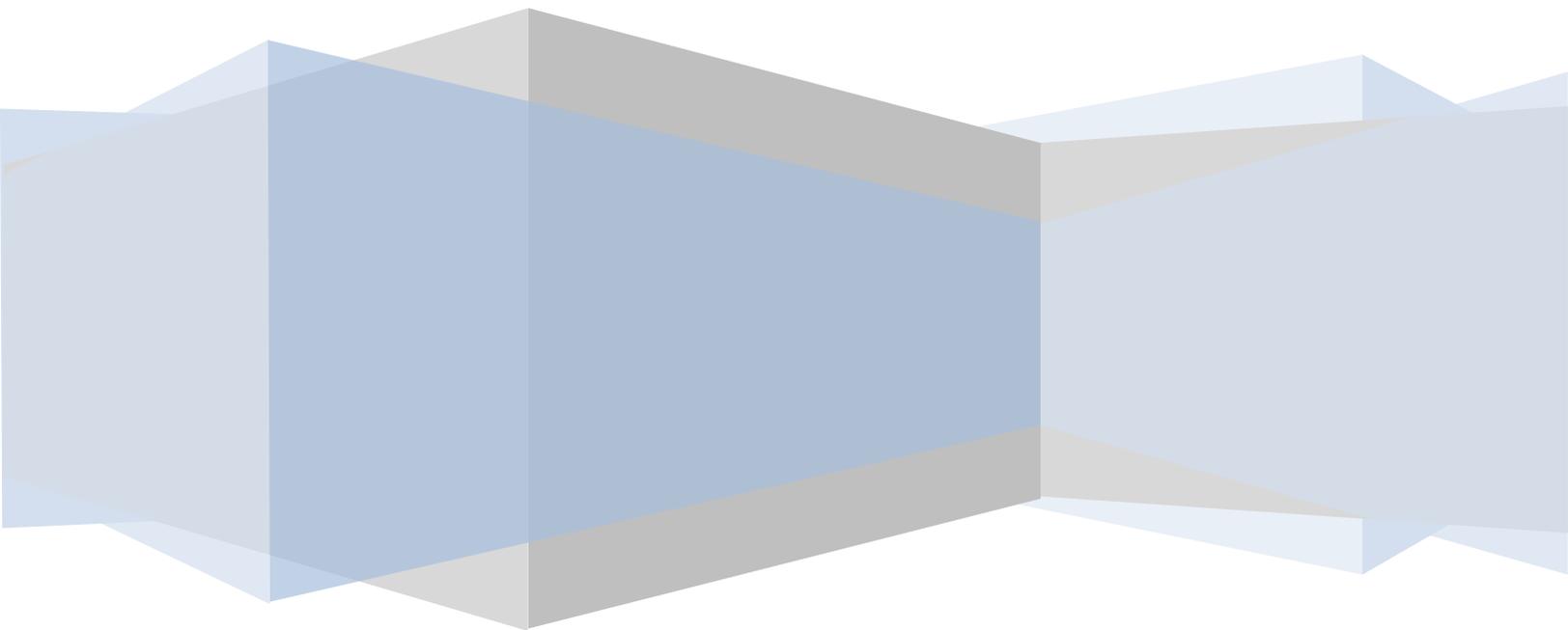


Back Yard Dog Tips



Who Put the Dogs Out?

As dogs grow up, their inconsistencies often frustrate their owners. One day your dog seems all grown up; the next day, he's chewing his way through the house like a buzz saw. In a fit of pique, you banish him to the backyard. At first it may be just during meals to prevent begging, or when company comes, to prevent jumping. Next, it's during work hours so he doesn't soil or chew when left alone. Before long, the dog is outside all the time.

Turning a rambunctious adolescent into a backyard dog doesn't solve anything. It merely brings temporary relief. True, your dog can't climb into cranky old Aunt Edna's lap if he's outdoors, but he'll also never learn how to behave appropriately around houseguests. A dog who is kept outside experiences social isolation. He may engage in excessive barking and howling in an attempt to reunite his pack. When a family member enters the yard to spend some time with him, he erupts into rapturous leaps and vocalizations, displaying a level of enthusiasm certain to squelch any possibility that that person will ever make a return visit.

