

# Guidance on Dog Training Aids

October 2018

## **Guidance on Dog Training Aids**

Successful dog training is expected to deliver dogs that consistently demonstrate appropriate social behaviours with both other dogs and people. It should also meet legal requirements and public expectations in terms of the control that an owner has over their dog's behaviour. Ideally training will be conducted with the assistance of a qualified trainer and the most effective method of training dogs is reward-based (positive) training.

Training that includes unpleasant (aversive) stimuli or physical punishment may cause unacceptable pain, suffering and distress. It is important to note that causing unnecessary suffering to a protected animal is an offence under Section 19 of the Animal Health and Welfare (Scotland) Act 2006, if the person knew, or ought to have known, that the action would cause unnecessary suffering. This may include unnecessary suffering caused by inappropriate training methods.

Particular training devices that the Scottish Government does not condone are: electronic shock (static pulse) collars, electronic anti-bark collars, electronic containment systems, or any other method to inflict physical punishment or negative reinforcement. This includes the use of any device that squirts oils such as citronella or other noxious chemicals that interfere with a dog's acute sense of smell, or emits any other aversive stimulus. These techniques compromise dog welfare, as they may lead to aggressive responses and worsen the problems that they aim to address by masking or aggravating underlying behavioural issues.

This guidance is advisory and may provide an aid to both dog owners and those involved in the enforcement of the Animal Health and Welfare (Scotland) Act 2006. Those responsible for enforcement of the 2006 Act may refer to the guidance when issuing advice, warning letters or care notices under the 2006 Act. A Court may, at its discretion, consider the guidance in a prosecution under Section 19 or Section 24 of the Animal Health and Welfare (Scotland) Act 2006."



Scottish Government  
Riaghaltas na h-Alba  
gov.scot

© Crown copyright 2018

**OGL**

This publication is licensed under the terms of the Open Government Licence v3.0 except where otherwise stated. To view this licence, visit [nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3](https://nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3) or write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: [psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk).

Where we have identified any third party copyright information you will need to obtain permission from the copyright holders concerned.

This publication is available at [www.gov.scot](http://www.gov.scot)

Any enquiries regarding this publication should be sent to us at  
The Scottish Government  
St Andrew's House  
Edinburgh  
EH1 3DG

ISBN: 978-1-78781-302-1 (web only)

Published by The Scottish Government, October 2018

Produced for The Scottish Government by APS Group Scotland, 21 Tennant Street, Edinburgh EH6 5NA  
PPDAS483086 (10/18)

W W W . G O V . S C O T