

# Heeling Step by Step – Training Steps Overview

## Step 1: Motor Skills with Food

All exercises require a level of motor skills especially Heeling.

### 1.1 How to start

We are teaching the puppy how to follow our hand with food.

### 1.2 Starting to take 1-2 steps and rewarding.

We are starting to approximate future heeling. Reinforce 1-2 steps.

### 1.3 Guiding the head in a higher position

It is not natural for many dogs to walk with their heads up. We have to teach these skills.

### 1.4 Head into the final position and increasing speed for optimal harmony

The Head is even higher. We are increasing speed.

## Step 2: Motor Skills with a ball

### 2.1 How to start

We have to build an expectation in order for the dog to focus on the ball as we are walking

### 2.2 Add more steps

Looking at the ball and walking 2-3 steps.

### 2.3 Multiple steps

The dog is more comfortable - we are adding more steps.

## Step 3: Basic Position – Stationary with Food

The dog cannot heel if he does not know the Basic Position.

### Step 3.1 – Look up

All we are asking from the puppy is to sit and look up.

### **Step 3.2 – Come into the basic position by luring the dog into a spin**

Motor skills for getting into the Basic Position from a slight angle in the future.

### **Step 3.3 Lure into the complete exercise**

We now lure the dog from a slight angle into the Basic Position.

### **3.4 Introduce the negative reinforcement “Leash pressure” for the first time**

We use Negative Reinforcement to help the dog understand when he is in the correct position. For now, we are giving the leash a meaning.

### **Steps 3.5 - 3.7 focus on explaining continuous leash pressure and making sure the dog understands it.**

## **Step 4: Basic Position - Stationary with a ball**

### **Step 4.1 – How to change the fix point from food to a ball**

We are finally placing the ball under the arm. We have to help the dog understand where it is.

### **Step 4.2- Come into the basic position with help from the leash pressure**

We combine leash pressure with the new focal point. All of this needs to be done before we start to heel.

### **Step 4.3 – Start adding slight distraction**

We start working with distractions while stationary in Basic Position. It is easier to start now before we add the complexity of movement.

## **Step 5: Let’s Start to Heel**

### **5.1 Reward in the first step as you are moving**

Before we take a complete step, we reinforce even 1/2 of a step.

### **5.2 One Step and stop**

Incorporating the halt position.

### **5.3 Multiple steps**

Increasing distance at a variable rate

## **5.4 Change of Speed**

Learning normal, slow and fast speed.

### **Step 6: Remove Aids of the Focal Point**

The sooner you remove aids of the focal point – the better. Sometimes, the dog might create a dependency on the presence of a ball in order to heel. We will now go through the same process but without a ball under the arm.

#### **Step 6.1 – External Reinforcement – Stationary**

The dog is in Basic Position and the ball is on the ground at 90°. We are asking for attention and send the dog to the ball.

#### **6.2 Move into Basic Position – External Reinforcement**

As before we are asking the dog to move into the Basic Position from a slight angle with the ball on the ground.

#### **6.3 One Step – External Reinforcement**

#### **6.4 Multiple Steps – External Reinforcement**

### **Step 7- Remove ALL Help- Level B of the Learning Pyramid**

Introduction to how we will reduce dependency on the reinforcement.

#### **Optional: Basic Position – Hand In**

Some countries define Basic Position with the Handler's hand in against the leg. We will show you how to accomplish it.

Enjoy a long list of training examples at various stages of teaching Heeling