Handling: Collars, Leads & Training Aids

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Like any sport, using the proper equipment makes all the difference. Field training is no exception. Central to your success as a handler are collars, leads and other training aids. No matter where you're going or what you're doing, every dog needs an appropriate buckle-style collar with up-to-date identification. Brass nameplates are a great option for field dogs, as they are attached directly onto the collar and do not hang and jingle. Leashes provide control in almost every non-hunting or training situation, and check cords make ideal training aids.

Collars are available in several different styles. Long-lasting Nylon Dura-Ruff® collars represent good all-around value and are available in a wide variety of beautiful colors. Using different colors for each dog helps you visually distinguish between animals. They are also available in a "Quick-Klip" style, which some people find more convenient that a traditional buckle. Beautiful fine leather collars are the longest-lasting, most comfortable collars you can buy. Many handlers feel that leather gets better as it ages, because oils from your dog's coat soften it over time. In general, rolled leather collars are best suited for long-haired dogs, while flat leather collars work best for short haircoats.

Training collars, such as the chain prong collars are valuable aids. They help teach your dog to deliver corrections to himself. But remember, these collars should never be left on the dog when he is unattended, tied out, or not being trained.

Leashes are critical for controlling your dog in any situation. Leather leashes, like the leather collars, are the most durable, easiest on your hands, and become softer and more attractive over time. Cotton web leads are also easy on your hands, and are a smart economical choice for light use, or for easier to control dogs.

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