
DO THE OPPOSITE

OVERVIEW

Do The Opposite is the first exercise we do related to Decision Points. It is also a great introduction to Public Access, if you are following the exercises developmentally. We have been trying to allow pups to be pups while at the same time teaching them concepts that, once they have lost some of their puppy animation and have begun to show self-control, will be useful. Another reason has been to avoid frustrating young dogs by not asking for self-control and attention to us, both of which they have difficulty exhibiting and even greater difficulty maintaining.

A Decision Point is any physical location within a context that there is an opportunity to make a change of direction of 45 degrees or greater. The objective of this exercise is to introduce Decision Points while teaching the pup to rely on us for direction of travel and direction changes.

In this exercise we want to keep moving, not quickly but fluidly and consistently. This is to keep pup from getting into trouble and because that is what young dogs do, they move. We also have not trained any skills yet that we could use to help a young dog not move so much.

We are also trying to convince pup that it doesn't know where we are going. At first you will bump into each other or you will choose the same direction. Some pups will speed up their guessing and try several options in quick succession - just keep going.

Reminder: This is a training exercise not a socialization and exposure exercise. Exposure is happening congruently and we don't have skills to control socialization yet.

EXERCISE

1. Four to six-foot leash.
2. Start walking at a fluid and consistent pace.
3. At a decision point, choose a direction *other* than the direction pup is looking or about to travel.
4. When to end:
 - 1) Pup begins to hesitate at, or in anticipation of, a decision point
 - 2) When you get tired
 - 3) Before pup has to relieve itself

COMMON MISTAKES

1. Distance between Decision Points is too long and pup begins to lead out and pull into their collar. If this happens, revert to mini Trips to Nowhere.
2. If pup is too excited, go home and spend some more time with Trips to Nowhere until the time is right.

Final note:

Pup still must have some semblance of control. This isn't a free for all at the end of a six-foot leash. If pup is still all over the place, then it is not ready for this exercises and needs more Trips to Nowhere.

SELF-EVALUATION

1. Pup doesn't hit the end of the leash at Decision Points (minimum)
2. Pup tries to guess and often does a back and forth at Decision Points
3. Pup Looks one way and follows you in the opposite direction often bumping into you
4. Pup looks at a Decision Point and then looks at you
5. Pup follows you through a Decision Point (gold)