

Trail-Ready Dog Starter Guide

Pack light • Train smart • Leave no trace



Everything you need to hike safely with your dog — from kit lists to training tips.



What's inside

Dog & Human Kit Essentials

The must-pack items for a safe, enjoyable adventure together.

Safety Gear & Quick Trail Tips

Essential kit and habits to keep you both safe from start to summit.

Trail Etiquette Basics

Respect wildlife, people, and the environment while on the trail.

Quick Training Cues for the Trail

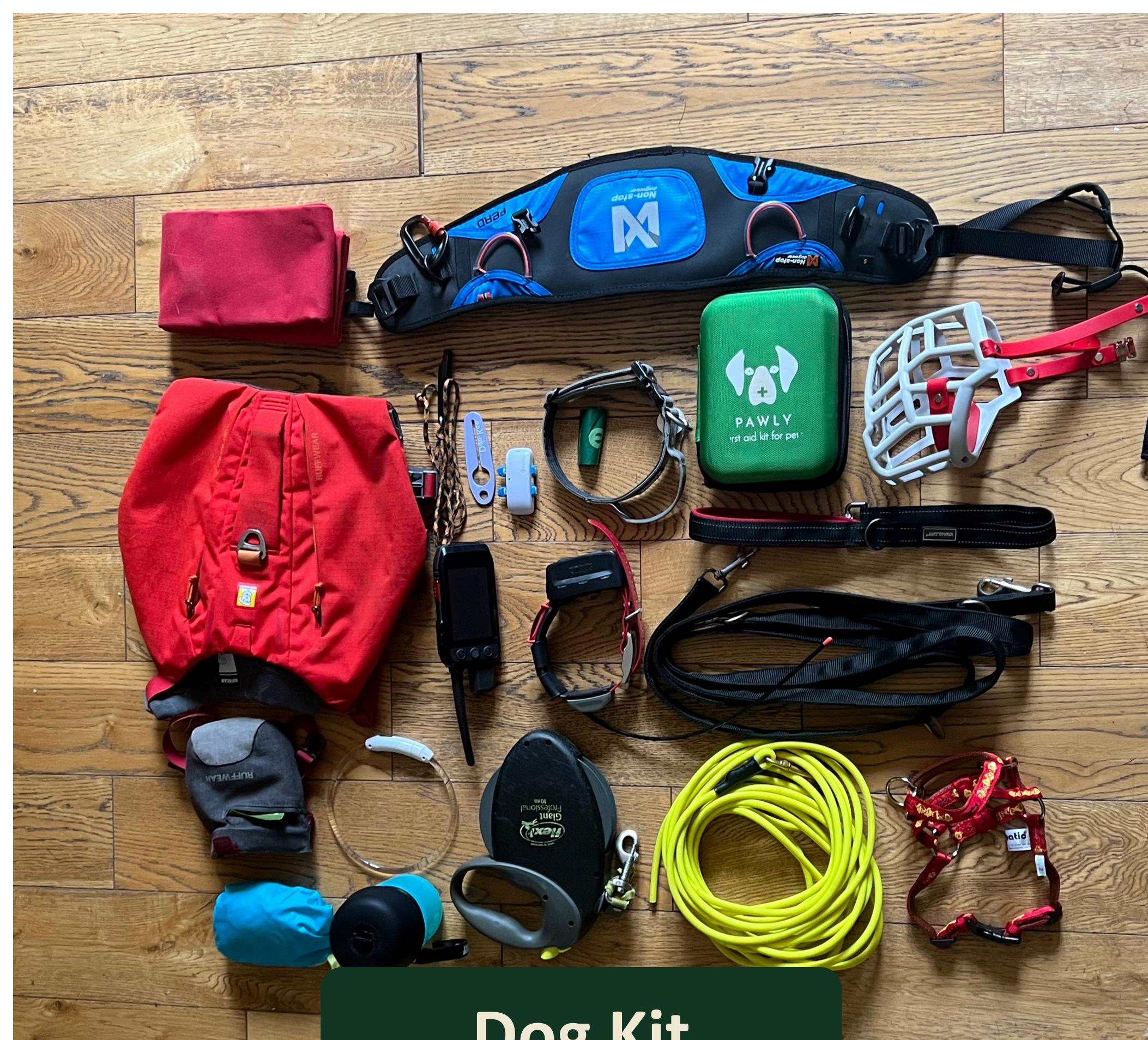
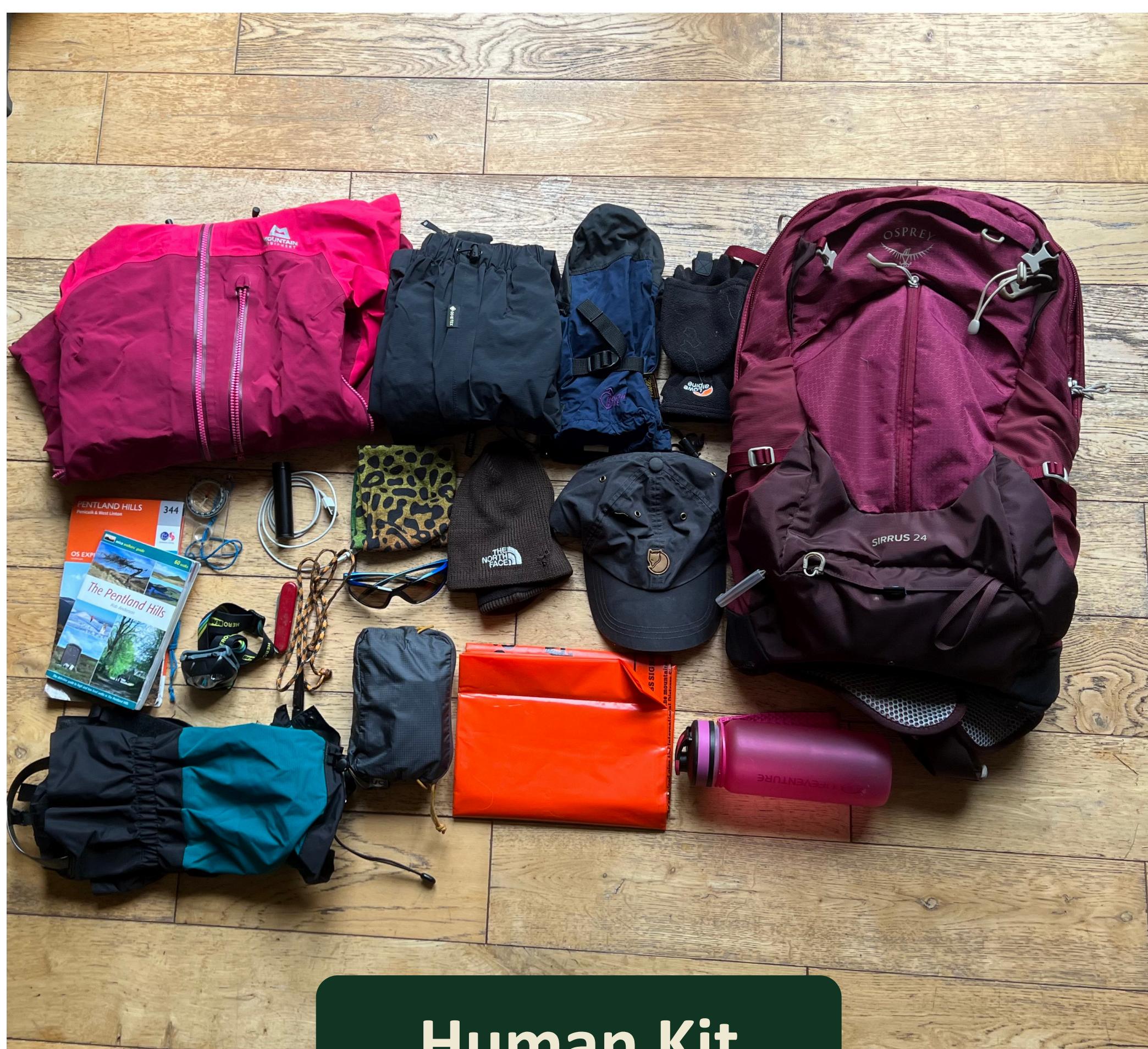
Four easy commands to keep your dog trail-ready.

