

Fallout Effects of Punishment Based Training Methods

including Prong, Choke & Shock Collars



An Unregulated Industry



Dog training is unregulated in the US. Not only does this mean consumers have no protection and anyone can do practically anything to your dog in the name of training, it also means there's a lot of muddy language out there with titles. (Note, this is targeted for those in the US. The UK and Canada have different uses of some terms.)

If you've fallen victim to predatory training methods or were convinced aversive methods are the solution, **IT IS NOT YOUR FAULT**. This is a symptom of an unregulated industry, with people posing as "professionals" with no recourse. But, you can change how you do things NOW.

Know better, do better.



facebook.com/rescuedbytraining



@rescuedbytraining



youtube.com/RescuedByTraining

Verifyable Credentials and *Methods Matter*

Regulation [.]
authoritative
principle or co

Any method or technique, including those that hurt or scare your dog, are completely legal and it's buyer beware. Anyone can, and many often do, call themselves trainers or "behaviorists" without any education in the science of animal learning, have little or no verifiable, credentials and do not hold any professional affiliations with reputable, force-free organizations. Below is a sampling of reputable, force-free organizations and training schools.





They "work" because
they hurt

Shock collars hurt.

There is no way around it. If they "work" it's because they are hurting or scaring the dog. The shock can cause not only psychological distress including high levels of stress, increased aggression and phobias but physically can cause unhealthy increases in heart rate and painful burns.

Continual use of shock collars can cause your pet to habituate to the level of pain, requiring increased shock levels to be effective and is proven to cause increased aggression and fear-based behaviors.

Aversive training tools also reduce or remove the dog's natural communication and body language, making dogs more unpredictable and dangerous.

What's the Science Say?

Multiple studies have reported that shock collars cause undue stress on a dog. One study found that training with shock collars caused long lasting stress effects where the dog continued to associate their handler as aversive even outside of a training context. The dogs exhibited behaviors clearly associated with fear and anxiety long after they had received shocks. The scientists conducting this study stated: "The conclusions, therefore are, that being trained [with electric shock] is stressful. That receiving shocks is a painful experience to dogs, and that the dogs have learned that the presence of their owner (or his commands) announces reception of shocks, even outside of the normal training context."

(Schilder, Matthijs B.H. and van der Borg, Joanne A.M., (2004), Training dogs with help of the shock collar: short and long term behavioural effects, Applied Animal Behavior Science 85 (2004) 319-334)

Suppression Isn't Modification

Suppressing behavior like reducing barking isn't the same as modifying behavior long term. Punishing a dog for barking or growling does nothing to help change WHY they are growling or barking in the first place. Without this important change, we can never get long-term behavior change

"Trainers" who lack an understanding of how animals learn, and an understanding of how to properly implement classical and operant conditioning, often rely on aversive tools, as they temporarily interrupt the animal's behavior (because, ouch, that shock hurt!) but they are not doing anything to truly modify the behavior and the methods they are using almost always make fear and aggression worse.



Reasons not to use a shock collar, or other aversive methods

1

You love your dog. You didn't get a dog to hurt or scare them. You got a dog to be part of your family and to love them. Treating them with love and kindness includes the training methods you use.

Veterinary professionals, the organizations who specialize in animal behavior and the science all strongly support humane training methods and many have strongly worded position statements against the use of aversive in training because of the detrimental effects. Many other countries outlaw the use of these methods.

2

3

Aversive training is NOT more effective than humane training. Humane training has been shown to be more effective than punishment. You do not need to compromise on your pet's physical and mental well-being in the name of training.



What's a Behaviorist?

The term **behaviorist** is a particularly tricky one, because there are behaviorists, mostly Veterinary Behaviorists, who are certified by the American College of Veterinary Behaviorists but there are only about 80 VBs in the whole world. There's also Certified Animal Behaviorists, given the designation CAAB (Certified Applied Animal Behaviorist) or ACAAB (Associate Certified Applied Animal Behaviorist) by the Animal Behavior Society and there's only about 50 of those worldwide.

So it's not terribly likely the trainer calling themselves a "behaviorist" actually has these credentials. **This is a huge red flag.** But unlike falsely calling yourself a veterinarian, which would have high legal stakes, it's not illegal to call yourself a behaviorist, so it happens without repercussions every day. And to further complicate things, other places like the UK, use the term much more generally, so those coming here from other countries may be further confused.

Interested in reading more?

Here's a list of research against the use of
aversives in training.

1. Polsky, Richard, (2000). Can Aggression in Dogs Be Elicited Through the Use of Electronic Pet Containment Systems?, *Journal of Applied Animal Welfare Science*, 3(4), 345-357
- 2 Schilder, Matthijs B.H. and van der Borg, Joanne A.M., (2004). Training dogs with help of the shock collar: short and long term behavioural effects, *Applied Animal Behavior Science* 85 (2004) 319-334.
- 3 Schalke, E., Stichnoth, J. and Jones-Baade, R., Stress Symptoms Caused by the Use of Electric Training Collars on Dogs (*Canis familiaris*) in Everyday Life Situations, *Current Issues and Research in Veterinary Behavioral Medicine*,
- 4 Defra AW1402 (2013) Studies to assess the effect of pet training aids, specifically remote static pulse systems, on the welfare of domestic dogs. University of Lincoln / University of Bristol / Food and Environment Research Agency. Prof. Jonathan Cooper, Dr. Hannah Wright, Prof. Daniel Mills (University of Lincoln); Dr. Rachel Casey, Dr. Emily Blackwell (University of Bristol); Katja van Driel (Food and Environment Research Agency); Dr. Jeff Lines (Silsoe Livestock System)
- 5 Defra AW1402a (2013) Studies to assess the effect of pet training aids, specifically remote static pulse systems, on the welfare of domestic dogs; field study of dogs in training. Final report prepared by Prof. Jonathan Cooper, Dr. Nina Cracknell, Jessica Hardiman and Prof. Daniel Mills (University of Lincoln).
- 6 Blackwell et al., The use of electronic collars for training domestic dogs: estimated prevalence, reasons and risk factors for use, and owner perceived success as compared to other training methods, *BMC Veterinary Research* 2012, 8:93.
- 7 Bradshaw J.W.S., Blackwell E.J., Casey R.A. 2009. Dominance in domestic dogs - useful construct or bad habit? *Journal of Veterinary Behavior: Clinical Applications and Research*, May/June 2009, pp 135-144.
- 8 Herron M.E., Shofer F.S., Reisner I.R. 2009. Survey of the use and outcome of confrontational and non-confrontational training methods in client-owned dogs showing undesired behaviors. *Applied Animal Behavior Science*, 117, pp. 47-54. <http://vet.osu.edu/assets/pdf/hospital/behavior/trainingArticle.pdf>
- 9 Scholz, Martina, and von Reinhardt, Clarissa: *Stress in Dogs*, ©2007, Dogwise Publishing
- 10 American Veterinary Society of Animal Behavior 2007. AVSAB Position Statement - Punishment Guidelines: The use of punishment for dealing with animal behavior problems.
- 11 Hiby, E.F., Rooney, N.J., Bradshaw, J.W.S., 2004. Dog training methods—their use, effectiveness and interaction with behaviour and welfare. *Anim. Welfare* 13, 63–69.
- 12 Blackwell, Emily J., Twells, Caroline Anne, Seawright, Rachel A. Casey. 2008. The relationship between training methods and the occurrence of behavior problems, as reported by owners, in a population of domestic dogs. *Journal of Veterinary Behavior: Clinical Applications and Research*, September/October 2008, pp 207-217.