

Reading Your Dog's Movement Videos

What to look for when you compare clips over time

PETSLIKEMINE
ARTHRITIS & MSK SPACE

Filming your dog is only half of it; the value comes from **comparing clips over time and learning to read what they show**. You don't need a trained eye. With a dated set of videos and a few things to watch for, you can spot the gradual changes that day-to-day life hides. This guide shows you how.

THE METHOD: COMPARE, DON'T JUST WATCH

Play an **older clip and a recent one side by side**, same view, same kind of surface. Watch each a few times, looking at one thing at a time. You're not judging "is this normal" in the abstract; you're asking **"what's different now compared with before?"** Slow the playback if your phone allows it, subtle changes are far easier to see at half speed.

Rising from rest *often where stiffness shows first*

- **Slower to get up** than in older clips?
- **Pushing up with the front**, hauling the back along?
- **Several attempts**, or a pause partway?
- **A stretch or shake-off** needed before moving?

Walking away & towards you *watch the back legs and the weight*

- **Weight even** on both back legs, or favouring one?
- **Back legs closer together** than before?
- **A leg swung out or in** rather than straight?
- **A "bunny hop"**, both back legs moving together?

Walking from the side *the whole picture in motion*

- **Head bobbing** up and down as they walk?
- **A hunched or roached back** rather than level?
- **Shorter steps** than in older clips?
- **Stiffer overall**, less loose and flowing?

Everyday challenges *stairs, steps, the sofa, the car*

- **Hesitating** before a step they used to take easily?
- **A run-up or a think** before a jump they once just did?
- **Taking stairs differently**, slower, or one at a time?
- **Avoiding it** altogether, or asking for help?

WHAT YOUR EYE CAN, AND CAN'T, CATCH

Comparing your own videos is genuinely powerful, and it's the best way to notice the changes above. But it's worth being honest about its limits. **The human eye is good at spotting clear, larger changes, and far less reliable at subtle ones.** Small, early shifts, a slight unevenness between legs, a few percent of asymmetry, the very first signs before a visible limp, are genuinely hard to see, even for experienced eyes watching carefully.

That's exactly the gap objective analysis fills. The same footage can be analysed by **PAWSCHECK, our gait-analysis tool**, which measures movement precisely and picks up the small changes that the eye misses, especially useful when you want to know whether a treatment is genuinely working. Your own eye and a measured analysis work well together: you watch the everyday picture, the analysis catches the subtle detail.

How to use. Keep your movement videos dated and in one place so you can compare them. Every month or two, line up an old clip against a recent one and work through the views above, one thing at a time. Note anything that's changed, and bring it (and your concerns) to your vet. Trust what you see; you know your dog better than anyone.

**WATCH THE CHANGE,
NOT JUST THE DOG.**