Printable One-Page Checklist

A simple, ready-to-go packing list for your next outing.

How to use this guide:

- Browse the sections before your next walk or hike.
- Pack your gear using the checklists — add your own essentials.
- Practise the training cues at home so they're ready on the trail.
- Follow local rules (e.g., Scottish Outdoor Access Code).
- Enjoy the journey — stay safe, have fun, leave no trace.



Dog Kit Essentials



ID & Safety

- ID tag with phone number
- Tractive GPS / Garmin tracker
- Collar light & Whistle



Walking & Control

- Collar + backup fixed-length lead
- Short lead, Flexi lead & Long line
- Harness or dog backpack
- Head collar & Traffic handle



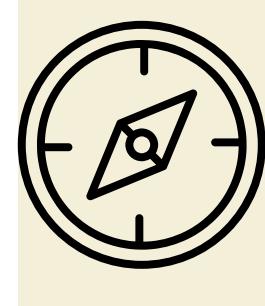
Essentials

- Poo bags (+ spare) or Doo-Kee
- Water bottle + collapsible bowl
- High-value treats / food
- Treat pouch



Health & Protection

- Muzzle (if needed)
- Towel or drying coat
- Paw care (balm/booties)
- Mini first aid kit (tick tool, wipes)



Optional Extras

- Barb wire cover
- Raincoat / Cooling jacket
- Trekking belt

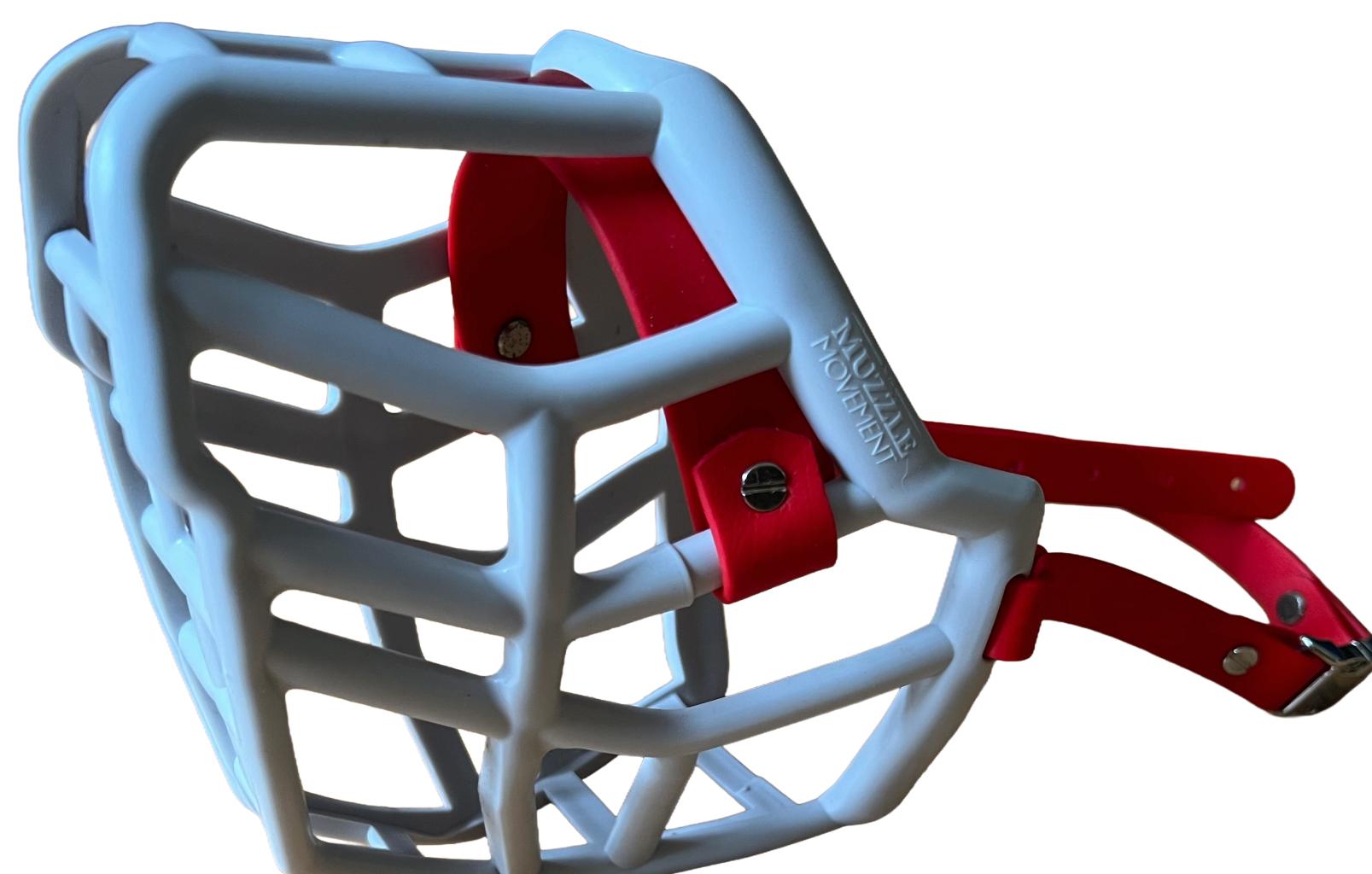
My Top Picks



RUFFWEAR Treat Trader

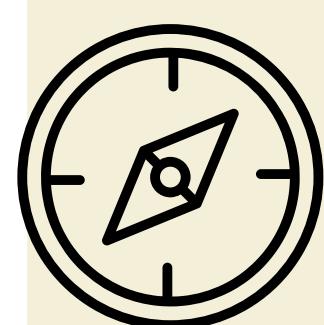


Lesotc Dog Water Bottle



Muzzle Movement - Neli

Human Kit Essentials



Navigation & Safety

- Map/GPX + fully charged phone
- Power bank & cable
- Compass
- Head torch + spare batteries
- Whistle
- Penknife
