

BRIDGEWATER VETERINARY HOSPITAL



TEACHING “LEAVE IT”



- This technique works best using a head collar and leash.
- To facilitate learning, start with low value items that the dog will willingly walk away from.
- With the dog wearing a head collar and an adult holding the leash, the dog is walked toward an item he may wish to pick up such as a ball or chew toy.
- As the dog reaches for the item, calmly say, “leave it” and turn the dog’s head using the head collar and quickly offer a food reward and “good dog” as the head comes toward you.
- Repeat several times with low value items.
- As the dog learns the meaning of the phrase, he will begin to turn his head prior to the pull of the leash. Immediately reward that behavior.
- Progress to more valued items and gradually phase out food rewards while retaining verbal praise.
- Once the dog knows the command well, you can try letting him drag the leash and see if he can be called away from an item with a verbal prompt.
- If the dog does not comply, use the leash to turn his head and reward him.



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