

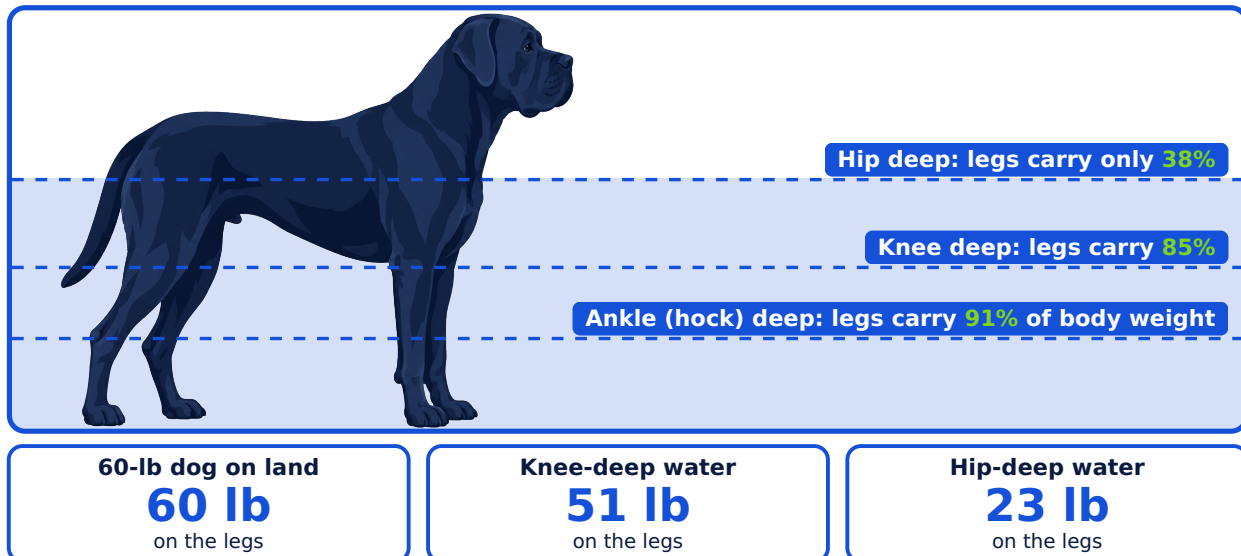


How Hard Is My Dog Working in the Water?

Underwater treadmill vs. exercise on land

1. THE WATER HOLDS YOUR DOG UP

Water pushes up on your dog's body. This is called **buoyancy**. The deeper the water, the less weight your dog's legs and joints have to carry.



2. BUT THE WATER ALSO PUSHES BACK

Walking through water is like walking into a strong wind. Every step pushes water out of the way, so muscles have to work harder. That's called **resistance**.

- **Deeper water** = more water to push
- **Faster belt** = harder work
- **Water jets** = even more push-back

The big idea:

Easy on the joints. Hard work for the muscles, heart and lungs.

Water also helps joints **bend more**. Dogs bend their knees and hips the most when the water is at or above those joints.

3. HOW DOES IT COMPARE TO LAND?

There is **no exact formula** like "10 minutes in water = 30 minutes walking." Every dog is different. Here is a general guide to how the effort feels:

In the water treadmill	Feels a lot like...	Joints feel
Ankle-deep, slow walk	An easy walk on a leash	Almost the same as land
Knee-deep, steady walk	A brisk walk	A little lighter
Hip-deep, steady walk	Walking through deep snow or sand	Much lighter (less than half the weight)
Faster belt or jets on	A walk uphill	Lighter, but muscles work harder

In people, walking in waist-deep water at half to one-third the land speed burns about the same energy as walking or jogging on land. That's why a slow water walk can still be a real workout.

4. SHORT AND SLOW ON PURPOSE

- New dogs often start with **5 minutes or less** of walking.
- We add time and speed a little at a time as your dog gets stronger.
- Your dog's vet plan sets the water depth, speed and time.

Signs your dog is getting tired:

- Heavy panting
- Drifting to the back
- Dragging toes
- More limping
- Trying to stop or sit
- Stumbling

When we see these, we slow down or stop.