

A WORLD OUT OF REACH



Washington Humane Society

If we tried to invent the cruelest punishment for dogs, we probably couldn't come up with anything worse than "solitary confinement."

Dogs are pack animals, so it's important for them to be with others.

Most people who chain dogs just don't realize how much scratches behind the ears, games of fetch, and time spent inside with their families mean to dogs. If you have an "outside dog," here are 10 ways you can improve your dog's life.

1 Bring your dog inside! Don't kid yourself that dogs "get used to" living outside. Unless you or other dogs are out there to share it with them, the backyard quickly loses its charm. Constant barking is really a cry for attention. If it has stopped, it's not because your dog is content but because he or she has given up hope of rescue.

2 Build a fence. A 6-foot privacy fence is safest—it's harder for dogs to escape and harder for hooligans to do bad things to your pup. If a fence is out of your budget, set up a running line so your dog can exercise without getting tangled. Use a harness instead of a collar so dogs can't strangle or hang themselves.

3 Provide lots of exercise. Dogs need to run and sniff and explore. Go for long walks daily (it's good for you, too!). Use a retractable leash that lets your dog run ahead and lag behind over interesting fire hydrants. A "no-pull" harness will painlessly save your dog's neck—and your arm sockets! Bonus: Tired dogs are less likely to "misbehave"!

4 Bring joy with toys. Imagine being stuck out—side, alone, with nothing to do but watch the mud dry. Even a knotted towel or a tennis ball can provide hours of entertainment. Dogs love to chew, so be sure they have plenty of rubber bones and other things to gnaw on.

5 Take your dog to "school." If your dog has been put outside because of behavior problems, confinement and isolation can only make them worse. A good dog-training class will teach you how to communicate with your dog, who just doesn't understand what you expect. Plus, "teenage" dogs often settle down as they get older.

6 Protect your dog from "Old Man Winter." In nature, dogs dig deep, cozy dens. Their fur, like your own winter coat, offers some protection, but they can still feel miserable in the cold. Puppies, elderly dogs, and small and short-haired breeds like pointers and Dobermans should never be left outside during cold snaps.

7 Help your dog beat the "dog days" of summer. Dogs are more susceptible to heat than humans. Since dogs don't perspire, they can only cool themselves by panting and sweating through their paws. Short-nosed breeds like pugs and bulldogs are especially prone to heat stress. The same goes for Northern breeds like huskies, whose thick fur is designed for Alaskan winters, not Alabama summers. Bring dogs inside during heat waves. At all other times, make sure they have access to shade. Plant trees: They can lower the ambient temperature by as much as 10 degrees!

In summer, when chained dogs have no choice but to urinate and defecate right where they live (something they never do in the wild), the waste draws flies, which drive dogs crazy—flies will actually eat off the tips of dogs' ears!

8 Provide plenty of food and water. In winter, dogs need to eat almost double their summer rations to keep a layer of body fat for warmth. Water must be available at all times, especially during the summer when panting causes dehydration. Put water in a sturdy bucket and check for freezing during winter. Put bowls at the end of the chain and inside a rubber tire to prevent tipping.

"Forcing an animal to live outside alone goes against the dog's two most basic instincts—the needs for a pack and a den."
—Animals' Agenda magazine

9 Visit the vet for regular checkups. Parvovirus, distemper, and other diseases can be prevented through vaccinations. Dogs must be wormed regularly—a dog with worms can lose vital body fat during winter. Heartworms are deadly—all dogs should be put on a preventive medication, especially during mosquito season.

10 Spay or neuter your dog. An unneutered dog is like a frustrated lover and is more likely to be aggressive to you and your children. Neutering and spaying also prevents cancer of the reproductive organs, common in older dogs. For low-cost spaying and neutering in your area, contact your local humane society, or call SPAY USA at 1-800-248-SPAY.





Chained Dog's Plea

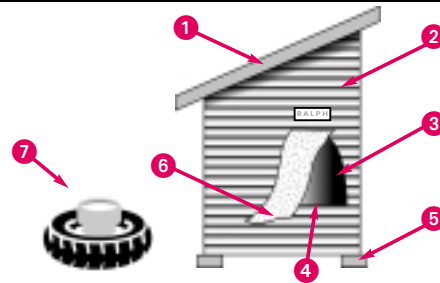
*I wish someone would tell me
 What it is that I've done wrong
 Why do I have to stay chained up
 And left alone so long?
 They seemed so glad to have me
 When I came here as a pup.
 There were so many things we'd do
 While I was growing up.
 But now the Master "hasn't time"
 The Mistress says I shed.
 She doesn't want me in the house,
 Not even to be fed.
 The Children never walk me.
 They always say, "Not now."
 I wish that I could please them.
 Won't someone tell me how?
 All I had, you see, was love.
 I wish they would explain
 Why they said they wanted mine,
 And then left it on a chain.*

—Edith Lassen Johnson

IS YOUR DOG-HOUSE LEGAL?

The law requires access to "proper" shelter at all times.

- 1 The shingled roof should have an incline of 5 inches to allow rainwater to run off. It should extend 5 inches in front and 3 inches on the sides to keep the rain off. The tall side of the doghouse should be the same height as the dog.
- 2 Use $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch pressure-treated plywood for the floor and roof and $\frac{5}{8}$ -inch for the walls.
- 3 Position the door on the tall side of the front to allow easy access and provide a windbreak. The opening should be just large enough to allow the dog to pass through.
- 4 The opening should start 7 inches from the floor of the house in order to provide a lip to keep bedding from spilling out. Use straw or newspaper for bedding—don't use rugs or rags—they absorb water and can freeze.
- 5 Raise the house 4 to 6 inches off the ground to prevent the floor from getting wet and rotting.
- 6 Put a flexible flap over the doorway during cold weather (an old rug or rubber mat cut down the middle will do).
- 7 Put water in a sturdy, tip-resistant bowl or bucket or inside a rubber tire to prevent tipping, and check for freezing several times a day during winter.



"The plain fact that my dog loves me more than I love him ... always fills me with a certain feeling of shame."

—Konrad Lorenz



"The law can require that you give your dog food, water, shelter, and veterinary care. The law cannot require you to love your dog." —Mary Eno, Montgomery County, Md., Humane Society

A chained dog can only watch as life goes by ...

