

Collars, Leashes & Lunge Lines



Purpose Of Dog Training Equipment

From a training perspective, it's my opinion, leashes and collars are required for three reasons.

The first is the safety of the dog owner and anyone they may cross paths with. Good dog training equipment should allow the dog owner to have sufficient leverage over the dog in order to control the dog in an emergency situation. Keeping their dog, themselves, and anyone around them on their outings safe is priority one.

The second reason, is as a means of getting a dog's attention. Not as a means of physically correcting a dog. The goal is to teach as opposed to correction. Correction may form a part of teaching but in the context of dog training it has come to mean physical discipline. Using pain to control or try and teach a dog to refrain from a behavior is certainly the avenue many 'Might Is Right' dog trainers pursue. However, that is a very base and primitive approach to teaching, and one that often backfires on many levels.

The final reason for selecting the correct equipment for your dog is not to wreck your dog's freedoms, but to wreck your dog's freedom to make mistakes big and small that ultimately undermine the idea of who is the teacher and who is the student, not to mention development of bad habits.

A Brief Overview

Harnesses - Some Toy Breeds

Toy breeds are physiologically frail, some even more so than their frames suggest and as a result it's best not to use a normal collar as their esophagus and tracheas are too thin to risk even accidental pressure. Other than that, don't use harnesses. At the end of this PDF are a whack of reasons why.

Snap Together Collars



Be very careful using flat collars that snap together (pictured to the left) for anything other than hanging tags. They have a tendency to loosen off on their own. Enough so that many dogs have been known to slip out of

them. A safer alternative is a flat collar that uses a buckle (pictured to the right) as opposed to a snap. Just make sure that you when you choose which hole to use that you do so when the collar is at its highest (under the jaw and behind the ears) as if you close the buckle lower on the neck there is often enough slack to once again slip over the dog's head.



Martingale Collar

A safer choice is a Martingale design collar. They're flat and in circumstances where the regular snap together and buckle collars might slip over the dog's head, a Martingale will instead snug up.



The Power Steering Collar (WadeCollar)

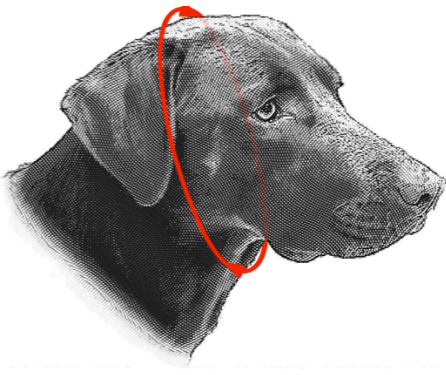



Some will need more leverage to keep themselves, their dog (and sometimes other people and dogs safe) or need a means to make it easier to simply get their dog's attention. If you think you need the extra leverage you can order a WadeCollar on-line at <http://store.askthedogguy.com/power-steering-wade-collar/>. However some London stores sell my collars and they are listed at the end of this email and

that will save you the shipping charges. There are also a couple of charts on how to determine the best size along with the list of storers.



WadeCollar Measurement Charts - By Weight or Skull (not neck)

Collar Sizing		
Measure Your Dog's Head (not neck)		
		
in	cm	Buy This Collar
10 - 12	25 - 30	12"
12 - 14	30 - 36	14"
14 - 16	36 - 41	16"
16 - 18	41 - 46	18"
18 - 20	46 - 51	20"
20 - 22	51 - 56	22"
22 - 24	56 - 61	24"

Collar Sizing				
By Your Dog's Weight				
				
lb.	kg	Small Head	Average Head	Large Head
		Buy This Collar		
up to 15	7	12"	12"	12"
16 - 35	16	14"	14"	14"
36 - 55	16 - 25	16"	16"	18"
55 - 75	25 - 34	18"	18"	20"
76 - 95	34 - 43	20"	20"	22"
96 - 115	43 - 52	22"	22"	24"
135	61	24"	24"	24"

WadeCollars Online

<http://store.askthedogguy.com/power-steering-wade-collar/>

London & St. Thomas Stores That Stock WadeCollars

Pet Valu - Westwood (Westmount near Home Depot)

425 Southdale Road

London, ON, N6P 1M7

519-518-7387

<https://maps.google.com/maps?>

[f=q&hl=en&geocode=&q=425+Southdale+Road+London+N6P+1M7](https://maps.google.com/maps?f=q&hl=en&geocode=&q=425+Southdale+Road+London+N6P+1M7)

Pet Valu - Byron

1240 Commissioners Rd W

London Ontario N6K 1C7

(519) 657-1903

<http://maps.google.com/maps?f=q&q=Pet+Valu,>

[+1240+Commissioners+Rd+W,+London,](http://maps.google.com/maps?f=q&q=Pet+Valu,+1240+Commissioners+Rd+W,+London,)

[+Ontario+N6K+1C7+Canada&ie=UTF8&om=1](http://maps.google.com/maps?f=q&q=Pet+Valu,+1240+Commissioners+Rd+W,+London,+Ontario+N6K+1C7+Canada&ie=UTF8&om=1)

Pet Valu - St. Thomas

1010 Talbot St,

St. Thomas Ontario N5P 4N2

(519) 631-7685

<https://goo.gl/maps/jpU2P7sdmJs>

Lunge Lines

Lunge lines are simply very long leashes for {{?Dog Name}} to drag around when outdoors. They allow {{?he or she}} freedom but without the freedom to make mistakes without guidance. {{?Dog Name}} can no longer ignore "Come" and you will be able to interrupt things like barking and digging. A lunge line also allows {{?Dog Name}} to get more natural actual exercise much earlier as you don't have to wait until {{?his or her}} has perfect recall. Real daily cardio as opposed the casual walking/smelling/peeing - repeat that happens on most walks can really impact a dog's in-home behavior.



