



FENCES PREFERRED

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There are three excellent places for your dog to spend his time: Inside the house with his new family; out for an on-lead stroll with his owners; and exercising off-lead in a securely fenced area. If a fenced area is not available, your dog will need to spend 100% of his outdoor time on-lead. Although it's not at all unacceptable or inhumane to leash-walk your dog every time he leaves the house, access to an appropriately fenced area, at least some of the time, is preferable. A fenced yard provides a dog with a safe place to exercise, explore, and play – all of which are high on a dog's list of "Must Haves!" Fences are available in a variety of styles, one of which is bound to meet your family's needs as well as your dog's.

It is important to remember, however, that no one type of fence is a perfect containment system for every dog. No matter what type of fence you choose, the keys to successful containment are Training, Management, Supervision, and Care. Fences should not be held responsible for "baby-sitting" your dog. An untrained and/or unsupervised dog is far more likely to experience any number of mishaps than a well-managed, consistently supervised dog, even in the presence of a "good fence."

If possible, provide your dog with a fenced area in which to play off-lead. But please don't expect your fence to do your job for you. Unsupervised dogs can be stolen, or harassed by people or other animals. Regardless of the care you've taken in choosing the "right fence" for your dog, if not properly supervised he may be injured by the fence itself. Untrained dogs may dig, climb, or otherwise escape. Mismanaged dogs may annoy your neighbors with incessant barking or other vocalization. In order to avoid the tragedies that are frequently associated with the "failure" of any type of fence, please bear the following in mind:

- Not all fences are right for every dog.

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- Fences are just objects – they should not be expected to provide your pet with care and supervision.
- If you choose a containment system that proves to be wrong for your dog, the containment system should be replaced – not the dog himself.
- Most of the unfortunate incidents that arise from “fence failure” can be avoided if proper Training, Management, Supervision and Care are provided.
- A boring, lonely yard increases the likelihood that your dog will attempt to escape. Bored and lonely dogs are also more likely to become excessively vocal and/or destructive. On the other hand, dogs that are provided with adequate, interesting Environment Enrichment objects and activities within their fenced areas are generally happier and better behaved.
- It is in a dog’s very nature to be compelled to explore as much of the environment as he can. A dog that escapes from a fenced area is not a “bad dog” at all. In fact, he’s more than likely a “smart dog,” and his containment system should be chosen and modified accordingly.
- Chained or tied dogs are statistically more likely to become aggressive, to get injured, and to develop obsessive-compulsive disorders. Chaining your dog is neither humane nor safe. It should not be considered as a viable pet-containment option.

The SPCA’s goal is to help the animals in our charge find loving, happy, safe and above all, **permanent** homes. Help us help the animals by remembering that they don’t just need fences...they need *you*.

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