

## Phase 3

### Training Aids

You're all ready to welcome a dog into your home — including working with him on his manners. Before he comes home, get your training supplies organized so you're ready to start training on day one. You will want to purchase a slip lead first. Other collars and harnesses will be used as the dog ages. A crate is also a good investment if you plan on keeping your dog indoors. This is very effective in potty training your dog.

**Treats.** Rewards keep your dog interested and motivated. Treat preference will vary depending upon the individual canine, but in general, soft, meaty treats are canine favorites. Treats should be small, around the size of a pencil eraser or a blueberry. Some treats come pre-sized for training while others may be broken apart or cut down to size prior to training.



**Slip leads.** At Cypress Arrow K-9 Academy, we use slip leads to function as both a leash and a collar. Often referred to as “training leads”, slip leads look like regular leashes, but they have a small metal ring at the end. We simply pull the leash through the metal ring in order to make a larger loop that slips around the dog's neck. When a dog pulls against the lead, the added pressure self corrects the dog by letting him feel the tension in the lead.



**Leashes.** Training leashes vary in length, typically between four and six feet. Ideally, the leash is long enough to allow slight slack when your dog stays close to you during walks (rather than being pulled tight all the time). A waist-clip leash

enables you to keep your hands-free during training sessions. Store your dog's leashes in easy access locations, such as on hooks near the door.

**Collar and harness.** A flat collar holds your dog's ID tag, which is important if he gets out on his own. While you can also clip a leash to a flat collar, you can use a harness to carry tags and equipment. Harnesses are used for pulling or guiding. Harnesses are commonly used for tracking/trailing, guiding and equipment.



**Prong Collar.** Prong collar training is a tried and proven method to quickly and efficiently train almost any dog, large or small. In many countries, they are actually called training collars. In recent years, however, the use of prong collars has come under quite a bit of scrutiny. Many believe prong collars are cruel and even injure a dog. The truth is, a properly fit prong collar is perfectly safe for a dog when used correctly by the trainer (that's you!). It does not, and should not, inflict severe pain or choke the dog in any way. In fact, prong collars are specifically designed to do the opposite. A prong collar looks pretty intimidating, there's no doubt about that. They can even look downright painful. But looks can be deceiving. You should never, ever use a prong collar on an aggressive dog unless you're getting professional assistance from a very reputable trainer. A prong collar can make a dog even more aggressive when improperly used. Since aggressive dogs need a highly customized training program, they are beyond the scope this phase can cover. But please, do not use a prong collar as a means to reduce aggression. Using a prong collar on an aggressive dog can lead to some

very dangerous situations and may make the problem worse. No website can help with an aggressive dog. You need personalized attention (the sooner the better).



**Long line.** When your dog is ready to practice behaviors like long-distance stays and recall, a long line is a safe and simple alternative to being off leash. Long lines also allow for exploration during training breaks and extra room to walk out for activities like scent detection. Standard long lines vary from 15 to 30 feet.



**Barriers.** Crates, pet gates, pet pens and playpens can be useful if you need to contain your dog in a certain area for situations like house training or chewing management. A barrier can also be helpful for keeping your pooch away from problem areas like stairs or the front door.

**Electronic or “E” Collars.** There are many types of dog training collars on the market all of which are useful in different situations. Here we focus on how to use an electronic collar or e-collar to train your dog. Sometimes called shock collars, e-collars emit an electronic pulse to your dog’s neck through two small prongs on the collar. This electric stimulation is triggered by a remote control unit that can be set to a wide range of levels depending on your dog’s temperament and sensitivity level.



Safety is paramount when using an electric dog collar. Experts agree e-collars are safe when used properly. When used carelessly they can be ineffective and even confuse or frighten your dog. Shock collars operate via a radio signal and contain two operant components: a handheld remote which transmits the signal, and a receiver-collar that’s fitted around the dog’s neck. You will have to really fine-tune the static stimulation to your dog’s specific temperament. Like other types of dog training collars such as pinch collars or choke chains, electric collars deliver an unpleasant sensation, from a distance, to interrupt your dog without the use of brute force. Timing is crucial when delivering a correction, the more precise the timing is, the quicker your dog will make the association and change his or her behavior. One of hallmark benefits of electric collars is the ability to communicate at a distance, which is why e-collars are so popular for hunting and other advanced dog sports.