- Emergency blanket / Survival bag
- First aid kit (plasters, blister pads)

My Top Picks



OS Maps



Clothing

- Raincoat
- Waterproof trousers
- Warm gloves & Windproof gloves
- Wooly hat & Sun hat
- Buff
- Sunglasses
- Waterproof + warm layer



Osprey Sirrus 24



Footwear

- Sturdy footwear
- Gaiters (optional)



Food & Hydration

- Water bottle
- Food, snacks & lunch



Extras

- Cash/card & ID
- Sun protection (SPF, sunglasses)



Scarpa Walking Boots

Quick Packing & Trail Tips

Packing Tips

- Use smaller pouches to keep gear organised.
- Keep dog gear easy to reach.
- Carry plenty of water for both you and your dog.
- Check the weather and terrain before setting out.
- Adjust your kit based on hike duration.
- Make sure your dog is comfortable with all their equipment.



Trail Tips

- Keep your dog on lead near livestock and nesting birds.
- Put the lead on early if unsure, and practise regular check-ins.
- Give way at narrow sections and gates.
- Bag and carry out all waste — leave no trace.
- Rest at least once an hour, watch for heat or cold, and check paws and ticks after the walk.

Pre-Walk Checks

ID & Fit



- Collar or harness secure and comfortable.
- ID tag with up-to-date phone number.
- Lead, long line, or backup lead ready.

Health



- Dog fit for the planned distance and terrain.
- Nails trimmed, paws free of cuts or cracks.
- Any medication packed if needed.

