

## All About Leashes

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In this article, you will learn about the several different types of leashes, where to buy them, and how to use them. You might be thinking, "Can't I get a regular leash for a couple of dollars at Wal-Mart?" or, "I know how to use a leash! It's easy! Hook it on to my dog and then lead him where I want to go." For a lot of people, using a leash with their dog is not that easy.

Reading this article will give you the basics and beyond as you learn about giving your dog the best. Most places have laws which state that all dogs must be kept on a leash in public. This restrains your pet from frightening other people, jumping on things, destroying objects, or running away. Yet some cities have established dog parks that allow dogs roam and run free.

### What Kind of Leash to Get?

There are several different kinds of leashes. Some leashes hook on to a dog's collar, while others simply are wrapped around a dog's neck.

The most common leash style is a "Nylon Webbing Leash." These hook on to a metal ring on your dog's collar, and usually are about 4-6 feet long.

However, some people prefer using a retractable leash, which allows the owner to let the dog run ahead or to keep him close.

A much cheaper leash seems to look much like a lasso - A simple rope with a loop for the head to slip through. This might be used for training or competitions, where it can be slipped off quickly.

A unique leash, called the Gentle Leader®, is a head collar. It fits around the top of dog's neck and around his muzzle. The strap that is across the muzzle doesn't restrict airflow or maneuverability. The dog can open his mouth, breathe, bark, eat and drink, whatever he wants to do with his mouth, but if he is doing something with it that you do not like, such as biting, you can pull on the leash and the strap will tighten, closing the dog's mouth. It also enables the owner to restrict pulling on the leash and jumping up on people.

### What do the leashes cost, and where can I get it the cheapest?

The cheapest leash would be the rope - you can make it yourself. The most casual (as well as popular) leash would probably be the Nylon Webbing. For a small dog, you can get one for about \$5. A larger dog might need a double layer in the leash, and they are about \$7. Retractable leashes are a bit more expensive. A 26 lb. and under dog can get by with one for around \$12; about \$15 for a 26-44 lb. Dog; and for 44-110 lbs, a retractable leash is about \$22.

You can purchase the Gentle Leader® for around \$20 in your local pet store; however, you can also order one from Amazon for \$12.

## **How do I use a leash so both my dog and myself are comfortable?**

Letting your dog pull on the leash makes him think he is the leader, making him uncomfortable. It makes his owner uncomfortable, too. Try walking "loose leash" with him. Make sure you reward your dog for walking loose leash with special treats, such as bacon or chicken. Also, if you jerk him around on his leash, he will develop a serious throat injury, which may lead to death.

Some people train their dog with "Choker Leashes." I do not recommend these because dogs have died due to a throat injury caused by the choker leash.

If you use the Gentle Leader, make sure you read all the instructions thoroughly before use. You could damage your dog's neck because of pulling on the leash.

## **Conclusion**

In the end, almost any leash/lead is fine to use except that I do not recommend the choker leash. You have to learn how to use each method differently. Make sure you reward your dog when he is doing what you want him to do.