Training with a remote collar can be divided into two general categories: stopping unwanted behaviors and reinforcing learned commands. Electric shock collars are never used to introduce new commands or to punish

your dog, nor should they be used on pups under eight months. Stopping unwanted behaviors is the number one reason people purchase electric dog collars. Whether it is jumping up, eating garbage, chasing cats, or some other irritating or dangerous behavior, a shock collar will cease the behavior in a short time.

## Best Choke Chains & Prong Collars for Dogs: How to Use Safely & Effectively For Training!

[COLLARS BY BEN TEAM](#) 16 MIN READ OCTOBER 9, 2019 [11 COMMENTS](#)

Of all the behavioral modification tools at a modern dog owner's disposal, perhaps none are more controversial and misunderstood than choke chains, pinch collars and similar (and, let's face it, often scary-looking) products.

Fearing that these items are cruel or dangerous, many owners and dogs who could benefit from them shy away. However, **in the hands of a compassionate owner who is educated in the use of these collars, choke, chain, and pinch collars can be extremely effective.**

We'll explore how to know when choke and pinch collars are appropriate choice for your dog, how to use them correctly, and why they really aren't as tortuous as they look!

*Best Prong & Choke Chains: Quick Picks*

- **Best Chain Collar: Coastal Pet Chain Collar. Quality 20" chain designed to not tarnish, rust, or break.**

- **Best Pinch Collar: Coastal Pet Prong Collar.** *This high-quality 20" prong collar is made from chrome-plated chain. Can also have prongs removed to further adjust size and fit.*
- **Best For Long-Haired Dogs: Herm Sprenger Fur Saver.** *This chain collar uses larger links than standard chains to prevent long-haired dogs from getting their fur stuck in the links.*
- **Best Martingale Collar: PetSafe Martingale Collar.** *This nylon webbing martingale collar is a safe alternative to the choke/chain model. Comes in several colors and sizes.*

## What Is a Dog Choke Chain and Why Would You Use One?

A choke chain (also known as a choke collar or – my preferred term – chain collar) is a very simple device. It consists of a length of chain and two big rings attached to either end.

After setting it up properly (we'll discuss this in a minute), you can slip it over your dog's head and attach it to your favorite dog leash.

**You use a chain collar for two things:**

1. **Keeping your dog's head up and attention on you while walking at your side**
2. **Delivering a sharp correction when your dog exhibits an undesirable behavior or breaks away from the "heel" position.**

### Phase 3: Training Aids

They are often used to help train dogs to stop dragging their poor owner all over the neighborhood and walk properly on a leash. They can also be useful for training dogs to respond to other commands.

#### How Do Chain Collars Work?

First of all, let's establish what chain collars do *not* do: **They do not choke or strangle dogs when used properly.**

Everybody clear on that?

The unfortunate perception of these collars is likely at least partially the result of some terribly unartful language. If the original marketers of the product had called it a chain collar or – even better – a correction collar, they probably wouldn't be so misunderstood.

When used properly, **chain collars provide a way to safely and securely direct your dog's attention toward you and move him into proper heel position.** They also **provide the ability to quickly initiate a squeezing sensation on the neck**, which is an effective correction technique.

This works through leverage and body mechanics – when used properly, they sit right up at the base of the dog's skull, which naturally draws their attention to you when you apply slight pressure. The quick jerk employed in a correction tightens the chain for a split second, before returning it to a loose state.

**This gets your dog's attention and causes nothing more than mild, attention-getting discomfort in the process.**

## What Are Prong Collars and How Do They Differ from Choke Collars?

Prong or pinch collars are pretty insane-looking devices, that resemble something you'd expect to see in a horror movie. They are essentially chain-based collars that feature a number of inward-pointing prongs. When not under tension, the prongs simply rest around your dog's fur; when a correction is made, the collar tightens, causing the prongs to press into the dog's neck slightly.

