

Types of Walks

Most often, people take their dogs on walks for their dog to get exercise. Not only do walks help with the physical aspect of your dog's health, but they help with the mental aspect as well!

Sniffy Walks

Often referred to as sniffy or decompression walks, these walks focus on fulfilling your dog's species specific behavior to sniff. Instead of focusing on the distance covered or a destination reached, sniffy walks allow your dog to absorb and explore different scents along the way. The average pet walk is often fast-paced and full of hectic stimuli which can overwhelm dog's senses and cause higher levels of anxiety in dogs. While this can tire the dog out, it can contribute to overstimulation and poor associations during walks - since the dog is on high alert for the next thing! During scent walks, instead of the legs moving fast, the brain and nose receptors are.

Sniffy walks allow dogs to use their natural instincts and abilities. It keeps them mentally stimulated while keeping them physically relaxed - simply exercise in a different form! The nose is continually working to track the different scents and contextualize the environment. Dogs have over 33 times as many scent receptors as dogs do. Decompression walks can lower a dog's pulse rate while releasing dopamine.

Walk Benefits

There is no right or wrong answer. Each walk provides benefits to the dog's health. While a walk focusing on exercising helps with their physical well-being, a sniffy walk contributes to their mental well-being. Walking allows dogs to be able to get out, move around, and explore. Dogs can be just as tired going on a 20 to 30 minute sniff walk as a normal hour walk.

What is Needed for a Sniffy Walk?

Nothing more is needed for a sniffy walk than your regular walk! However, letting your dog have a little more freedom during the walk is not a bad idea - after all the walk is for them to explore! Break out a long line or a retractable leash to let them explore a bit, but remember to be cautious of the surroundings and ready to reel them in closer if needed. A harness is never a bad idea either as it offers a safer option to a collar as they are more difficult to slip out of and do not put pressure on the dog's neck.

So next time you head out on a walk with your dog, go for a sniffari! You might be surprised just how much scents can stimulate their brains and tire them out.



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