

Off the lead? – Not everywhere

One of a dog owner's key belongings is a dog's lead. Most people won't even leave the house without it, because letting a dog run off its lead invites new hazards around every corner. Drive time harbours enormous risks for dogs running free. Many towns and communities make a lead compulsory – dog owners can ask their local council about where and when such rules apply. But there are other situations dog walkers must exercise caution and would do better to keep their four-legged friend on the lead, say the experts from Fressnapf, the pet super store chain.

"On the lead" is the rule on cycle- and footpaths, where walkers, cyclists, joggers, riders or children may cross your path. Anticipation and consideration are the rules here, even if you're certain that your dog is obedient and will behave. Many dogs cannot weigh up the risk represented by an oncoming cyclist and may suddenly change direction, putting all involved in danger.

PET POINTERS



with Tony Cross

You should also put your canine friend on the lead when you come across another dog. There are dogs that react angrily to their counterparts. Many an owner will break out in a sweat at the sight of another dog charging towards their pet, and may have trouble keeping their own dog under control.

A lead is absolutely recommended wherever you might expect poultry or game, especially if your dog has a hunting instinct. Calls to obedience are often ineffective in trying to keep your dog under control in this type of environment. To give your dog more freedom, put it on a retractable lead giving it a radius of around 10 metres / 33 feet to roam in.

At www.maxizoo.ie/petguide.html you'll find more tips on keeping and raising your four-legged friend.

SAFETY IN THE DARK

As the Winter draws in, you have no choice but to walk your dog in the dark too. This can prove a very difficult time to walk your dog as drivers and cyclists might not see you. Protect yourself and your pet: There are reflective leads and collars available to make your dog visible in a car's headlights. Flashing collars or leads will stand out from a distance, especially in heavy traffic or in bad weather. Owners should equip themselves with a reflective belt or a jacket with reflective strips.



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