**Despite the frightening appearance of these collars, they are safe and effective when used properly.**

In some ways, they may be even safer than standard chain collars, as the prongs help ensure that the force of the correction is applied across a number of different locations at the same time.

Note that the prongs of most collars are blunt or rounded to help avoid injuring your dog's neck. But if you like, you can purchase [soft vinyl tips](#) to make the prongs even gentler, and further ensure your dog's comfort and safety.

## How Do I Put a Choke Chain on My Dog?

Despite the simplicity of the device, many people are stumped when they receive a length of chain with two rings on the end. It's supposed to be a loop, right? Neither of the terminal rings will pass through the other, so how do you make this into a loop?

While this initially seems like some sort of mind-trick puzzle, it's actually quite simple:



### Phase 3: Training Aids

1. Pinch a length of the chain
2. Pull the doubled portion all the way through the ring
3. Push this pinched portion through either of the rings
4. Place the resulting loop around your dog's head, with the free end (the one you'll attach to the leash) on top of your dog's neck

NOTE: You'll need to decide the side on which your dog will walk before placing the loop around his head. The free end of the collar should lie across the top portion of your dog's neck and point towards you. This ensures that when you release tension on the leash, the restrictive ring will slide back down the chain, re-opening the collar.

If you want to put a prong collar on your dog, there's a slightly different procedure. You'll need to disconnect two of the links (it's often easiest to disconnect the two directly opposite the leash ring), then wrap it around your dog's neck and reattach the links.

### Basic Use of a Choke Chain or Pinch Collar

While the proper use of a chain or pinch collar is generally regarded as safe, improper use can lead to a host of problems. It's a good idea to seek the help of a skilled, certified trainer to ensure you are using the tool safely, but the basic procedure is as follows:

1. **Place the collar on your dog** in the correct orientation.

2. **Praise your precious puppy** and pat his fat-wittle-haunches. He's a good boy, yes he is. But then it's back to business – this is work time
3. **Have him come to the heel position.** If he needs help doing so, gently pull up on the leash to draw his attention to your face, and guide him into position.
4. **More love, petting and affection** — he does a good job; he gets praise.
5. **Start walking**, with the goal being to keep your dog locked into the heel position (tucked up close to your side) with the leash hanging loosely between the two of you.
6. **If your dog ventures away from the proper position, pop the leash quickly.** Many like to issue a verbal correction at the same time, although the choke chains make a distinct sound when popped. This applies to both “SQUIRREL” attacks and innocent sniffing; your dog should be by your side, monitoring you to know what to do.
7. **Lather, rinse and repeat** until your dog understands the proper behavior for walks.

### The Dos and Don'ts of Choke Chains and Other Pinch Collars

When using a pinch or chain collar, be sure to **do the following things:**

**Be sure that you put the chain collar on your dog in the appropriate orientation.** If you walk with the dog on your right, leash-end of the chain should hang from the left side of your dog's neck, and it should look like a lower-case “q” when you put it on your dog's neck. Reverse these directions if your dog walks on your left, and be sure the chain looks like a lower-case “p” when you put it on.

**Try to keep chain and pinch collars high on your dog's neck, just below the jaw.** This can take a little practice to get right, but it is important for achieving positive results and avoiding injuries. Some corrective collars feature leather

tabs or similar devices that make it easier to keep the collar from slipping down your dog's neck.

**Ensure that you are using a chain collar of the appropriate length.** Most trainers and vets recommend measuring the circumference of your dog's neck carefully, with a flexible ruler or measuring tape. Then, add about 4 or 5 inches to arrive at the proper length for a chain collar.

Conversely, be sure that you **don't do any of the following:**

**Don't use a chain collar or similar device as a form of punishment** – doing so is not only cruel, it is incredibly counterproductive to your efforts. Chain collars are designed for giving corrections and keeping him in the proper position — nothing more.

**It is probably wise to avoid using chain or pinch collars with dogs under 6 months of age.** In fact, it is probably even wiser to wait until after 1 year of age before using them.

**Never use chain collars or other corrective collars with short-nosed** or thin-necked breeds. These dogs are simply too fragile to use this training tool, and could easily end up injured.

