



SACRAMENTO SPCA

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Keeping Your Dog Confined To Your Property

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We recommend that you keep your dog indoors, unless you're present to supervise his time outside. Dogs are "pack animals" and need to socialize with you and the world around them. By walking your dog regularly (at least twice a day), you can provide him with the exercise and mental stimulation he needs.

If there are times when you must leave your dog outside, keep him in a securely fenced yard to prevent him from straying. Within the safe confines of your yard, he should have access to adequate shelter from rain, snow, severe winds and other inclement weather. You may also consider providing him with a covered dog "run" or pen with a doghouse inside. This is a good alternative if you're unable to fence your yard, or if your dog is apt to escape from your yard by jumping the fence.

We don't recommend that you chain or tie your dog up to prevent him from wandering off. A chained or tied up dog is likely to become frustrated, which could lead to destructive and/or aggressive behavior. He could also become entangled in his chain, rope or leash and, as a result, severely injure himself.

However, if you feel you must chain or tie up your dog, then use a "dog trolley." You can construct one by sliding a ring onto heavy wire or rope and fasten the ends between two posts or trees. Then, connect your dog's lead to the ring. Make sure the lead is short enough to avoid tangling, yet long enough to allow your dog to lie down. The trolley may either be overhead or on the ground. Provide at least 15 feet of clear space for your dog to move around in and be sure to remove any objects or debris that could cause him to become entangled or injured. Don't secure the dog trolley near stairways, fences, decks or porches, and make sure it's a safe distance from all possible "escape routes." When using a dog trolley, don't ever use a choke chain collar, but use a leather or nylon harness instead. Don't leave your dog chained outside for extended periods of time.

California law requires you to make sure your dog has access to appropriate shelter, clean water at all times, and food, if necessary.

It's best to provide your dog with a tip-proof water bowl or place the bowl in an area where it won't get knocked over. You can dig a hole and place the bowl at ground level, which will not only keep it from being knocked over, but will keep the water cool as well. You'll also want to provide your dog with safe toys that are appropriate for his size (see our handout: "Dog Toys and How to Use Them").