An Underground Fence: Is one right for you?

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As a responsible pet owner, one of your primary responsibilities is ensuring that your dog stays in your yard and does not run at large. By keeping your dog confined, you eliminate many threats to his safety, such as being hit by a car, getting lost, or getting into poisonous substances. Additionally, your neighbors will appreciate the fact that your dog's droppings stay in your yard, and not theirs.

There are multiple ways to contain your dog. The most obvious is to build a traditional dog fence, such as a chain link or a wooden fence. While a traditional fence can probably contain your pet, it may not be the best option for you. Fences are often expensive to build, especially if you have a large yard. They often end up being conspicuous and unsightly, and dogs frequently find a way over or under fences. Some communities even restrict the construction of fences. A great alternative you may wish to explore is a hidden underground dog fence.

Underground fences (also called hidden fences) create an invisible "safe zone" in your yard. Your dog wears a special containment collar, which allows him to roam freely around your yard, but keeps him within the boundaries of the "safe zone" you create for him. Containment collars deliver an audible warning tone to your dog as he nears the perimeter of his safe zone, and then a harmless electrical stimulation if he continues to approach the boundaries of the hidden fence.

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Underground fences offer you many benefits. They are extremely affordable when compared to the costs of constructing a physical fence. Installation is quick and easy. Most buried wire systems can be installed in just one afternoon. With proper and consistent training, your dog quickly learns the limits of his yard, and that he cannot dig under or jump over a underground fence.

There are many different underground fence systems available today. They differ by type (buried wire vs. wireless), yard size (smaller yard up to 5 acres, or larger yards up to 25 acres), and features such as adjustable stimulation levels and remote training capabilities. All hidden fence systems can be used with any number of dogs. Extra collars are always available. Choosing the right underground fence system for you and your dog requires careful consideration of each system's features and capabilities.

BURIED WIRE FENCING SYSTEMS

An underground fence offers you plenty of features and flexibility. Buried wire allows you to completely customize areas of your yard that are "off limits," such as gardens, flower beds, pools, or storage areas. When installing buried wire systems, you choose where the wire goes, and where your pet is to go.

The Basic In-Ground Pet Fencing System is a good basic buried wire system with a transmitter suitable for yards up to 5 acres. If you require a waterproof containment collar for your pet, you may want to consider the SportDog 100-Acre In-Ground Fencing System. This system features a powerful transmitter designed for larger yards up to 100 acres in size.

Buried wire underground fence systems include 500 feet of wire. In some cases, you will need additional wire, splicers, and boundary flags.

Basic installation of a buried wire system consists of these simple steps:

1. Create a continuous loop of wire around the perimeter of your yard.
2. Twist the wire to create a pass-through zone for your dog (i.e. from the transmitter out to the yard's perimeter).
3. Connect the loop to the twisted wire.
4. Bury the wire by cutting a 3" deep trench with a flat spade.
5. Plug in the transmitter (indoors or in an enclosed area).
6. Test the system.
7. Install the white boundary flags as a visual reference for you and your dog.

All buried wire underground fence systems include a manual and installation video that provide detailed instructions for installing the system and training your dog to understand it.

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WIRELESS UNDERGROUND FENCE SYSTEMS

The PetSafe Instant Fence is a completely wireless hidden fence system. It creates a "safe zone" for your dog by using a radio signal produced by the transmitter, rather than buried wire. There are several advantages to this type of hidden fence. The first is ease of installation - there are no wires to bury. All you need to do is plug it in. The second advantage is that the system is not permanent, so you can easily take it with you if you move.

Wireless fence systems do not allow you to customize special areas of your yard the way buried wire systems do. The "safe zone" of a wireless system is circular in nature, and is limited to about a 90-foot radius. This option is best suited for smaller yards or containment areas.

To help you decide which hidden fence system is right for your dog and your lifestyle,

- Review the frequently asked questions (FAQs) for a list of questions that can help you decide which features are important to you.
- Refer to the comparison chart to view the features of each system and identify which system contains the features you need.

A word of caution:

Underground fences can be an effective containment tool when used properly. Careful training and observation of your dog is vital to its success. Do not leave the dog in your yard unsupervised. Remember, the underground fence may help prevent your dog from leaving the yard, but does not prevent other animals or people from entering the yard.

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