**We’re dog lovers.** For many of us at POST, a trip to our open spaces isn’t the same without our furry friends. But knowing where you can or can’t take your dog can be challenging, so we’ve made this helpful guide.

Below you’ll find 12 featured hikes, brought to you by our staff’s opinionated four-legged friends. They’ve all spent a lot of time on our trails and know these open spaces better than we do! We have also included a complete list of all of the dog-friendly open spaces in our little pocket of California.

Dig in and find your next dog-friendly hike.
Jean Lauer Trail
Pulgas Ridge
Wavecrest
Windy Hill
Pearsons-Arastradero
Coal Creek
Fremont Older
Bean Hollow
Sanborn
Sierra Azul
Almaden-Quicksilver
Coyote Lake Harvey Bear Ranch

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Jean Lauer Trail

Preserve: Pillar Point Bluff County Park
Length: 1.5 miles round-trip
Difficulty: Easy

This trail was named in memory of Jean Lauer, a former POST staffer who loved this stretch of coastline. In the winter, it’s the best spot to see the world-famous Mavericks surf break and is close to the Fitzgerald Marine Preserve:

Trail Map

“So much good sniffing on this trail. A cornucopia of coastal scents mixed with a surprising variety of K-9 flavors. Like, whoa.”

-Bentley

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Pulgas Ridge

In the center of this preserve is a large, **off-leash dog area** and this trail takes you right to it. This is a great spot if your pooch needs to let loose and really burn some energy. Go, dog, go.

**Preserve:** Pulgas Ridge Open Space Preserve

**Length:** 1.5-mile loop

**Difficulty:** Easy

“Sometimes nature calls when you’re on the trail. But my person knows what’s up and always packs out waste.”

-Roxy
“I’m a local coastsider so let me tell you—this is one awesome spot. But let’s keep it that way by observing the rules of the trail and staying on leash.”

- Peppy

With sweeping views of the Pacific, it’s no wonder this trail is a favorite for local dog-walkers. The birding here is great too. In the winter, this is one of the most important nesting sites for raptors in the entire Bay Area, so bring your binoculars.
Windy Hill

Preserve: Windy Hill Open Space Preserve
Length: 6 miles round-trip
Difficulty: Moderate

Climb to the top of Windy Hill for a panoramic view of rolling hills stretching west to the Pacific Ocean. The site of POST’s first land protection project, this preserve is a favorite among many of our staff (and their dogs).

“Having grown up near this preserve, I know this trail like the back of my paw. I highly recommend it!”

-Tito
Pearsons-Arastradero Preserve

Close to Highway 280, access to this preserve is relatively easy, especially for residents of the Peninsula. On this hike, you’ll enjoy ancient oaks, abundant wildlife and sweeping vistas from the western hills to the Bay; it’s a great place for a sunset walk.

Preserve: Pearsons-Arastradero Preserve
Length: 4.5-mile loop
Difficulty: Moderate

“Arastradero is my go-to when I need to burn some calories and clear my head. And I always hydrate at the trailhead’s built-in water bowl—no celebration for dehydration, right?”

- Aspen

Trail Map
Coal Creek Open Space Preserve

Preserve: Coal Creek Open Space Preserve
Length: 3 miles round-trip
Difficulty: Moderate

This hike has a little bit of everything: a winding trail through an oak forest, spectacular views and a small waterfall. It’s an ideal spot for a relatively short hike with just enough elevation to keep things interesting.

“The views on this hike are certainly something to howl about. I can even see my house in Menlo Park!”

-George

Trail Map
Fremont Older

A hike to the top of Maise’s Peak is a must, especially for South Bay residents. Wind through a beautiful forest and rolling hills to the summit for panoramic views of the surrounding open spaces.

“"I love rolling around when I’m out in nature and there are some great spots here for just that. Gets my coat just the way I like it.”