**Don't allow your dog to pull against the chain.** This can cause serious injuries, including tracheal damage, pulled muscles or even cervical damage. Some dogs can actually exert enough pressure to cause their eyes to bulge. Chain collars and similar devices should only be used for loose-leash walks, with your dog at your side.

**Never leave your dog unattended while wearing any type of chain collar.** This includes not only prong collars and choke chains, but slip collars and martingales as well.

## Martingales and Slip Collars: Alternative Options

Choke chains and pinch collars are not the only game in town, and there are a number of other corrective collars on the market.

Two in particularly wide use include the Martingale and the slip collar. Both work in relatively similar ways to chain and prong collars, although there are a few key differences.

### **Martingales**

Martingales are conceptually similar to prong collars, except that they are primarily made from nylon webbing, rather than metal links, and they have no prongs.

Martingales are often considered the safest type of correction collar to use on a day-in-day-out basis, but there are still risks entailed with such use.

### **Slip Collars**

Slip collars are very similar to chain collar – just replace the chain links with a length of rope and you've got a slip collar.

They work in the same way that chain collars do, although they do not create the same sound a chain collar does – many trainers consider this sound as important as the constricting of the collar for training purposes.

Many slip collars come with a stopper to keep the collar from opening wider than you'd like.

## Best Chain Dog Collars, Prong Collars, and Similar Tools

We've compiled six of the best corrective collars on the market below. Be sure to review the various pros and cons of each, and select the best model for you, your pup and your training philosophy.

### 1. Coastal Pet 20-Inch Titan Heavy Chain Collar

**About:** The Coastal Pet Chain Collar is a straight-forward chain collar, designed to work well without costing a fortune. The combination of heavy-duty, 3-millimeter links and argon-welded seams ensure the chain is durable and built to last.

**Price:** \$

**Our Rating:**

**Features:**

- Great-looking chain is chrome-plated, so it will not rust or tarnish over time like some others
- 20-inch-long chain (including end rings)
- Recommended and used by professional trainers

## PROS

If you are looking for a no-frills chain collar at a very affordable price, the Coastal Pet Chain Collar is a great choice. It works well and will help make it much easier to train your dog to walk properly

## CONS

There weren't many complaints about the Coastal Pet Chain Collar. However, a few dog owners experienced sizing problems, so always be sure to measure your dog's neck carefully before ordering.

## 2. Herm Sprenger Fur Saver Heavy Dog Training Collar

**About:** The Herm Sprenger Fur Saver features a slightly different design than traditional chain collars. Instead of using a large number of short chain links, which often catch the fur of long-haired breeds, the Fur Saver uses a small number of very large links to provide a collar that works well, without tangling Fido's hair.

- Made in Germany, this premium chain comes with a quality guarantee
- 19-inch-long chain (including end rings)
- Chrome finish is eye-catching
- Won't catch, break or pull the hair on your dog's neck

## PROS

Most owners love Fur Saver chain collars, and long-haired dogs certainly prefer the coat-saving design. They are very well made, work smoothly and are built to last. It's an easy choice if you don't mind coughing up a few more bucks than you would spend for a typical chain collar.

## CONS

Displeased owners who tried the Herm Sprenger Fur Saver were few, as were complaints about the product. It is about twice the price of a typical chain collar, but its quality easily justifies this difference in price.

### 3. Coastal Pet Prong Collar

**About:** The Coastal Pet Prong Collar is a straight-forward prong collar that can help accelerate the training process and provide another tool in your training arsenal. Built from the same chrome-plated links and argon-welded seams that their chain collars are, Coastal Pet Prong Collars will not rust, tarnish or break.

- 20-inch-long chain (total length, end-to-end)
- Includes 11 dual-pronged links
- Prongs can be removed easily to alter the size

## PROS

The Coastal Pet Prong Collar is a high-quality product that's available at a very affordable price. If you believe that a prong collar is the best tool for you and your pet, it's hard to go wrong with this one. Most customers were quite pleased with the durability and quality of the collar. The fact that you can alter the size is also quite nice.