Over time, an isolated outdoor dog will become exceedingly independent and difficult to train. Whatever desire he had to please will be gone, replaced by the need to occupy his time in any way possible. His motto becomes "If it feels good, do it!" Dig up the tulip bulbs. Excavate a cooling pit. Fence-fight with the dog next door. Without human feedback to the contrary, these are all rewarding activities for a backyard dog. There is nothing wrong with letting a well-mannered dog spend a lazy day lying in the grass, soaking up the sun or playing in the fallen leaves. But when the yard takes the place of teaching your dog appropriate house manners, you need to step back and examine why you have a dog.



Come Rain or Come Shine

If your dog enjoys spending a considerable amount of time outside, he needs protection from the elements.



A doghouse can offer access to cool shade on a hot day or shelter from the cold, rain or wind. When providing a doghouse, make sure the opening does not face into the wind during the coldest months of the year.

If the opening is large, hang some plastic strips over the doorway to keep heat in and cold out; and provide good insulated bedding, such as straw, to keep the dog up off cold ground.

Remember to clean the place out every few months to ensure that no other beasties have set up house—a nest of yellow jackets was discovered in one spaniel's outdoor shelter.

If your dog spends more than an hour outdoors on a hot day or several hours outside other times of the year, make sure he has fresh water available. Weigh down his water container, or affix it to a stationary object in such a way that he can't easily tip it over. His meals are best served in your house, because leftover food will attract unwanted insects and possibly wildlife.

For those situations where there is either no fence or a need to keep your dog out of certain areas such as your begonia bed, build a sturdy exercise pen, where your dog can do "dog things" without incurring the wrath of family gardeners or neighbors.

Dogs are companion animals and, as such, belong in our homes and in our lives. Just because you have a backyard doesn't mean that your dog should be restricted to it. Take the time to teach him house manners and socialize him to the world beyond your property, and you will discover you have within him the best possible companion.

Why Do People Chain Dogs?



Most people who chain their dogs are not even aware of the pain and cruelty they are inflicting on their pet. The owners do it because they lack the time, energy or finances to train them or simply didn't have the proper room to keep the dog in the first place. Before you decide to add a dog, or any pet, to your home you should always research everything you can first. Be sure that you have the room, the time, the money and the equipment before bringing any pet into your home, and never purchase a pet on a spontaneous decision.

Dogs are not lawn ornaments! They are very social animals and when you become a dog owner you become his pack. They need and want contact either from you or other dogs. A dog seldom receives this when they are chained outside to only be a member of the family when it is convenient for the owner. This is very harmful for the dog's mental health. They may and probably will become withdrawn and depressed. Compulsive barking, chewing and digging could also result, which usually leads the owners to take the dog to the shelter because of their ill behavior.

Although the dog may be receiving vet care and a plate of food, they need more! They need to be a active member of the family and if you decide to bring a dog in as part of your family, having the proper equipment, room, and time to make it part of your family should be included in the

decision of whether you want a dog as a pet or not.

One of the biggest mistakes made is thinking that a length of chain gives the dog plenty of room to move; they can still get tangled up in their chains. This may result in the dog not being able to get to the dog house, or the food bowl and water bowl will get out of their reach. This could be very dangerous in hot weather - imagine being very hot and very thirsty and your glass of water just out of your reach.

Dogs that spend their lives chained have been known to grind their teeth down to stumps. Many will compulsively lick an area on their body until it turns into a bleeding sore - this will draw flies, mosquitoes and other pests making their already miserable conditions even worse.



The reasons people chain their dogs could be because of bad behavior, **but chaining a dog doesn't correct bad behavior, it makes it worse.** Chaining a dog causes aggressiveness due to always needing to be on the defense since it has no way to escape danger, and hyper-activeness because they are not getting the exercise they need. *A dog with behavioral problems needs to be trained not chained.*

There are a variety of reasons why people chain their dogs outside.

- Many people believe that dogs *should* live outside, and they keep the dog tied up because he or she escapes the yard or digs in the garden.

- Or maybe the dog has grown too large to be inside, or has developed a behavior problem that the owner is unable to deal with, so the dog stays in the yard.
- Or perhaps the dog is kept outside to protect the home.