-Mango

Preserve: Fremont Older
Open Space Preserve

Length: 2.5 miles round-trip

Difficulty: Moderate
This is a magical spot, especially for your K-9 friends. Both the beach and short trail along the coast are dog-friendly. The parking lot can get full on the weekend if the weather’s nice, so try to get there earlier in the day if you can.

“Dude, this is one totally rad spot. I like to hit the waves and feel the sand between my paws—need I say more?”

-Arlo

Preserve: Bean Hollow State Beach
Length: 1.5 miles round-trip
Difficulty: Easy
Sanborn County Park

Enjoy a section of the Bay Area Ridge Trail, views of the South Bay and a beautiful mixed Douglas fir and redwood forest. Most of this hike is in the shade, making it a great choice in the warmer, summer months.

“"I'm pretty furry, so I prefer to hike in the shade when I can, which is why this trail is one of my faves."
-Trixie

Preserve: Sanborn County Park
Length: 6 miles round-trip
Difficulty: Moderate

Trail Map

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Escape into one of the Bay Area’s largest open space preserves. Just minutes off Highway 17, access to this trailhead is easy, especially for residents of the South Bay. On clear, bright days you’ll have great views of Mount Hamilton, too.

“I love the chaparral and gnarled live oaks of Sierra Azul. And coming from San Jose, we’re there in just a few wags of the tail.”

-Dingo
All of the trails in this park are dog-friendly, so take your pick. This trail is our favorite, looping through the heart of the preserve and leading past the entrance of the San Cristobal Mine, a Gold Rush era mercury ("quicksilver") mine.

"Dang, it gets mad-hot in the South Bay. So, be cool y’all, hook your friends up with some water when tongues start to hang."

-Victor
Coyote Lake Harvey Bear Ranch

Preserve: Coyote Lake Harvey Bear Ranch County Park
Length: 4-mile loop
Difficulty: Moderate

This trail weaves through golden hills sprinkled with towering valley oak. With spectacular views of the South Bay, this is a must-see piece of the iconic California landscape. Great for fall walks when the weather is cooler.

“At fourteen, I’ve reached a point in my long hiking career where I prefer to stick to my favorite go-to trails. And let me tell you, this is one of them.”

-Sitka

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Here are a few guidelines for dog-friendly hiking:

- Limit yourself to three dogs per person.
- Keep your dogs out of streams and ponds to help protect wildlife.
- A six-foot leash is required for leashed areas—self-retracting leashes are allowed with a maximum extended length of 25 feet.
- Keep your dogs from harassing wildlife or other visitors.
- Please remove dog waste by packing it out.
- Always ask before approaching dogs on the trail.
## Dog-Friendly Open Spaces

Some open spaces are dog-friendly on designated trails only—please plan accordingly.

**Mid Peninsula Regional Open Space District**
- Coal Creek
- El Sereno
- Fremont Older
- Long Ridge
- Pulgas Ridge
- St. Joseph’s Hill
- Thornewood
- Windy Hill

**National Park Service**
- Fort Funston
- Milagra Ridge
- Mori Point
- Rancho Corral de Tierra
- Sweeney Ridge

**Santa Clara County Parks**
- Almaden Quicksilver
- Alviso Marina
- Anderson Lake
- Calero
- Chesbro Reservoir
- Coyote Creek
- Coyote Lake Harvey
  - Bear Ranch
- Ed R. Levin
- Hellyer
- Joseph D. Grant
- Lexington Reservoir
- Los Gatos Creek
- Martial Cottle
- Mt. Madonna
- Penitencia Creek
- Sanborn
- Santa Teresa
- Stevens Creek
- Uvas Canyon
- Uvas Reservoir
- Vasona Lake
- Villa Montalvo

**San Mateo County Parks**
- Devil’s Slide
- Edgewood
- Fitzgerald Marine Reserve
- Mirada Surf
- Pillar Point Bluff
- Quarry Park

**City of Santa Clara**
- Ulistac Natural Area

**City of Menlo Park**
- Bedwell Bayfront

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## Dog-Friendly Open Spaces

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