## CONS

Despite being marketed as rust-proof, a very small number of customers living in coastal areas did report some rusting after prolonged use.

### **4. Herm Sprenger Extra Large Black Stainless Steel Pinch Training Collar**

**About:** The Herm Sprenger Pinch Collar is a premium collar designed to help you train your four-legged bestie. Simply put, this is a beautifully crafted product, made from high-quality materials.

- 20-inch-long chain (total length, end-to-end)
- Includes 10 premium, dual-pronged links
- Black Anodized finish to ensure the collar will last and look great for years to come
- Made in Germany



## PROS

Most owners were immensely pleased with the collar and raved about its efficacy. Additionally, because the Herm Sprenger Pinch Collar is black rather than chrome, it provides a slightly subtler aesthetic, which appealed to many owners, including police and military K9 handlers, who prefer the black finish for tactical reasons.

## CONS

You'll don't get this kind of quality without paying for it. But, there were very few complaints about the Herm Sprenger Pinch Collar, and most customers found it to be well-worth the additional cost.

### 5. Mendota Command Slip Collar

**About:** The Mendota Command Slip Collar is a soft, flexible alternative to the traditional chain collar. Made from color-fast multifilament, double-stitched polypropylene, it won't catch your pet's fur or stain your pet's skin. The Mendota Slip Collar comes in 10 different great-looking color and pattern options to match your pet's personality.

- Available in six different lengths, ranging from 16 to 26 inches
- Trimmed with English bridle oil-tanned leather accents
- Made with non-corrosive, brass-toned rings that look great and last for years

## PROS

The vast majority of owners using the Mendota Command Slip Collar praised it highly. Many owners (and presumably their dogs) appreciated the ability to use a soft training tool, while still achieving improved discipline and better behavior during leash walks.

## CONS

There weren't many complaints about the Mendota Slip Collar, although a very small number of owners reported that the collar was not as effective for their dog as a chain collar. Nevertheless, most owners found it to work quite well.

### 6. PetSafe Martingale Collar

**About:** The PetSafe Martingale Collar is an alternative training tool designed to help improve your dog's behavior during leash walks. Because Martingale-style collars only close a predetermined amount, they are safer than chain and slip collars.

- Made from high-quality nylon webbing for a comfortable fit
- Available in five different length and width options
- Comes in five different eye-catching colors to ensure your dog looks great
- Can be operated by hand if need be

## PROS

Most customers found the PetSafe Martingale Collars to be very effective. Many noted that their dog seemed to prefer wearing these collars to prong or pinch collars.

Additionally, many owners who had dogs that would escape from most other collars could not do so with these.

## CONS

There weren't many complaints from those who used the collars as training tools, but many were unaware that Martingales are not designed to be used outside of training sessions. Also, this specific model is for petite dogs, but there are other similar models for larger dogs as well.

\*\*\*

Do you use correction collars to help train your pooch? How effective have they been for you? Let us know your preferences and experiences – including the type of correction collar you prefer. Which ones have worked, and which ones haven't? We'd love to hear your thoughts in the comments below

Chain collars and similar devices often elicit strong opinions, but let's keep things civil – we all love our dogs and try to treat them the best way we know how.

## LEASH/ COLLAR CORRECTIONS

# The Problem with All-Positive Dog Training

By Ed Frawley.

I will talk about the controversial topic of "the need for corrections in dog training." I will tell you a little about my experience in dog training and why I feel the need to talk about this subject.

There are three types of all-positive trainers:

1. Those who emulate Pet-Smart, which runs 100% all-positive training courses and won't mention corrections in training. These kinds of people know better but chose to cash in on the image of all-positive training.
2. There are all-positive trainers who love animals and push the all-positive concept but simply lack experience to know better.
3. There are all-positive trainers who compete and win in various dog sports. These competitors do an excellent job of desensitizing their competition dog's to ignore the distractions their dog will face in their respective dog sport.

I have issues with the people in the first two categories and I will explain why in a minute.

I respect and admire most of those trainers in the third category because they know that 99.999% of every pet dog out there will require a "distraction / correction phase" at the end of a training program.