Whatever the reasons, fewer dog owners seem to be keeping their dogs tied up outside. And many communities have passed laws against long-term chaining of dogs. Why?



First, more people are learning that continuous tethering is bad for dogs. As pack animals, dogs have been bred for thousands of years to form a strong attachment to a human family. An otherwise friendly and happy dog, when kept continually chained and isolated, often becomes neurotic, unhappy, anxious, and aggressive. In fact, studies show that chained dogs are much more likely to bite than unchained dogs.

In addition, chained dogs may hang themselves if they are tethered too close to a fence and attempt to jump it.

Chained dogs are also subject to attacks by other animals and cruel humans.

Getting Your Dog off the Chain

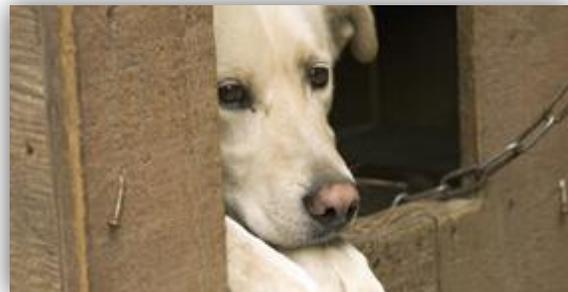
Many dog owners have learned to solve the problems that caused them to tie their dogs outside in the first place. If you would like to provide your dog with an alternative to a chain, consider these suggestions:

- Install a fence if your property does not already have one. Call ChainFree Asheville at 828-450-7736 for a free fence.
- If you have a fence and your dog can jump over it, install a 45-degree inward extension to the top of your existing fence. Many home improvement stores sell these extensions.
- If your dog digs under the fence to escape your yard, bury welded wire or chicken wire to a depth of one foot below where the fence meets the ground (be sure to bend in the

sharp edges). Or place large rocks at the base of the fence.

- Enroll your dog in an obedience class—especially if his behavior is the main reason you keep your dog outside.
- Spay or neuter your dog if you haven't already done so. A neutered dog is less likely to roam and more content to stay at home. These are safe procedures that have many health and behavioral benefits. Ask your veterinarian for more information.
- Remember that behavior problems such as barking, chewing, and digging are often the result of a lack of stimulation. By providing your dog with proper toys, exercise, "people time," and positive reinforcement, you may alter undesirable behaviors and teach acceptable house manners. In addition, a dog who is inside the house is much more likely to deter an intruder than a dog chained in the yard.

Giving Your Dog Proper Shelter



In addition to safe confinement, dogs need adequate shelter from the elements. Dogs kept outside may be unintentionally exposed to bitter cold temperatures in the winter and scorching heat in the summer. To protect your dog from harsh weather, provide a well-constructed doghouse. However, keep in mind that some breeds with very long or short coats cannot tolerate extreme outside temperatures even when provided with proper shelter.

To provide your dog with a comfortable doghouse, consider these suggestions:

- The house should be large enough to allow the dog to stand up and turn around

comfortably, but small enough to enable the dog to retain body heat.

- The house should have a slanted, waterproof roof to allow rainwater to run off.
- If the doghouse is made of wood, it should be raised off the ground at least two inches to prevent the floor from rotting.
- The door should be just large enough for your dog to enter easily.
- During the winter months, to protect your dog from cold wind, the door should be covered by a flexible plastic flap—such as a floor runner that doesn't have spikes on one side. A piece of carpet can work in a pinch, but it can get wet and freeze.
- Clean, dry bedding such as hay, straw, or cedar shavings should be provided. The bedding should be changed weekly to prevent mold.
- In warmer months, the dog should also be provided with shade such as a tree or tarp. A doghouse in direct sun becomes an oven and will not keep a dog cool.
- Finally, anytime your dog is kept outside, be sure to provide fresh water in a tip-proof bowl or large bucket. Make sure the water doesn't freeze during colder months.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is meant by "chaining" or "tethering" dogs?

These terms refer to the practice of fastening a dog to a stationary object or stake, usually in the owner's backyard, as a means of keeping the animal under control. These terms do not refer to the periods when an animal is walked on a leash.

