

All About **DOGS**



The Right Collar

The function of your dog's collar can vary depending on where you live. In the city, it can serve as the last line of defense between you dog and busy traffic. If your dog roams rural land, its collar might be merely aesthetic.

No matter how you use the collar, there is an overwhelming variety of styles, colors and sizes from which to choose. The type of collar you need depends on its purpose.

If you have any questions about what type of collar you need, reach out to your dog's veterinarian for a recommendation for your specific dog.

NYLON ADJUSTABLE COLLARS

For the majority of dogs, a traditional nylon collar will get the job done. These options are durable and come in adjustable sizes for fitting a variety of dogs.

Nylon collars should be snug but not so tight that it restricts your dog's breathing. A good trick is to leave enough room for two of your fingers to fit between your dog's neck and the collar. This will keep your dog comfortable yet secure, unable to sneak out of the collar while on a walk.

You also should consider the weight of the corresponding hardware when selecting your collar. A larger dog will be able to comfortably handle wider, heavier pieces, while a smaller one is probably a better fit for lightweight hardware choices.

HARNESSES & HALTERS

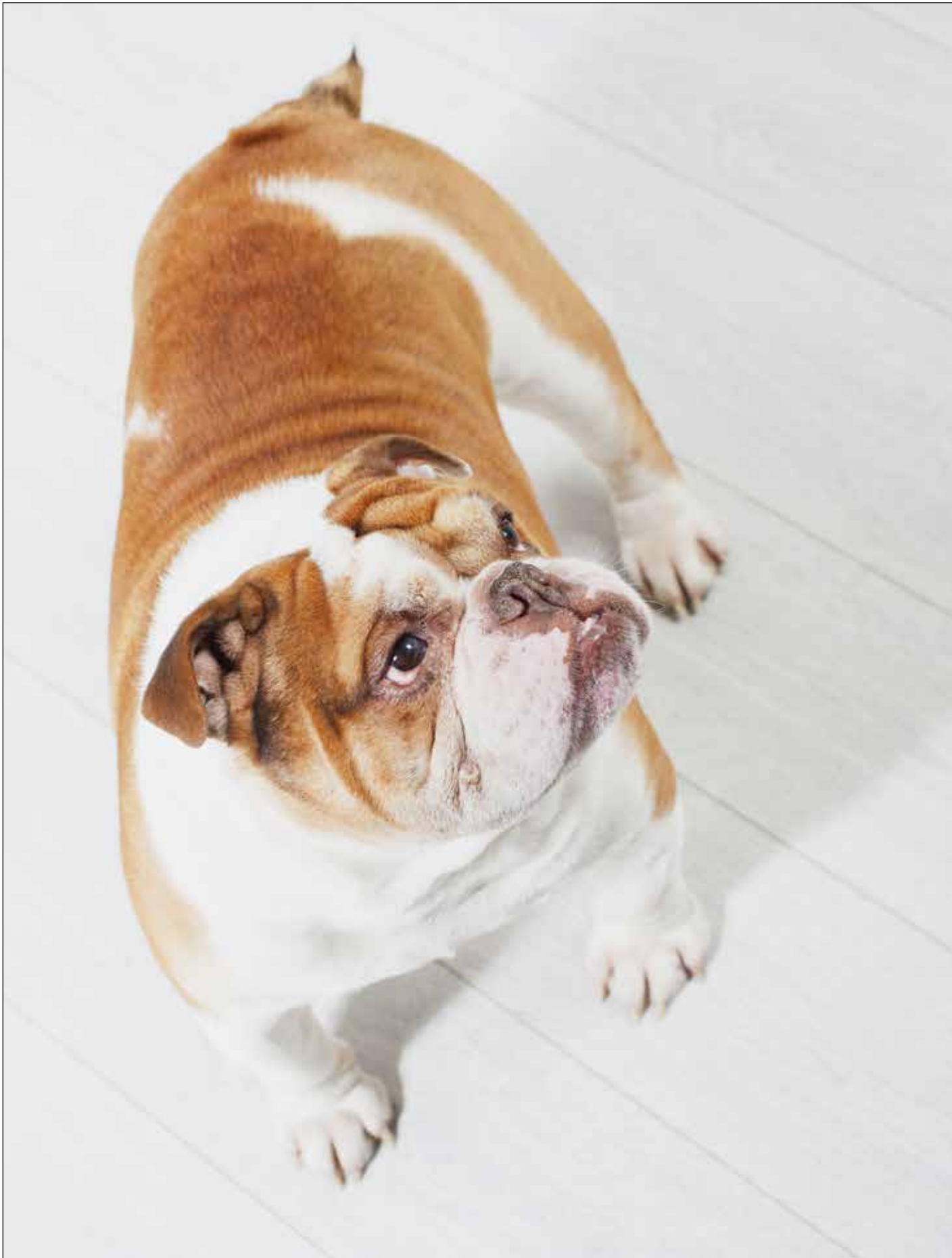
Dog harnesses go around your pet's neck and shoulders behind the front legs. They are better suited for dogs with respiratory issues, as they put pressure on parts of the body other than the throat or trachea.