I know all positive sport trainers making headway with their appropriate puppy that they've raised in a strict system and they're managing every aspect of their dog's life. This doesn't mean the dogs listen for crap outside the 'sport work' though. And these same trainers don't do pet training because they can't be as successful. They just avoid it.

The only people from this third category I don't respect are those trainers who tell others they can train any pet dog using their all-positive methods and never have to correct the dog.

The bottom line is adopting a dog at 4 years old with a history of chasing critters, ignoring commands, pulling on leashes, barking at external stimuli, is going to be hard to impossible to reprogram with food rewards alone.

For the past 20 years I have used the following auto text when I respond to new trainers who have been influenced by "old wives tales – like all-100% positive training." It goes like this:

### Phase 3: Training Aids

You are always going to get other people's opinions on how to train your dog. You only need to ask your neighbor, your friends or even your vet (Vets are not dog trainers they are health care providers).

99.99% of these people are well intended but lack the experience that is needed to offer sound training advice. The fact is they are more likely to offer "OLD WIVES TALES" on dog training rather than sound training advice.

In many circles today, correcting a dog during training has become politically incorrect. Frankly those are circles I don't care to be part of.

Companies like Pet Smart are known to fire instructors from their "ALL POSITIVE trainer classes" if that person talks about corrections during a course. That's a fact from one of their trainers not me. That trainer told me that "Pet Smart is only interested in selling training courses and not in providing accurate training information."

The problem with all-positive training is that there will come a time with every dog (and usually when the dog is off leash) when the distractions that dog faces are more interesting to the dog than the high value reward the handler is offering for compliance to a known command. At that point in time that dog needs to learn that there are consequences for not following direction from the handler.

Controversial subjects like this attract flies so before I get into the meat of why corrections are needed I talk a little about my experience in dog

I am 66 years old. I have owned and trained dogs my entire life. Back in the 1960's I got the bug to really learn how to train. I read every book I could find and trained on a daily basis. I trained our family dogs and our neighbor's dog's.

I wanted to become a Vet so during college I studied pre-veterinary medicine (which is how I ended up with a minor in chemistry). I worked in a vet clinic in La Crosse WI. That clinic was also the dog shelter for the city of La Crosse. On Saturdays the Vet killed shelter dog's. I couldn't handle that and it didn't take me long to realize I would rather train dogs than provide health care for dogs.

I went to my first serious dog training seminar in 1974 and from that point I never looked back. I can't count the number of seminars, the number of trips I made filming dog training videos or filming dog competitions over the last 40 years.

I produced my first dog training video in 1982. My web site went on the internet in 1994. We currently have the largest dog training web site on the internet with over 800 streaming videos and 18,000 pages of training content. To my knowledge there isn't another web site that is even 20% the size of leerburg.com

My only point in mentioning these things is to establish the fact that I have been deeply involved in dog training my entire life. Unlike a lot of all-positive dog trainers, this is not my first rodeo.

Becoming a professional dog trainer is a never ending evolution. Over the past 50 years I have evolved into a "balanced reward based dog trainer."

### Phase 3: Training Aids

A well balanced trainer uses high value rewards in the learning phase of training to teach behaviors. In my case I always start with marker training and high value food rewards. I have written extensively on training with markers and will not go into that here. You can read about it in my article [THE POWER OF TRAINING DOGS WITH MARKERS](#).

The "Balance" part of a reward based system simply means that we will introduce a dog to corrections once it generalizes a command.

The purpose of a correction in dog training is not to punish a dog for inappropriate or bad behavior but rather the purpose of a correction is to change a dog's behavior.

That is a subtle but very important distinction.

Many inexperienced and/or new trainers fail to understand that different temperament dogs require different kinds and levels of corrections.

Using remote collars and prong collars on dogs that may only need a verbal warning to get a behavior change is abusive. On the other hand that same dog may require a remote collar or prong collar correction to get a behavior change when faced with a strong distraction.

Understanding varying temperaments in dogs: how to motivate and build drive in dogs: how to manage levels of distractions: along with knowing what types and levels of correction specific dogs require is what is needed to become a "balanced reward based dog trainer."