Weather & Daylight



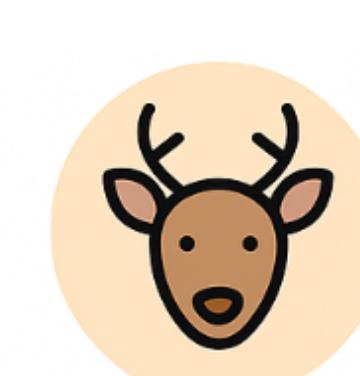
- Check forecast, temperature, and wind.
- Be aware of sunrise/sunset times.
- Adjust kit for heat, cold, or wet conditions.

Route & Parking



- Map or GPX file loaded and tested.
- Plan A and backup Plan B ready.
- Identify water points for you and your dog.

Livestock & Wildlife



- Lead on where required.
- Avoid disturbing ground-nesting birds.
- Watch for deer or other wildlife crossings.

Communication & Safety



- Share your route and ETA with someone.
- Phone fully charged, power bank packed.
- Emergency contact details accessible.

Trail Etiquette Basics

For You

- Check the weather and know your route.
- Carry a map and compass — and know how to use them.
- Wear layers and sturdy footwear.
- Don't underestimate the hill — prepare properly.
- Leave no trace: stick to paths and carry out all waste.

For Your Dog

- Reliable recall or keep on lead when needed.
- Polite passes: give space to people and dogs, and keep leads short.
- Gates & stiles: put the lead on first, yield, and close gates behind you.
- Use a light in low visibility.
- Consider a GPS tracker in off-lead areas.
- Bring water, snacks, and a towel.
- Don't ask your dog to carry more than they can handle.

For Livestock & Wildlife

- Observe quietly from a distance.
- Never let your dog chase or bark at sheep.
- Train using stooge animals if needed.
- Even friendly dogs can cause stress — keep control at all times.

For Other Walkers

- Don't let your dog raid someone's picnic.
- Recall your dog before they approach strangers.
- Respect families with children and reactive dogs.
- A polite dog reflects a responsible owner.

Quick Training Cues



1) Loose-Lead Legends

- Reward a slack lead: mark + treat at your knee.
- Stop or change direction when tension appears.



2) Reliable Recalls

- Use a happy cue; crouch; reward generously.
- Practise on a long line before off-lead.



3) Emergency Stop / Check-In

- Teach a clear hand signal to freeze and look.
- Rehearse at short distances, then add movement.



4) Settle & Wait

- Mat down; reward calm while you sit/stand.
- Add time, distance, and distractions gradually.



Emergency Plan



- Pause, breathe, assess: people, dog, environment.
- Warmth & shelter: coat/blanket; move off exposure.
- Call for help: local vet, mountain rescue (if appropriate).
 - Location: app/GPX coordinates; describe features.
 - Record: brief notes & photos for the vet.

Local vet & phone: _____

ICE contact: _____

Planned route/parking: _____

OS Grid/Lat-Long: _____

Printable One-Page Checklist

THE TRAIL-READY DOG CHECKLIST

Your quick guide to safe, fun adventures with your dog

1. DOG ESSENTIALS

- Collar & ID tag
- Short lead, long line, or trail belt
- Dog backpack or harness
- Head collar (if used)
- Poop bags & holder
- Treat pouch & high-value treats
- Water bottle & collapsible bowl

3. HUMAN ESSENTIALS

- Waterproof jacket & trousers
- Warm layers & gloves
- Food & water
- Map, compass, & phone charger
- First aid kit & survival blanket

2. SAFETY GEAR

- GPS tracker / Collar light
- Whistle
- Muzzle (if needed)
- Dog first aid kit
- Weather protection (coat or cooling vest)

4. TRAIL TIPS

- Keep dog gear accessible
- Pack small pouches to stay organised
- Always check weather & terrain before heading out
- Adjust kit based on hike duration and difficulty
- Ensure your dog is comfortable with their gear before the hike



Print and keep in your kit bag for every adventure.