Halter-type collars are similar contraptions in that they wrap around your dog instead of simply sitting around his neck. These collars look like a horse's halter, attaching around the back of your dog's head and its nose.

These collars are recommended for larger dogs in the training phase. They can teach your dog how to walk without leading or pulling you. They also can make the owner feel more in control since more parts of the dog's body are covered.



The Bulldog



We love their wrinkly faces and stout statures. We also love their calm, friendly demeanor. The bulldog is an American favorite.

In fact, bulldogs are the fourth most popular dog breed as ranked by the American Kennel Club.

The general appearance of the perfect bulldog is medium size with thick-set body and a round face. Its coat is straight with short hair and plenty of soft, loose skin.

Here are other bulldog tidbits from the AKC:

- The bulldog originated in the British Isles and was officially recognized by the AKC in 1886.
- Full sized, the bulldog can weigh up to 50 pounds.
- The bulldog's short snout can make breathing in hot, humid air difficult.

MAINTENANCE

To keep your bulldog's appearance neat and tidy, regularly clean the face and ears with pet wipes. Ears are also to be cared for, as the buildup of wax and debris can cause infections.

Like most breeds, keep your bulldog's nails trimmed regularly with a nail clipper

or grinder. This will help prevent overgrowth or cracking.

EXERCISE

The Bulldog Club of America recommends that bulldogs should start regular exercise at about six months of age. You should start with long walks that gradually build up to 2 miles per day.

Try taking your dog to different places to allow him the freedom to explore and see new things. This will help keep your perspective fresh, as well, keeping you engaged in the routine.

Play is also a great way of giving your bulldog regular exercise. Keep any choking hazards away from your pooch, especially bones. Bulldogs have powerful jaws that can break bones and cause internal bleeding if swallowed in splinter form.

Find solid rubber toys that can stand up to a bulldog bite. Fetch and catch are simple games that can help your dog get a healthy workout while having fun.

Dog Coat Health

Shiny or dull? Which one describes the appearance of your dog's coat? Many factors can determine the coat health of your dog. Some can even be serious conditions that need to be checked out by a veterinarian.



As a dog owner, you can take some simple steps to make sure your dog looks and feels its best.

Read on and spread the word to your fellow dog-lovers to make sure all your pooches have great hair days.

CAUSES OF DRY COAT

Poor nutrition is one of the main causes of dull and lifeless coats. A dull coat is a great indicator that your dog is not receiving a healthy diet of meat, protein and nutrients. Tuna, salmon and other sources of omega-3 fatty acids can all contribute to a healthy coat.

Avoid by-products, preservatives and grains that do little for your dog's overall health. It may cost you a bit more money at the grocery store or local pet shop for higher-grade dog food, but it will be worth it to see your dog maintaining more of its shiny coat.

MEDICAL PROBLEMS

A dull coat can be a sign of serious medical problems that may not be visible to the eye. Parasites such as tapeworms and roundworms can take away important nutrients that your dog needs to sustain its health.

Infections, fleas, ticks and kidney issues also can have the same effect. A veterinarian will be able to identify and resolve the issue.

If you notice your once-shiny dog begin to show signs of a dry, dull coat, it may be time for a check-up.

BRUSH & BATHE REGULARLY

One of the best ways to make sure natural oils reach your dog's skin surface is through regular brushing. Brushing your dog at least once every other day helps you achieve this by stimulating the skin and hair follicles.

In terms of bathing, it is important to not overdo it. Bathing once a month is a good general guideline, but your dog may need more frequent baths due to skin or coat type. A moisturizing shampoo that won't irritate skin is your best bet, along with natural conditioner to soothe your dog's skin.

Adding a Family Dog

Is there a more special relationship than the one between child and dog? Fido just seems to understand that kids require gentle care and patience.

Despite sometimes rough treatment from young children who may not understand proper care, the family dog is forgiving, kind and ready to build a special bond.

We all remember our family dogs from childhood — and not just their names. We can recall specific memories, stories and their personality traits. Every family dog is different and holds a special place in our hearts.

If you're thinking about introducing a dog to the family dynamic, there are some steps you should take to making sure the experience is a positive one.

DOG AND KID SAFETY

Children are victims of half of the estimated 4.7 million annual dog bites in the United States, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Many of these bites can actually be delivered by the family dog.

You must remember that a dog is an animal with natural instincts to protect what it thinks belongs to it. Teach your children to avoid certain behaviors to make sure they are safe from dogs that might consider them a

threat.