2. Is there a problem with continuous chaining or tethering?

Yes, the practice is both inhumane and a threat to the safety of the confined dog, other animals and humans.

3. Why is tethering dogs inhumane?

Dogs are naturally social beings who thrive on interaction with human beings and other

animals. A dog kept chained in one spot for hours, days, months or even years suffers immense psychological damage. An otherwise friendly and docile dog, when kept continuously chained, becomes neurotic, unhappy, anxious and often aggressive.

In many cases, the necks of chained dogs become raw and covered with sores, the result of improperly fitted collars and the dogs' constant yanking and straining to escape confinement. Dogs have even been found with collars embedded in their necks, the result of years of neglect at the end of a chain. In one case, a veterinarian had to euthanize a dog whose collar, an electrical cord, was so



embedded in the animal's neck that it was difficult to see the plug.

4. Who says tethering dogs is inhumane?

In addition to The Humane Society of the United States and numerous animal experts, the U. S. Department of Agriculture issued a statement in the July 2, 1996, *Federal Register* against tethering:

"Our experience in enforcing the Animal Welfare Act has led us to conclude that continuous confinement of dogs by a tether is inhumane. A tether significantly restricts a dog's movement. A tether can also become tangled around or hooked

on the dog's shelter structure or other objects, further restricting the dog's movement and potentially causing injury."

5. How does tethering or chaining dogs pose a danger to humans?

Dogs tethered for long periods can become highly aggressive. Dogs feel naturally protective of their territory; when confronted with a perceived threat, they respond according to their fight-or-flight instinct. A chained dog, unable to take flight, often feels forced to fight, attacking any unfamiliar animal or person who unwittingly wanders into his or her territory.

Numerous attacks on people by tethered dogs have been documented. For example, a study published in the September 15, 2000, issue of the *Journal of the American Veterinary Medical Association* reported that 17 percent of dogs involved in fatal attacks on humans between 1979 and 1998 were restrained on their owners' property at the time of the attack. Tragically, the victims of such attacks are often children who are unaware of the chained dog's presence until it is too late. Furthermore, a tethered dog who finally does get loose from his chains may remain aggressive, and is likely to chase and attack unsuspecting passersby and pets.

6. Why is tethering dangerous to dogs?



In addition to the psychological damage wrought by continuous chaining, dogs forced to live on a chain make easy targets for other animals, humans, and biting insects. A chained animal may suffer harassment and teasing from insensitive humans, stinging bites from insects, and, in the worst cases, attacks by other animals. Chained dogs are also easy targets for thieves looking to steal animals for sale to research institutions or to be used as training fodder for organized animal fights. Finally, dogs' tethers can become entangled with other objects, which can choke or strangle the dogs to death.

7. Are these dogs dangerous to other animals?

In some instances, yes. Any other animal that comes into their area of confinement is in jeopardy. Cats, rabbits, smaller dogs and others may enter the area when the tethered dog is asleep and then be fiercely attacked when the dog awakens.

8. Are tethered dogs otherwise treated well?

Rarely does a chained or tethered dog receive sufficient care. Tethered dogs suffer from sporadic feedings, overturned water bowls, inadequate veterinary care, and extreme temperatures. During snow storms, these dogs often have no access to shelter. During periods of extreme heat, they may not receive adequate water or protection from the sun. What's more, because their often neurotic behavior makes them difficult to approach, chained dogs are rarely given even minimal affection. Tethered dogs may become "part of the scenery" and can be easily ignored by their owners.

9. Are the areas in which tethered dogs are confined usually comfortable?



No, because the dogs have to eat, sleep, urinate and defecate in a single confined area. Owners who chain their dogs are also less likely to clean the area. Although there may have once been grass in an area of confinement, it is usually so beaten down by the dog's pacing that the ground consists of nothing but dirt or mud.

10. But how else can people confine dogs?

The HSUS recommends that all dogs be kept indoors at night, taken on regular walks, and otherwise provided with adequate attention,

food, water and veterinary care. If an animal must be housed outside at certain times, he should be placed in a suitable fence with adequate square footage and shelter from the elements. ChainFree Asheville builds fences for chained dogs. Call us today at 8287-450-7736. No obligation whatsoever!

