



Warming up is crucial to any activity you do with your dog. It helps to prepare the dog's body and mind for the intended exercise. Warmups increase the body's metabolic rates: which send more oxygen, glucose and blood to help warm the muscles and connective tissues. A warm muscle is less prone to strains and ruptures than a cold one. Human muscles take about 9 minutes to warm up and it is only achieved by gradually increasing the warmup rate. Plan to increase intensity during the warmup.



TOOLS:

Collar or Harness, Leash, K9FITvest (try with and without to note form)



DURATION:

Recommended 5-10 minutes. Use less time if combined with other Warm-up Exercises.



INTENSITY:

Low



MUSCLES TARGETED:

Front Limbs, Hind Limbs, Core

What is a Controlled Walk?

A controlled walk is the act of moving forward with your dog on leash and in "heel" position. The goal is to walk your dog, don't let your dog walk you. Keep the walk purposeful.

Why is a Controlled Walk Recommended?

If your dog is not conditioned properly or not sufficiently warmed up before exercise it can be exposed to the risk of injury. Age makes muscles, tendons and ligaments tighter and more rigid; therefore more prone to injury when stretched. The older the dog is the more important warm-up and cool-down exercises become.

Where Can I Do a Controlled Walk?

Controlled Walk can be performed outside or inside (around the house or on a dog-specific treadmill) where the heel position can be reinforced.

Controlled Walk Exercise Guidelines:

Always keep your pet on a leash while performing a controlled walk. Incorporate turns on both left and right side of the body; or add intermittent sits for additional body benefits. Increase speed gradually to a fast walk while maintaining heel to warm the muscles.

SWAG™ TRAINING TIP:



Walk the Right Way. Make Heel a Priority. Initially, treats may be used to help keep your dog by your side in a heel position.

Teaching a dog to walk without pulling requires plenty of rewards. Use highly desirable treats that your dog doesn't get at other times. Soft treats are best so your dog can eat them quickly and continue training. Most dogs love wieners, cheese, cooked chicken or ham, small jerky treats or freeze-dried liver. Chop all treats into small peanut-sized cubes.

Source: ASPCA.org