They include:

- **Startling or scaring the dog:** Teach your children to never jump on a dog from behind or pull its tail. These actions can startle or scare your dog and trigger aggression.
- **Taking food or toys:** Dogs are protective of their food and toys, and seeing a child come too close may make them feel threatened. It's a good idea to teach children to leave dogs alone when they are eating food, chewing on a bone or gnawing on their favorite toy.

- **Playing too rough:** Even though your family dog may be able to take some rough treatment from your child, it may have a snapping point, if provoked. Repeated hitting or roughhousing can make a dog growl or snap. Teach your child to know when to back off.

The most effective way to prevent potentially dangerous situations is through supervision. Monitor the behavior of your child and dog as they interact, and be sure to jump in if things start to escalate.

Through continuous learning and supervision, your child will come to respect your family dog and form a special relationship that lasts for years to come.



Dogs and Your Health

Dogs make us laugh and keep us busy. New research shows that they also may boost our health.

Many published studies show dogs are positively impacting our mental and physical well-being. From lessening our anxiety to protecting us from certain viruses, dogs play a major role in how we feel.

CHILD HEALTH

A study from the University of California, San Francisco, found that owning a dog may improve the health of children in the household. Researchers reported that in a study of mice, the house dust from homes with dogs worked to protect against a common cold strain, the respiratory syncytial virus (RSV).

In the study, house dust from dog-owning homes did not cause usual RSV symptoms such as mucus production and lung inflammation. This is potentially big news because RSV is the leading cause of bronchiolitis and pneumonia in children under 1 year of age in the United States, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

CARDIOVASCULAR HEALTH

Owning a dog could help keep your heart healthy because of the extra physical activity

required to care for one.

A study published in the American Journal of Cardiology found that male dog owners were less likely to die within one year after a heart attack than those who did not own a dog. Walking the dog is a perfect way to get moderate to vigorous physical activity that is key to rehabilitating from serious conditions.

It also is a great way of staying in shape on a regular basis, helping keep your heart, joints and weight in working order. A study from the American Journal of Preventive Medicine showed that adults with dogs walk on average almost twice as much as adults without dogs.

ANXIETY AND LONELINESS

Dogs offer companionship and interaction, which can be especially important for people dealing with anxiety or overall loneliness. Owning a dog can help people cope with stressful situations, a life crisis or mental health issues.

In fact, a Medical College of Virginia study found that for hospitalized patients with mental health issues, therapy with animals significantly reduced anxiety levels.



Dog Arthritis & Joint Issues

Running, jumping and playing — a dog's life is full of physical activity. That non-stop action can eventually lead to arthritis or joint pain.

Knowing how to spot the warning signs of physical ailments in your dogs is important, as early detection can help make treatment more effective.

Be proactive with your pooch and take notice of how it stands, walks and runs. Work closely with your veterinarian if you have any concerns about your dog's mobility, and be sure to ask questions about how you can help your dog before advanced medical attention is required.

WARNING SIGNS

If your dog is struggling to partake in common physical activities, he may be having joint issues.

Ask yourself these questions when evaluating your dog:

- Is he slow to get off the couch or up stairs?
- Is he not keeping up on family walks or jogs?
- Is he disinterested in running around with other dogs?

Joint issues usually occur over time, so you may not notice your dog experiencing any sudden pain or limping. Staying ahead of these more serious issues will be key in identifying and treating the issue.