They are sold for dogs but I have found those made for horses are about 1/3 the price and 3X the quality so try a tack shop for horses. I keep two on hand as they occasionally need laundering.

For larger dogs only, below my signature line are places I have bought lunge lines in the London region. If London's not in your area, just go to a tack shop for horses, they'll have them in stock. I keep two on hand as they occasionally need laundering.

For smaller dogs a trip to Home depot or Mountain Equipment Co-Op (MEC) buy a clasp and length of rope or webbing with some hardware will normally suffice.

Where To Find Lunge Lines In London

Greenhawk Harness & Equestrian Supplies - Located next to Copps Buildall.

4357 Colonel Talbot Road

Lambeth, Ontario

Canada

N6P 1P9

Tel: 519-652-9768

Web: <http://www.greenhawk.net>

Sprucewood Tack

2029 Richmond St.

Arva, ON

NOM 1C0

(519)660-TACK(8225)

Web: <http://www.sprucewoodtack.com/index.aspx>

Harnesses - All Other Dogs



Harnesses have become popular in recent years. However not due to the value they have in dog training, but because of an overall deterioration in dog trainer skills. One does not need advanced degrees in physics and biomechanics to understand that a harness gives nowhere near the control that a properly fittings and I will collar provides. There also seems to be a difference in the psychological impact of the physiological impact of collar pressure nearer the head as opposed to the shoulders that is likely related to a mother dog's focus of physical disciplinary actions which are typically higher on the neck. The more effective of the bunch are so because they exert pressure to parts of the dog that makes pulling uncomfortable. In other words, they use pain as a means to motivate. However, most do nothing more than spread the force of a dog pulling over a wider part of the body. It's hard to say because it's been a recent advent however, based on the way that I've seen these harnesses used, I'm quite sure we're going to see an upsurge in dogs with elbow shoulder injuries and eventually arthritis in those areas.

The movement towards the highly flawed 'All Positive/Purely Positive/Force-Free . . .' treat, treat, treat approach to companion training has as one might just expect resulted in dogs unable to exert true self-control around normal everyday at distractions. The dog trainers that

embrace this ideology somehow got into their head that if a collar is attached to dogs neck it somehow cannot be used in any manner other than cruelly. I've been training full-time for close to 30 years I have never met a dog that had a neck injury as a result of a collar around its neck. I have seen people use every imaginal piece of dog training equipment under the sun in ways that were unfair to the dog, rarely purposely, but when there was cruelty involved, that cruelty was inherent in the person and not in the equipment they were using.

The more immediate problem, particularly for people with dogs with some weight behind them is quite simply control in emergency situations. We are certainly going to see an upsurge in the number of people and dogs injured by dogs and dogfights. It's not uncommon for two people walking dogs independently to stop and let their dogs meet. Sometimes this goes well, sometimes it does not. When it does not it's far easier to separate the dogs with control over their heads. Without that control the dog owners are more likely to get personally involved and get accidentally bitten themselves.

Here are the reasons people most often offer is why they are using a harness.

- "When s/he wears a neck collar, the dog chokes themselves."

What is actually happening is the dog owner is choking the dog, not the equipment. If a dog is taught how to walk on a loose leash appropriately using the correct equipment and steps without jumping into the deep end of the pool and simply walking the dog around the block with a new type of equipment, no dog will choke themselves.

- “It’s the only way I can walk him or her. The other collars come off or don’t work.”

Almost everyone giving advice about companion dog training, whether they be veterinary technicians, veterinarians, dog trainers, pet supply store employees etc. are amateurs when it comes to what they are offering advice. As a result, silly ideas abound. For example, what the two finger rule means. It doesn’t mean less than two fingers or the collar is too tight. It means the collar is too loose.

The most commonly recommended and worn companion dog collar is the type that snaps together and is the collar usually being referred to as coming off. This is the type of collar that almost every dog, since they became popular, that has been hit by a car, was wearing, five minutes before they were struck. No matter how you snug them up, within days they loosen off sufficiently to slip off the dog’s head when it pulls away from its owner in to us its head in a corkscrew action.

The main reason to stay away from harnesses is that from both a safety perspective and from a training perspective it is far better always to have potential control of a dog’s head. To think otherwise is to ignore both human and canine biomechanics, physics and some aspects of how many dogs associate the contact with the part of the body that a collar sits.

If you have control of the head which a collar helps with, you have a far better chance of controlling a dog’s body in emergencies. A harness gives no control over a dog’s head or effective control over their bodies.

Outside of safety, it’s far harder to get a dog’s attention with a harness. It’s no the right part of the body for doing so and not only from a

leverage perspective. The psychological impact seems to be different. Perhaps because when a puppy ignores their mothers when she does not want to be ignored, she will more often than not acquire that focus by making some level of contact with their necks via her mouth or paws.

The type of collar or harness becomes moot if a dog is simply taught to keep the leash loose. However, most dogs are wearing harnesses because they have not been adequately trained to keep the leash loose. While the strain on the owner's wrist, elbows and shoulders may be lessened the force exerted when the dog continues to pull still exists. It's just transferred to the dog's joints. Many of those dogs will become more prone to injury in these areas and end up suffering from arthritis and related problems.

Used intelligently, it's just far more natural and safer to use an appropriate collar. I'd suggest considering using one of the collars mentioned below. If you have questions, just call (519-457-9559)