

DOG TRAINING EQUIPMENT

Training equipment can be used either for communication or for aversive control. The best equipment accomplishes the training goal, in a timely manner, with the least possible physical intrusion on the dog. Training equipment should never cause physical harm, undue physical or emotional distress, or prolonged discomfort to the dog. Any type of equipment can cause injury if misused or improperly fit.

		ADVANTAGES	DISADVANTAGES
<u>Non-slip or Flat Collar</u> 	<p>Humane training restraint, the potential for misuse is extremely limited, since it does not tighten or constrict around the neck and is generally comfortable and safe enough for most dogs to wear continuously. However, it may offer limited control for large, powerful, or highly aroused dogs.</p>	<p>Can attach ID tags</p>	<p>If pulled, such as by tightening of the leash, it can put pressure on the trachea.</p>
			<p>If the fit is too loose, your dog may escape by backing out of the collar.</p>
<u>Limited-Slip Collar</u> 	<p>An adjustable collar designed to tighten around a dog's neck, but to stop tightening before they actually constrict around the neck. When the collar is not being pulled tight by the leash, it hangs loose.</p>	<p>Cannot choke your dog or pose other dangers possible with <i>unlimited</i> tightening around the neck.</p> <p>They are good for dogs that tend to "slip" or back out of their collars.</p>	<p>If fitted too tightly, the collar can constrict and choke when the leash tightens, rather than becoming snug enough around the neck to prevent escape.</p>
			<p>If fitted too loosely, your dog can back out of the collar and escape. Some dogs may catch their paw or jaw in the loop while playing or scratching.</p> <p>Risk of getting additional loop caught on an object or by another dog.</p>
<u>Slip Collars or Choke Chains</u> 			<p>There is no limit to the amount the collar can tighten around the dog's neck. The improper use causes choking thereby does not maintain your dog's attention, change the behaviour effectively, or give accurate guidance.</p>
			<p>Use of the collar with prolonged or excessive force of the choking action can cause death or injury, including blindness or brain damage. The narrower the gauge and width of the collar and the higher the collar is placed on your dog's neck, the greater the risk of pain and injury.</p>
			<p>There is a substantial risk of injury or death by hanging or strangulation should the collar become caught. If put on incorrectly, the collar is constricts but will not release. Never leave on an unsupervised dog.</p>

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<p>Prong or Pinch Collars</p>		<p>The continuous loop restricts the amount the collar tightens around the dog's neck.</p>	<p>The prong collar can cause injury if used with force or if your dog is allowed to hit the end of a lead, long line, or retractable leash with force. Never leave on unattended.</p>
		<p>The design of this collar is to gain your dog's attention through discomfort via the pointed metal prongs, which means this collar creates strong stimulation with little effort.</p>	<p>Metal prongs can cause pain and injury to the neck when leash tightens. It can be too stimulating for many dogs.</p>
		<p>It is an option for certain situations (such as a fragile or weak owner, dogs with fragile trachea, rambunctious dogs, or ones not responding to other neck collars) head halters offer the same benefits without the pain, and are therefore a more humane restraint.</p>	<p>If too loose, pressure is put only on a few prongs which make contact at incorrect angles and create too much pressure on a concentrated spot. If too tight, prongs can be a constant source of pain or discomfort. Prongs may come loose from one another, causing the collar to release.</p>
		<p>You can put plastic tips/covers over each pointed metal prong to decrease the stimulation.</p>	<p>It can cause aggression if the pain of the collar is associated with other dogs or people in the environment.</p>
			<p>If worn too high on the neck, it lays too close to your dog's ears where sensitive nerve bundles exist.</p>

<p>Head Halter (Halti, Gentle Leader, Snoot Loop, New Trix)</p>		<p>It is HIGHLY RECOMMENDED that whenever you are using a head halter you use a double ended leash. This allows for one point of contact of the leash to be attached to the halter, and the second point of contact to be attached to the harness or collar. The advantage of this is to reduce the risk of injury when using just one single point of contact on the head halter.</p>	<p>It is important to fit the head halter properly to make the dog comfortable and accepting. Some dogs will never become acclimated to the halter and are better off wearing some other collar or harness. This collar requires careful fitting for proper use, and some owners need experienced assistance.</p>
		<p>Can have a calming effect on some dogs.</p>	<p>Your dog must become accustomed to wearing the halter without undue stress, through habituation and rewards.</p>
		<p>The point of attachment on the head halter is physically very forward. Typically requires less strength to control the dog's head.</p>	<p>With the single point of contact being located so far forward (under the dog's nose) on the head halter, pressure on the leash could result in the dog's head being pulled around suddenly and creating the potential for injury to the neck and back .</p>
		<p>The two points of contact leash also is useful as a safeguard to prevent the dog from escaping if the halter happens to slip off.</p>	<p>The sensitive skin on top of a dog's muzzle can become irritated, especially on short-coated dogs. On some collar designs, the nose strap can bother some dogs' eyes. Some breeds with flat noses or breathing difficulties are not suited to a head halter.</p>

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<p><u>Regular Harness or H-Harness</u></p>		<p>Recommended as a humane training restraint, the potential for misuse of these harnesses is extremely limited, since it does not put any pressure on a dog's neck, head, or airway. This also makes it useful when collars and head halters are not appropriate due to physical conformation or injury.</p>	<p>These harnesses offer less control than collars or head halters. Most dogs tend to pull harder than when wearing a collar or head halter. Some models can be difficult to fit properly or to put on your dog.</p>
			<p>A harness should not be left on an unsupervised dog. Injury can occur if your dog pulls sideways as you pull in the opposite direction. Dogs can escape if improperly fitted.</p>

