Jogging with your puppy

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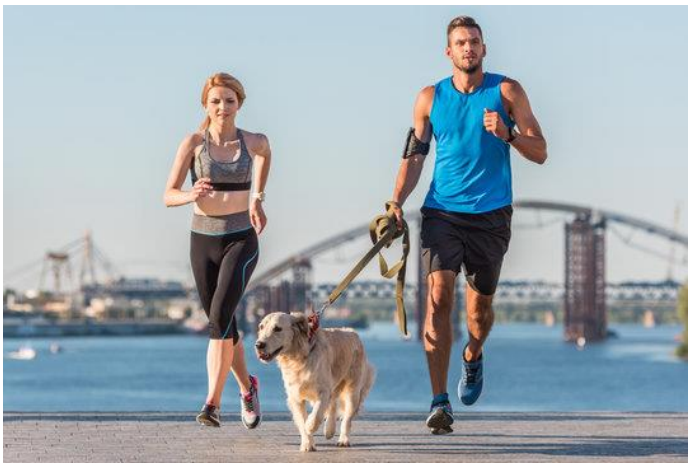

As our puppies start to grow up and winter gives way to beautiful spring, it can be tempting to start taking your pup out along on your morning or evening runs. However, there are a few considerations to note prior to taking the little one out on a 10k run along Rushcutters Bay.

Breeds can be an important factor to consider whether your dog is suitable as a running companion. Hunting, herding and athletic breeds including but not limited to Kelpies, Border Collies, German shorthair pointers, labradors, greyhounds are more suited to run longer distances, however they will still need to be trained to reach such distances. Dogs that are very large, such as Great Danes or very small such as miniature poodles, chihuahuas or brachycephalic dogs, pugs, french bulldogs, bulldogs etc, are less than suitable for running as their body conformation do not tend to lend itself to long bouts of exercise. If you are in doubt, give us a call and we're happy to provide you with some advice!

Age is another important factor to consider when selecting a running partner. Geriatric or juvenile dogs should not partake in high-impact exercises such as running. Puppies should not be run regularly until at least a year to 1.5 years of age as their bones, muscles, tendons and ligaments are all still under development, high impact exercises may impact the normal growth of these structures. If your mature dog begins to experience exercise intolerance, such as being out of breath quickly after a walk or run, or acts sore and stiff after the run, it is best to contact your veterinarian for a consultation. Unfortunately, this age can vary widely between individuals and breeds.

In order to train your dog to run with you, it is vital to start the program gradually, their own couch to 5k program if you will.

- Start by taking your dog on long walks a few times a week for a few weeks, this will allow your dog to gradually adapt to the distance and the route.
- Once your dog is comfortable with this routine, begin adding some light jogging for short periods of time during the walk.
- Continue monitoring your dog for any signs of excess fatigue.
- If they continue to cope well, continue increasing jogging time until the walk is replaced with a jog.
- You may gradually increase speed and distance if your dog continues to cope well.
- Overtraining, like in humans, can lead to injury. Remember to allow your dog to have rest days, which will allow them to recover and continue to get fitter!

If you have any questions about how or when to train your pup into a trusty jogging partner, please don't hesitate to contact our friendly team for some advice!