Dogs, like people, are individuals. A correction that results in a behavior change for one dog will have no effect on another dog. Simply withholding a food reward or toy reward for many dogs may produce a behavior change, while an off leash high drive dog facing strong distractions may require stiff remote collar corrections to get behavior changes.

Not only do dogs of different temperaments require different kinds of corrections, what kind of distraction a dog faces often dictates what kind and level of correction a dog needs to get a behavior change.



For me the real ART OF DOG TRAINING means being able to control my dog in a highly distracting environment. To accomplish that the trainer needs to be able to produce a dog that understands and respects the consequences of not following a known command. The trainer who can do that and yet still have a really nice bond with his dog is a great trainer.

With all this said, there are two ends of the correction spectrum. At one end are trainers who consistently give ineffective corrections that don't change behavior. They nag their dog with non-behavior changing corrections that have little to no effect on the dog. Ineffective corrections desensitize a dog to corrections. They simply teach a dog that they don't need to pay attention to the handler.

At the other end of the correction spectrum are those trainers who feel the need to punish a dog with a correction. These handlers can train a dog but they never develop what I consider is a deep bond with their dog.

Trainers who give a prong collar correction to a dog that would have offered a behavior change with a verbal warning are abusing their dog. Trainers who nag their dog with repeated ineffective corrections desensitize their dog to corrections.

## **All-Positive Dog Trainers Just Don't Get It**

Now back to these all-positive trainers. They have blinders on and they just don't get it. They don't understand that dog sport competitors who train with all positive methods need a very specific type of dog – they need dog's that are compliant and have a very strong food or toy drive.

### Phase 3: Training Aids

These same trainers could be given 10,000 pet dogs and they would be lucky to be able to train and compete at a high level with one of those dogs using all-positive methods in their respective dog sports much less be able to train that dog to be consistently compliant in off leash obedience.

Not one all-positive trainer could ever have trained and certified one of the police service dogs that I handled in the 10 years I was a K9 officer.

In fact, it's safe to say that these all-positive trainers could never train and certify one single patrol dog anywhere. They simply couldn't do it, but they will sure lead anyone who will listen to believe they could. The people who claim these things are the trainers who lack the experience to know what they are talking about.

All-positive trainers will always point to sea world and the dolphins and killer whales as proof of their system. They pontificate about how impossible it would be to give a killer whale a correction.

Well anyone with half a brain can see that these dolphins and killer whales are forced to live in very small pools that have zero distractions. Taking human interaction and withholding food rewards from an animal that lives in social isolation is in and of itself a pretty strong correction.

I stand with those folks who think what Sea World does to their animals is cruel and unusual punishment. How they force these animals to live is disgusting. Their claim to be using pure operant conditioning is a scam on the American public.

So let's make this very clear, I have a lot of respect for reward-based competitors who go out there and win in their respective dog sports. My friends don't try and tell pet owners that they should train their pet dogs or working dog's without ever having to correct that dog for bad behavior.

These trainers know when they control the environment, the reinforcement history, present and future, and then play in a sport where things can be very predictable – with the right dog they don't need corrections. But the rest of the world isn't sterile and 'Oh-shit free.'

Something else to consider is a lot of this debate gets down to defining terms. What a human thinks is a correction, or pressure, may not be perceived so by a dog. My dogs simply thrill over the prospect of having their pinch collars go on because it means we're going for a stroll. And the pinch collar ensures my 85 pound dog doesn't pull me down the street. He walks like a dream because the pressure was taught correctly during "leash-pressure training" (which we are about to release a new training DVD and on-line course in).

And finally if you are one of those people from the second group –those people how love dog's but don't have the experience to realize all-positive training systems don't work – I would ask you to rethink your position.

Be honest with yourself. Know what distraction levels really affect your dog. You can manage your dog by keeping it on leash and away from these distractions, but ask yourself what you would do if your dog accidentally got off leash in the face of these distractions – especially if this happened in an environment that could be dangerous for your dog.



### Phase 3: Training Aids

Personally I want my dogs to learn to mind me all the time – not some of the time. Education is what is needed – not propaganda about all-positive training.