<p><u>No-Pull Harness</u> (Easy Walk, Sense-ation, Halti harness)</p>		<p>Leash attaches to chest strap and when a dog attempts to pull the pressure will cause him to turn or stop.</p>	<p>The no pull harness offers less control than collars or head halters. Some designs can be difficult for owners to put on correctly.</p>
		<p>Easy to put on.</p>	<p>Some dogs can back out of these harnesses.</p>
		<p>Can be left on during off lead supervised activities.</p>	<p>Can chew off harness.</p>
			<p>It can cause chafing, abrasions, and loss of hair in the armpits.</p>

<p><u>Step In Harness</u></p>		<p>On a single point of contact, (e.g. regular leash), the harness distributes the force of pull almost evenly across the chest and shoulders. However, because the harness sits right on top of the shoulders as opposed to further down the back, the dog does have less leverage to pull with as compared to a regular harness.</p>	<p>The harness can be a bit complicated to put on the dog correctly. If fitted improperly, dogs can also learn to escape out of the harness.</p>
		<p>It is a great tool to use if collars and/or head halters are not usable for the dog due to physical confirmation or previous injury.</p>	<p>With one point of contact, the harness can provide less control compared to the head halters and collars.</p>
		<p>When used with a double ended leash with one point of contact on the back of the harness and the second point across the chest, the force is split between the side and chest and at the back of the harness. By placing alternating pressure on these two points, there is nothing solid for the dog to pull against, therefore allowing the handler to be able to influence the direction that the dog is moving.</p>	<p>The Step-In harness should never be left on the dog unsupervised</p>

<p><u>Retractable Leash</u></p>		<p>The retractable leash is a thin, nylon cord (usually about 15 feet long) housed on a spool in a plastic bulky "handle" carried by the handler. Most designs also allow for the cord to be locked in place at any length, making it work like a short leash.</p>	<p>The cord attaches to your dog's collar and stays taut no matter your dog's distance from you, since the cord automatically retracts as your dog and you get closer to each other. The pressure of the retracting cord can make walking nicely and recalls more difficult due to the constant tension.</p>
		<p>Varying length can allow for training and proofing at a variety of distances without fear of escape.</p>	<p>Injuries can occur if a dog forcefully and abruptly hits the end of a leash. It should not be used with head halters, slip collars, and prong collars because of the limited control the retractable cord allows you to have over your dog's pulling.</p>

<p><u>Retractable Leash</u> (CONTINUED)</p> 		<p>Due to limited control of the retractable cord it can be dangerous to walk dogs on sidewalk near busy streets, etc. with the retractable unlocked. If forced from your hands, the bulky housing can quickly retract toward your dog's collar and injure her or startle her into flight. Likewise, if the cord or the collar breaks, the retracting cord, clip, or collar can whip back toward you and cause injury.</p>
		<p>Potential for the cord to become wrapped or tangled around other dogs and people and cause abrasions. The housing is plastic and can freeze, crack and break in cold climates.</p>

<p><u>Citronella Collar</u></p> 	<p>Conditionally recommended as a humane training device, once other appropriate and more humane methods have failed, this device can be considered to help stop excessive and unnecessary barking. The sound of the spray may serve as a conditioned punisher (punishment marker) and add to the bark suppression effect the citronella odor.</p>	<p>A dog must be carefully supervised and observed when first exposed to the collar. You must be able to assess your dog's reaction, adjust the spray intensity appropriately, and remove the collar if your dog's reaction is extreme (urination, shaking, hiding, whisker quiver, agonistic pucker) or results in undesirable behaviour (aggression or extreme fear).</p>
	<p>A small box containing a canister of citronella – a harmless liquid that smells bad to many dogs – is attached to the collar and lies against your dog's throat. When your dog barks, a sensor detects vibrations in the throat or "hears" a bark, depending on the type of sensor. The device then automatically releases a spray of citronella under your dog's chin, toward his nose.</p>	<p>Sensitive dogs, especially noise-phobic ones, may have a strong fear response, such as bolting or escaping, to the sound of the spray. As with any strong aversive, a dog can associate the spray with the nearest person, dog, or location, and react negatively. It may be necessary to trim or shave the hair on the neck and chin of long-haired or thick-coated dogs.</p>
	<p>The collar should be removed when bark suppression is not desired. Make sure that the collar is not triggered by extraneous electrical signals from television stations, radio transmitters, and other equipment, or from external noise or vibrations, such as other dogs barking or ID tags jangling.</p>	<p>Behaviour can become collar-dependent, meaning your dog learns to stop barking only when wearing the collar (activated or deactivated). Some dogs learn to bark the canister empty. Dogs can become desensitized to the spray.</p>
		<p>The spray can affect a nearby dog who is not barking or other animals. In rare cases, a dog or person may be allergic to citronella.</p> <p>Punishment does not teach a dog what to do, so training needs to be a part of the training plan.</p>

<p><u>Electronic or Shock Collars</u></p> 		<p>NOT RECOMMENDED as a humane training devices because, as with all powerful aversives, electrical stimulation or shock as a training tool has a high likelihood of creating fallout that can include fear, aggression, anxiety, and the breakdown of trust between you and your dog.</p>
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