



**ABKA**® American Boarding  
Kennels Association



## CHOOSING A COLLAR AND LEASH

**FOR CATS:** If you walk your cat outside on a regular basis, then a harness will work better than a collar. Identification can be attached to a collar for indoor/outdoor cats, but make sure the collar has an elastic stretch section or breakaway portion in case your cat gets caught on something.

**FOR DOGS:** The choices are much more varied. The collar should fit fairly snug to prevent your dog from pulling its head out. You should be able to fit two fingers under it once buckled.

**NYLON:** comes in a wide variety of colors, widths, and styles. These collars sometimes don't come with holes for the buckles, and can, therefore, be custom-fit. Extra length can also be cut off and the end sealed with heat to prevent fraying. Nylon collars can also be cleaned with soap and water.

**LEATHER:** comes in limited colors, and will often bleed dye when wet, and can dry very stiff if soaked. Worn leather will become soft and pliable, and can be quite comfortable once broken in. These collars can be flat, rolled, or choke style. Leather collars must be removed when bathing your dog.

**ROLLED LEATHER:** is good for long-haired breeds since it won't flatten a ring of hair around the neck. They may buckle or be a choke-style.

**CHAIN:** most often used for training or control when walking your dog. They must be put on correctly in order to not hurt the dog's neck—hold the collar up and make a "P," and place on the dog while facing it so that the tail of the P is on the dog's right (your left). Since dogs should be trained to walk on your left, the tail of the P is next to you facing down and will release after you've corrected the dog. If the tail points up, the chain can remain tight and not release, possibly choking the dog. Chains can rust if they're repeatedly exposed to water.

**PRONG TRAINING COLLARS:** should be used only with a dog trainer's recommendation and instruction and should never be left on the dog after a training period is over.

Leashes come in a wide variety of colors, materials, and styles, and often are made to match a collar. Small dogs and cats need only a lightweight leash, while a large, strong dog will need a leash of heavier construction. Look for good stitching that goes through all layers of the material and leather, a comfortable handle or loop, and a length comfortable for your height in relation to the pet's size. Most leashes come in 4- or 6-foot lengths, and there are extendable leashes that unroll several feet. Remember that the longer the leash gets, the harder it is to control your dog, especially if the dog makes a dash after something.