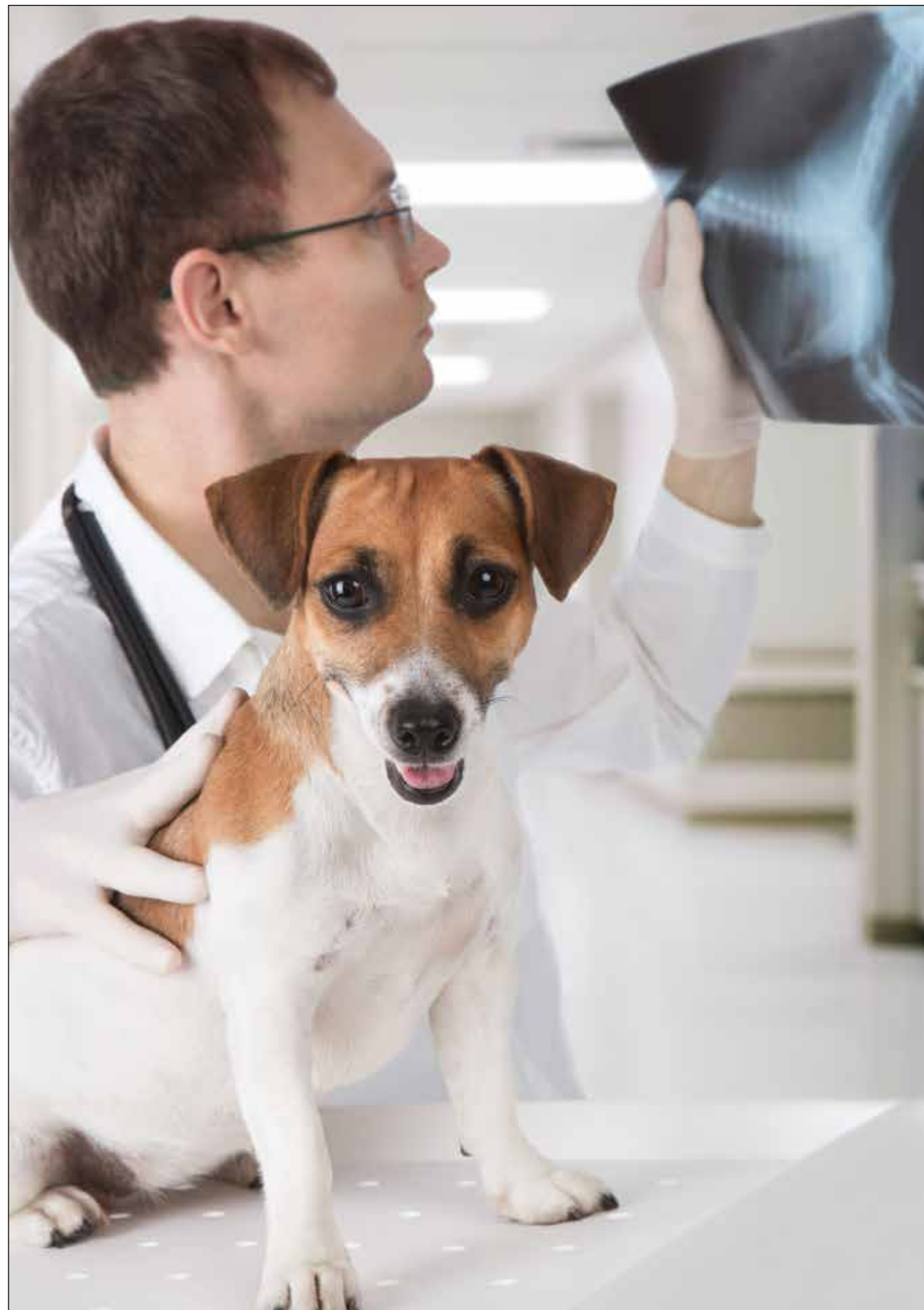
WHAT CAN YOU DO?

Just like most medical issues, arthritis and other joint issues can be treated both surgically and non-surgically. What your dog requires usually depends on what stage the problem is in.

If caught early enough in the process, non-operative success can be achieved. Weight control and strength training can actually help fight joint issues.

Less weight means less stress on the joints, so putting your dog on a healthy diet that includes plenty of beneficial fish oils can make a positive difference. So, too, can introducing more exercise to your dog's daily routine. Working out can build up your dog's strength, adding muscle to help protect the joints.

Check with your veterinarian to make sure you're not overloading your dog with new activity. If you get the green light, add a few more games of fetch or an extra jog into your dog's exercise regimen.



Volunteering at a Shelter

Making a difference in your community is easy — especially if you love dogs. Shelters are always looking for volunteers to help care for displaced or injured pets.

There are many people working every day to improve the lives of shelter dogs, and there are plenty of benefits to joining them in their missions.

BUILD RELATIONSHIPS

Not only will you be making a positive impact on the shelter dogs in your area, but you'll also make new friends — both human and animal — and feel better about yourself.

You can build relationships with like-minded dog-lovers as you work together to improve animals' living conditions. Shelters work closely with local businesses, governments, schools and law enforcement communities to help spread their message. You'll have a whole new set of personal connections in no time.

HOW TO GET STARTED

One way to find animal shelters or protection organizations in your area is to simply look around. Read your local newspaper for ads, look online for a list of organizations or simply start calling around.

You'll likely be able to find plenty of opportunities to volunteer your time. Depending on your skill set, you could make an immediate contribution to enhancing your local shelter's operations.

WHAT YOU OFFER

If you have a big heart and plenty of time, your local shelter could use your



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services. Plenty of daily activities fill up the schedule of shelter workers, including:

- Walking the dogs;
- Playing with the dogs;
- Feeding the dogs;
- Helping with medical attention;

and

- Fundraiser preparation.

Maybe your skillset is in design or marketing. Your expertise could be vital in improving the shelter's logo or approach to bolstering community awareness. If you have a business

background, you could help the shelter streamline its finances or improve its processes.

Whatever you bring to the table, you can make a big difference in the lives of shelter dogs by volunteering your time.