad. This separation serves not to discipline your dog but to help her calm down.

### **Chewing Habits**

Buy several of your dog’s favorite chew toys. Keep them around the house, giving one to your dog whenever and wherever she’s anchored, stationed or crated. If your dog shows interest in chewing an inappropriate object—anything other than her chew toy—discourage the behavior by pulling her away before she gets to it.



If your dog already has something in her mouth, reach for a treat cup. Shake it to get her attention and offer a treat in exchange for her treasure. Praise her when she drops her quarry.

It may seem counterintuitive to offer a treat for stolen goods, but it’s better to have a resident delivery service than a sock destruction crew. Learn more about teaching your dog fun tricks like *Fetch the Paper* and *Pick Up Your Toys* in my book, [Agility and Dog Tricks For Dummies](#).

## Directions Good Dogs Know

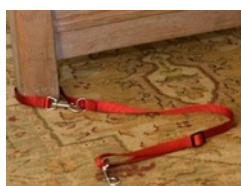
FOLLOW	When you're away from your home base, this lets your dog know you're the leader.
LET'S GO	Companion command to Follow/Heal; this command redirects your dog.
SIT	The dog equivalent of "please."
DOWN	Level 3 containment. Time to relax.
STAND	Stand still.
STAY	Grounding command.
WAIT	Quick check-in before entering a new area or having a snack.
COME	The canine equivalent of the sport direction to Huddle Up.
UNDER	Direct your dog under your legs or a table for emotional security.
BACK	Step back or stand behind me for protection.
AWAY	To reinforce personal space.
GIVE or DROP	Teaching your dog to release anything held in his mouth.
NO	Impulse control. Teaches him to avoid a specific behavior.
DIRECTIONAL SIGNALS	Reflects daily routines like CAR or GO TO YOUR BED. Also used for familiar names like DAD or LINDSAY.

Thank you for purchasing The WDT™ Teaching Lead. I designed this product to help dog lovers walk, comfort, train and bond with their dog without the use of shock collars, isolation or intimidation. Expand your Teaching Lead techniques and learn more about my compassionate, fun and uniquely effective training methods by visiting:

## [WhenDogsTalk.com](http://WhenDogsTalk.com)



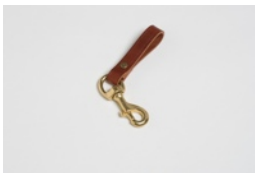
Teaching Lead Extension



Station Lead



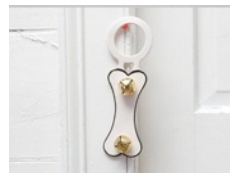
Hand & Seatbelt Lead



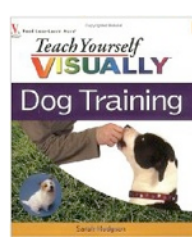
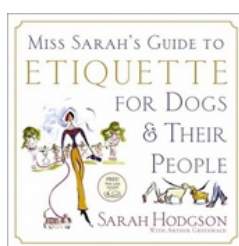
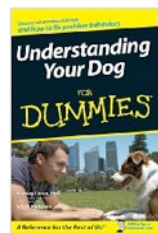
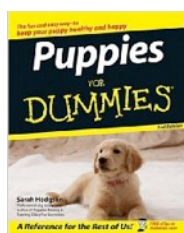
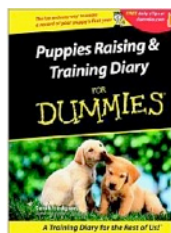
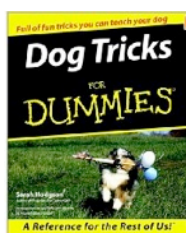
Finger Lead



Long Line

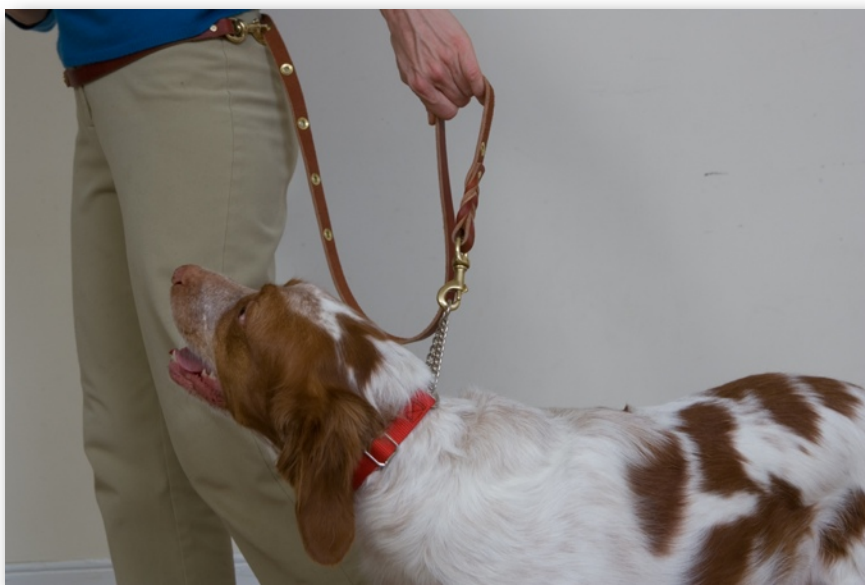


Housetraining Bells



## **What Is The WDT™ Teaching Lead?**

What is 6' long, full of holes and the best tool you will find to train your dog? The WDT™ Teaching Lead! Made in leather or nylon with clips at both ends, its ingenious, patented design lets you use it as a regular leash, a hands-free lead or an indoor and outdoor training aid. Sarah Hodgson, author, media personality and world-renowned dog training expert, has simplified her techniques in this booklet to help you and your dog find a safe, effective and completely positive way to connect.



Sarah Hodgson

When Dogs Talk...Sarah Listens

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