11. Should chaining or tethering ever be allowed?

To become well-adjusted companion animals, dogs should interact regularly with people and other animals, and should receive regular exercise. It is an owner's responsibility to properly restrain her dog, just as it is the owner's responsibility to provide adequate attention and socialization. Placing an animal on a restraint to get fresh air can be acceptable if it is done for a short period. However, keeping an animal tethered for long periods is never acceptable.

12. If a dog is chained or tethered for a period of time, can it be done humanely?

Animals who must be kept on a tether should be secured in such a way that the tether cannot become entangled with other objects. Collars used to attach an animal should be comfortable and properly fitted; choke chains should never be used. Restraints should allow the animal to move about and lie down comfortably. Animals should never be tethered during natural disasters such as floods, fires, tornadoes, hurricanes or blizzards.

13. What about attaching a dog's leash to a "pulley run"?

Attaching a dog's leash to a long line—such as a clothesline or a manufactured device known as a pulley run—and letting the animal have a larger area in which to explore is preferable to tethering the dog to a stationary object. However, many of the same problems associated with tethering still apply, including attacks on or by other animals, lack of socialization and safety.

A chained animal is caught in a vicious cycle; frustrated by long periods of boredom and social

isolation, he becomes a neurotic shell of his former self—further deterring human interaction and kindness. In the end, the helpless dog can only suffer the frustration of watching the world go by in isolation—a cruel fate for what is by nature a highly social animal. Any city, county, or state that bans this practice is a safer, more humane community.

Tragic news stories and statistics make the connection between tethering or chaining and dog attacks clear. And virtually every dog who spends a significant amount of time tethered will suffer some temperament problems. But why is it that, according to British animal behaviorist Dr. Roger Mugford, “[d]ogs, just like human beings who get locked up for no reason, will get mean and bitter”?



The short answer, according to renowned animal behavior specialist Shelby Marlo, is that “dogs who are forced to live their lives at the end of a chain suffer from severe psychological, emotional, and behavioral effects.”

According to Sue Sternberg, an expert in dog aggression, “A chained dog is an unsupervised dog, so without human intervention, the chained dog can, and usually does, rehearse aggressive behavioral sequences over and over again.” Sternberg continues, “For the chained dog, these behavioral sequences get stronger and stronger, and his aggression increases with every passing day. ... It is usually only a matter of time ... before a mauling occurs.”

Chaining Violates Dogs’ Nature as Social Pack Animals



Dogs are highly social animals. In the wild, dogs ran around with each other as members of a “pack.” Over a period of many years, dogs were gradually domesticated and came to rely on humans not only for their care but for companionship as well. Humans became—and still are—dogs’ “pack members.” Because domesticated, dogs no



longer have packs of other dogs to live with, they need to be members of our families.

According to the Washington Humane Society, “Chaining, by definition, keeps a dog in solitary confinement, continually thwarting [the animal’s] pack instinct to be with other animals or with [his or her] human ‘pack.’”

Many experts agree. Karen Delise, author of *Fatal Dog Attacks*, explains: “As pack animals, dogs [who] are chained are socially ... compromised. This obviously creates a stress-induced environment for many dogs.”

Asheville's Ordinance

Section 3-12 (i) -- It shall be unlawful to tether a dog unless the tether is no less than 15 feet in length, and cannot become tangled or prevent the animal from moving freely or having access to food, water or shelter.

According to well-known veterinarian Dr. Michael Fox, “Dogs are pack animals and need frequent contact with their own kind or with human beings.” Dr. Fox writes that for dogs who have spent much of their lives in a back yard, “the chances are high that [they] will become overexcited when [they’re] with people. Long periods of social deprivation ... can make a good-tempered dog quite ill-tempered.” As a result, “Dogs do bite when they become overexcited. It’s as though they don’t know what to do with all their pent-up energies.” This may explain why some chained dogs—who are used to being alone—attack when they are finally approached, even by a familiar face or a family member.

Animal behaviorist Linda Goodman states, “Dogs need to be a part of a social group. Living alone in the back yard actually constitutes a form of cruelty and abuse—isolation from the family (pack) is a very severe form of punishment.” She continues, “Chained dogs have to endure an unnaturally lonely life. ... It is like a sentence of solitary confinement for life.”

