



VIP RECOMMENDATION

ELIMINATE AVERSIVES



Eliminate all shock collars, bark collars, electric fence, vibrating collars, static electricity collars, prong collars, choke chains, physical punishment, screaming, yelling, as well as anything in the environment that causes your dog to want to escape or avoid.

WHAT IS AN "AVERSIVE"?

"In dog behavior terminology an "aversive" is something unpleasant that is used to suppress or diminish an unwanted behavior. An aversive can be an unpleasant sound, a physical correction, the pain caused by a shock collar or prong collar correction, or a harsh scolding. It's considered an aversive if it's something your dog will work to avoid in the first place or will work to stop in the moment" (Madson, 2022).

Something aversive can be something we do to a dog, but it can also be something that exists in the environment. Think of the irritating scream of a fire alarm or even the beeping done with low batteries.

Aversive things are from the perspective and perception of your dog, not you. This is very important. We don't determine what is aversive to our dogs, they do.





ELIMINATE AVERSIVES

We use our knowledge of dog body language to help us figure out if our dog is finding something aversive. This is why we teach you a lot about dog body language. When we see an increase in subtle stress signals, that is our cue to look and listen. What is our dog worried about? **It's our job to eliminate the stressor, not deliver more of them.**

Dogs are always learning. When a dog is working to avoid something aversive, he's learning lessons about fear and pain. We don't want these lessons. We want our dogs to be free from worry so they can learn that the world is a happy, safe place. Simple things like learning to be housetrained can be overridden by a need to feel safe when something in the environment is scary.

9 SIDE EFFECTS OF PUNISHMENT AND OF AVERSIVES IN GENERAL

Eileen Anderson, highly respected author, describes the side effects. "Here are nine documented possible side effects of the use of punishment, negative reinforcement, and of aversives in general.

- 1. Escape/Avoidance:** If you hurt or scare your dog, she will likely try to avoid you, the places you frequent, and whatever else she associates with the hurt. This linked post is about that happening to a dog. This post is about that happening to a human.
- 2. Operant Aggression:** If you hurt or scare your dog, he may hurt you back.
- 3. Elicited Aggression:** If you hurt or scare your dog, she may hurt your other dog or your kid.
- 4. Generalization** (related to #1 and #2 above): If you scare or hurt your dog, she can become afraid of (or aggressive toward) other things associated with your actions, like locations and objects.
- 5. Apathy:** If you hurt or scare your dog a lot, she may become apathetic and not do much of anything.
- 6. Conditioned Suppression/Learned Helplessness:** If you hurt or scare your dog a lot unpredictably, she will live in a state of fear and also may not do much of anything.
- 7. Injury:** If you hurt your dog you could cause him injury.
- 8. Reinforcement of the Punisher:** If you hurt or scare your dog regularly, your actions will easily be reinforced and become habitual. On the occasion that your actions don't work to interrupt or decrease behavior, you will tend to escalate the hurt.
- 9. Copying:** If you see someone training their dog through pain or intimidation, it can influence you to do it yourself.



READ MORE



Don't believe us? That's ok. We want you to do your research. We have put together some links from worldwide veterinary associations and other highly respected scientific sources for you to read:

American Veterinary Medical Association

<https://www.avma.org/javma-news/2021-11-01/veterinary-behaviorists-no-role-aversive-dog-training-practices>

American Society of Veterinary Behavior

<https://avsab.ftlbcn.net/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/AVSAB-Humane-Dog-Training-Position-Statement-2021.pdf>

British Small Animal Veterinary Association

<https://www.bsava.com/position-statement/aversive-training-methods/>

Canadian Veterinary Medical Association

<https://www.canadianveterinarians.net/policy-and-outreach/position-statements/statements/humane-training-of-dogs/>

European Society of Veterinary Clinical Ethology

https://esvce.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/esvce-position-statement-e-collar_2019.pdf

Here are some other recommended reads, each has a great source list to dig in if needed:

Anderson, E. (2022, July 12). 9 effects of punishment. eileenanddogs.

<https://eileenanddogs.com/blog/2014/09/19/effects-punishment/>

Anderson, Eileen. (2021, November 25). Why prong collars hurt. eileenanddogs.

<https://eileenanddogs.com/blog/2017/08/10/why-prong-collars-hurt/>

Cathy Madson, M. (2022, November 10). Dog training aversives: What are they and why should you avoid them?. Preventive Vet. <https://www.preventivevet.com/dogs/dog-training-aversives#:~:text=In%20dog%20behavior%20terminology%20an,correction%2C%20or%20a%20harsh%20scolding.ing>

Plant, L., & Anderson, E. (n.d.). Fallout from use of aversives. eileenanddogs. <https://eileenanddogs.com/fallout-aversives-punishment-negative-reinforcement/>

Position statements. ESVCE. (n.d.). <https://esvce.org/esvce-position-statements>

Veterinary behaviorists: No role for aversive dog training practices. American Veterinary Medical Association. (n.d.). <https://www.avma.org/javma-news/2021-11-01/veterinary-behaviorists-no-role-aversive-dog-training-practices>

Ziv, G. (2017). The effects of using aversive training methods in dogs—a review. *Journal of Veterinary Behavior*, 19, 50–60. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jveb.2017.02.004>