



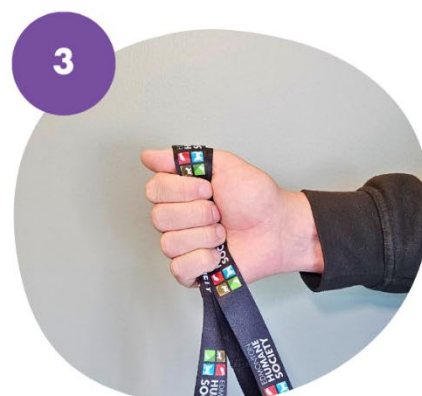
The way you hold your dog's leash might seem like a small detail, but it can make a big difference in how safe and enjoyable your walks are. A secure grip prevents injuries like rope burn and reduces the risk of losing control of the leash—keeping your dog safe and close by your side.

This guide introduces one simple and effective technique called the thumb lock.

### How to Use the Thumb Lock

1. Hold out your hand and put the leash handle over your thumb.
2. Take a small loop of slack from the leash and rest it over your thumb too.
3. Close your hand into a fist, holding both the loop and handle with your thumb on top.

This grip helps keep the leash secure in your hand, even if your dog pulls unexpectedly.



There are other safe ways to hold a leash, like the finger lock, that you may want to explore. Choose the technique that gives you the most control and connection with your dog.

### Walking Safety Tips

- Don't wrap the leash around your hand or wrist. This can cause serious injuries if your dog lunges or pulls suddenly.
- Keep your leash hand close to your core. This gives you better balance and control.



- Stay alert to your surroundings and pay attention to your dog. Know what might trigger them—like squirrels, bikes or other dogs—and create space or change course *before* they react.
- Use a leash that matches your dog’s size and strength. Bigger or stronger dogs may need a wider, sturdier leash to prevent jolting or breakage.

## Struggling With Leash Manners? You’re Not Alone

Many dogs pull, bark at other dogs or get overly excited on walks. These behaviours are common—and they can improve with practice, consistency and the right support.

*Tip: Explore more of our helpful guides for humane and effective tips such as:*

- [Loose Leash Walking](#)
- [Leash Reactivity](#)
- [Choosing the Right Walking Gear](#)

We also offer private consultations and group [training classes](#) with our professional dog trainers. They can provide personalized guidance to reduce stress on walks and build a stronger, more positive bond between you and your dog.

## Why It Matters

Leash handling isn’t just about safety. A steady, secure grip can prevent accidents, gives you better control in unexpected situations and creates a more consistent experience for your dog. Over time, that consistency can make walks feel more predictable and positive for both of you.

### **Additional Resources:**

Find more free guides on our website by visiting:

<https://www.edmontonhumanesociety.com/education/resources-for-pet-guardians/>

### **Did You Know?**

You can also ask us behavioural questions by emailing:

[askthespecialist@edmontonhumanesociety.com](mailto:askthespecialist@edmontonhumanesociety.com)