Chaining Makes Dogs Even More Territorial



Dogs are territorial animals. A chain or tether limits the animal’s space and makes the boundary of those few square feet of territory much more distinct.

In her book, Karen Delise writes, “Because dogs are territorial animals, chaining them only serves to exacerbate space issues, as space is limited and more clearly defined.” Delise goes on to explain that chaining “increases the likelihood of a dangerous defensive response to a perceived encroachment on the dog’s territory or possessions (food or water bowls).”

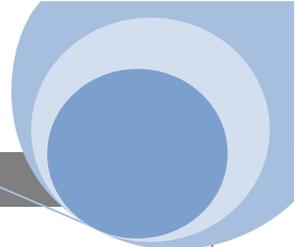
As Dr. Michael Fox writes in his book *Understanding Your Dog*, approaching a chained dog will invariably result in a “show of aggression or territorial defense by barking and lunging.” He explains that a “dog kept on such a restricted personal territory” may develop a “territorial defense behavior ... [that is] abnormally intense.”

‘Flight’ Is Not an Option

Dogs are “fight or flight” animals. When confronted with a threat, a dog’s psychology and physiology dictates that he will either flee from the danger (“flight”) or confront it (“fight”). Because tethered dogs have no ability to flee and escape from danger, they must resort to aggression and attacks.

Karen Delise explains that “the natural fight or flight response afforded to most animals in most stressful situations is denied to a chained animal.” She writes, “The dog is cognizant of the fact that he can only retreat the length of the chain and will often opt to ‘stand his ground.’ Removing the option of flight for any animal will always increase the chance of a physical encounter (or fight response) to a threat.”

In addition to having their social needs ignored, many chained dogs are deprived of proper food and water, shelter, and veterinary care.



Chained dogs—like all animals who are left outside and unsupervised—are also susceptible to the cruel acts of passersby. Chained dogs are tortured, poisoned, shot, stabbed, stolen, used to “bait” fighting dogs, sold into the abject misery of life in a laboratory, set on fire, and abused in countless other ways. Others freeze to death during cold snaps after being ignored by heartless owners for years.

Did You Know?

Dogs need to be with YOU! They crave companionship. They aim to please you and they really want to spend time with you and live indoors. Dogs are healthiest and happiest indoors with the rest of the family.

- Dogs left outside need sturdy shelter to protect them from rain, snow, cold, and wind and to provide shade in the summer. A waterproof house with the floor elevated a few inches off the ground and with a flap over the entrance is best. Houses should be small enough to allow a dog’s body heat to warm the interior but big enough to allow the dog to get inside, stand up, turn around, and lie down.
- When the temperature drops below 45 degrees, straw (available at feed stores) must be stuffed inside doghouses in order to keep dogs warm. Blankets, clothing, and towels only make conditions worse when they get wet and freeze.
- Dogs need an adequate amount of food every day. Food should be provided in a dry, clean dish, not tossed on the ground. Remind dog owners to give dogs more food in the winter, when they need to eat more to keep warm.



- Dogs need fresh water every day. Water should be placed in a heavy bucket or an anchored bowl to prevent it from tipping over (putting the bucket inside a car tire works well). Water helps to prevent heat exhaustion in the summer. It must be checked frequently in the winter to make sure that it hasn’t frozen—dogs will

die of dehydration on even the coldest day without water.

- Backyard dogs should be checked frequently for fleas, mites, and worms, which rob them of the nutrition that they need and can make even a dog who constantly eats thin.

Please don’t forget to give the dog some attention and playtime too. A happy dog has toys, goes for walks, and spends time with people.

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Can ChainFree Asheville Help You?

ChainFree Asheville builds free fences for people with chained dogs. We also provide free doghouses and spay/neutering for dogs through the generous donations of our patrons.

Our fences are made of strong welded wire with wooden posts in cement and t-bars every 8 feet. We generally use one side of the house for one leg of the fence and then build 3 sides with the welded wire. The gates are chain link.

There is absolutely no charge to you for any of this!

We have one requirement: Your dog must be spay-neutered if he/she is not already. Call us to measure your yard today!

**Prepared by ChainFree Asheville
828-450-7736.**