



OUT & ABOUT

Why bother training for public spaces?

So you can confidently and safely take your dog with you anywhere, and make the experience an enjoyable one for you both.

How to prepare.

Step 1. Think about the types of challenges you are likely to encounter:

- In a pet store: Bins full of goodies, other dogs, people who want to pet your dog.
- An outdoor café: Other dogs and people walking by, food within easy reach, kids running around, people who want to pet your dog.
- In a park: Other dogs, people, running children, trash on the ground, Frisbees and balls, people who want to pet your dog.

Step 2. Decide how you will handle potential challenges. Will you...

- Move away to create distance?
- Use treats as a food lure to recapture or keep your dog's attention on you?
- Use commands your dog is well practiced at (sit, down, stay, watch, leave it, heel) to help guide your dog's behavior? Which will you use in each situation?

Step 3. Go on your outing. Actively scan the environment so you can respond proactively to challenges rather than reacting when the distraction is already too close.

After you get home.

Assess how the outing went.

- What did your dog do well?
- What needs extra practice?
- Is there anything you want to do differently next time?

Training Tip: Work at your dog's level. Is your dog ready to do a down-stay for the full duration of a café meal or should you start with a shorter visit like a trip for coffee? Has your dog spied the chew bones in a lower bin at the pet store? A leave it, let's go, or watch from several feet away is more likely to work than when he has his nose in the bin.

Troubleshooting: If your outing was not as enjoyable or successful as you would like, spend some time at home working on the commands your dog struggled with. Then pick an easier outing, such as a café during the afternoon lull instead of the morning rush. Bring tastier treats and go before your dog's mealtime, not after.

For more tips, visit our website.

