

## 18 Things YOU Can Do to Help a Chained Dog

If you are reading this, then you are concerned about a chained-up dog. Perhaps the dog is your own and you want to better his life. Perhaps the dog is one in your neighborhood whom you are worried about. There are many things you can do to help!

1. **Bring the dog inside!** Would you want to sit in the yard by yourself day after day, year after year? Of course not. Dogs get bored and lonely when stuck outside. They want to be inside the house with their human family. Read *here* for tips on housetraining and behavior modification to help your dog be a good “inside” dog.
2. **Get to know the dog’s guardian** if you are concerned about someone else’s chained dog. Click *here* for tips on talking to a stranger about helping their chained dog.
3. **Call your local animal control office, humane society, or sheriff’s department** if the chained dog is:
  - consistently without food, water or shelter
  - sick or infested with parasites
  - too skinny

A city/county official or humane society investigator is required to investigate the situation if the dog guardian is breaking your community’s animal cruelty law. In most communities, it is considered cruel to leave a dog without food, water or shelter; to not provide medical care to a sick dog; and to keep a dog undernourished. Even if your city doesn’t have an animal cruelty section in your city’s ordinance, your state will have a section in the state law that addresses animal cruelty.

Once you report the situation-don’t be afraid to follow up! Keep calling the authorities until the situation is resolved. The dog is counting on YOU to be his voice.

4. **Put up a fence.** Fences don’t have to be very expensive if you are willing to do some work yourself. You can sink wooden posts and staple inexpensive metal fencing to them for the cheapest fence (See the *trolley instructions* page for info on sinking posts.) Chain link is easy to do yourself, too. Workers at Home Depot, Lowes, and other home improvement stores will tell you exactly what materials to buy and give you advice on putting up all types of fences. *See fence pictures*
5. **Put up a trolley system** if the dog is a fence-jumper. A trolley system is very inexpensive and will give the dog much more freedom of movement. Click *here* for pictures and an instruction sheet.

6. **An electric fence is an option for dogs who jump fences.** At *Petsmart* and other pet supply stores you can buy electric fence kits for both fenced and unfenced yards. Some electric fences attach to an existing fence. Other electric fences are buried underground.

If the yard is already fenced, you can put up a “hot wire” for around \$40-\$50. A “hot wire” is a live wire that attaches to the top of the fence. Call a farm supply store for advice on putting up a hotwire. Hotwires are commonly used to contain cows and horses. They are a good deterrent to burglars, too!

7. **Purchase a 15, 20, or 30 foot lightweight tie-out** if a fence or trolley aren't possible. Attach the tie-out to a strong stake that screws into the ground. Place the stake in a central location so that the dog can move around all sides of the stake. You can order these materials from *Petsmart*.
8. **Spaying and neutering a dog will help him to calm down** and stay closer to home. A sterilized dog won't try to escape to find a mate! Investigate low-cost spay/neuter programs in your area. Call 1800 to get a coupon. If you are trying to help someone else's dog, ask your own vet and ask if s/he will give you a discount as a community service.
9. **Provide food and fresh water EVERY day.** Contrary to some people's beliefs, dogs need to eat every day, just like we do! You can place the water bowl inside a tire to keep it from tipping. You can attach a water bucket to a wooden doghouse to keep it from tipping over. Stretch wire, a small chain, or twine across the bucket and secure the wire to the house on either side of the bucket. *Picture*
10. **Provide proper shelter for the dog.** Dog igloos can be purchased pretty cheaply from Wal-Mart or other discount stores. If you can't afford to buy a doghouse, you can make one. Click *here* for instructions (it's not much cheaper to make one than buy one, though).
11. **Give the dog toys and rawhides.** A big rawhide will occupy a dog for several hours. Even a knotted towel or ball can provide hours of entertainment. Toss them over the fence if the dog belongs to someone else.
12. **Take the dog on walks!** It will mean the world to that dog to be able to get of the yard, see new things, and smell new smells. Imagine spending your whole life in one room. That's what life is like for a chained dog.

If the dog is very strong or large, you can use a prong collar or harness to make walking easier on you. Ask pet store workers to help you get the dog fitted for a collar or harness.

If the dog belongs to someone else, offer to walk the dog yourself.

13. **Take the dog to school!** Obedience training can solve behavior problems and help the dog learn how to be a good “inside” dog. Petsmart offers very inexpensive dog training.
14. **Fill the doghouse with hay and blankets in the winter** to make a soft, warm bed. Bring the dog inside during freezing weather if possible. Just like we wouldn’t want to sleep outside in the snow, dogs don’t either. Especially if the dog is short-haired!
15. **Provide the dog with flea treatment, heartworm preventative, and annual worming.** Click *here* to read a fact sheet on parasites and how to treat them. Even if you can’t afford heartworm treatment, please give the dog an annual worming for roundworms and tapeworms. These pills are inexpensive to buy at a vet. Most vets will sell you the pills without requiring a vet visit.
16. **Provide shade in the summer.** Can you imagine sitting in the hot sun all day in August? It would be miserable! Bring the dog inside during heat waves if possible. Plant trees to provide shade. You can also create shade with tarps and pieces of plywood.
17. **Fill up a plastic kiddie pool for hot summer months.** Dogs enjoy cooling off in a pool as much as we do. What a cheap way to ease those hot summer days for a dog!
18. **Educate people about chaining!** PETA has an excellent brochure that contains much of the information listed here. *Contact PETA* to order some brochures, or download the brochure *here*. Keep some brochures in your car. If you see a chained dog, you can put a brochure in that person’s mailbox.