



Using a harness for walks instead of attaching the leash to the collar, reduces pressure on your dog's neck, making the walk more comfortable and enjoyable. This guide covers what to consider when purchasing a harness, common harness styles and how to properly fit them to your dog.

What to Consider

Harnesses come in a variety of styles. To figure out which style works best for your dog, you may need to test different ones to find the right fit.

Harness Pros	Harness Cons
Avoids pressure on the dog's neck	Some dogs can slip out of harness
Different style options to ensure best fit	Some styles restrict shoulder movement

Like any collar left on a dog, a harness can become caught or tangled. To prevent injury, always remove harnesses and collars when you aren't supervising your dog.

Harness Styles

Front Clip Harness		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connects to the leash at the front to better manage leash pulling • The harness is Y or H shaped and does not restrict shoulder movement
Front Clip Harness – Easy-Walker Model or other across the chest styles		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connects to the leash at the front to better manage leash pulling • Restricts dog's shoulder movement
Back Clip Harness		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connects at the top of the dog's back • Does not reduce the effects of pulling, like front clip harnesses • Leash is less likely to become tangled in feet or drag on the ground

Note: While front clip harnesses can seemingly reduce pulling during walks, [loose leash walking](#) is a learned skill and must be taught.

Tip: Regularly check for frayed fabric and monitor plastic buckles, to make sure they aren't cracked.

When Choosing a Harness, Ask Yourself...

- 🐾 Does the harness need to go over your dog's head or can they step into it?
Some dogs are nervous of overhead movement or having their legs and feet handled. If this is the case, choose a harness that accommodates to make it easier to put on and take off.
- 🐾 Where do you want the leash to attach to?
Some harnesses are front or back clip only, while others have both.
- 🐾 How easy is it for my dog to escape from this harness?
Harnesses with multiple adjustable straps and secure fastenings help you keep your dog's harness on and prevents them from slipping out.
- 🐾 Are the straps adjustable in size?
Depending on your dog's body shape and measurements, you may need a harness that can be adjusted at multiple points to get a perfect fit.
- 🐾 What material is the harness made of?
Think about your dog's fur length and skin, as some materials might irritate your dog more than others. Also consider how easily the material can be damaged and cleaned. We recommend reading the cleaning instructions to make sure you don't shrink or damage your harness when cleaning or drying it.

Tips for Fitting

1. Make sure harness straps aren't too loose or too tight by using the two-finger rule.

The two-finger rule: When fitting a harness or collar on your dog – you should be able to slip two fingers under the strap.

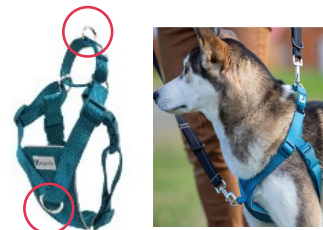
2. Straps that go around your dog's belly shouldn't rub or cause chafing at their armpits or elbows.
3. Look at your dog's walk and posture when they wear the harness. Check for anything digging in or restricting their movement and adjust accordingly.

To help you find a good match for you and your dog, we have put together a basic fitting guide for the two styles of harnesses we regularly use at the Edmonton Humane Society. For more detailed instructions on fitting, please visit the harness manufacturer's websites for more in-depth guidance.

Tip: When fitting a new harness, having someone feed your dog tasty treats can help keep them standing still and make the process easy and fun while you put the harness on and adjust the size.

Fitting an RC Tempo - No Pull Harness

This harness has both front and back leash attachments, giving you flexibility in where the leash attaches and lets you use one or two leashes at once.



1. Undo the buckles and loosen the neck opening of the harness, then slip it over your dog's head.



2. Adjust the neck opening's straps so the front panel is at the base of your dog's neck.
3. Next adjust the girth straps. Pull them behind your dog's front legs and adjust the length so they can be buckled. The straps should go behind your dog's armpits and not dig into them.
4. Adjust all the neck and girth straps so that two fingers can fit between the straps and your dog.

Fitting an Easy-Walker Harness

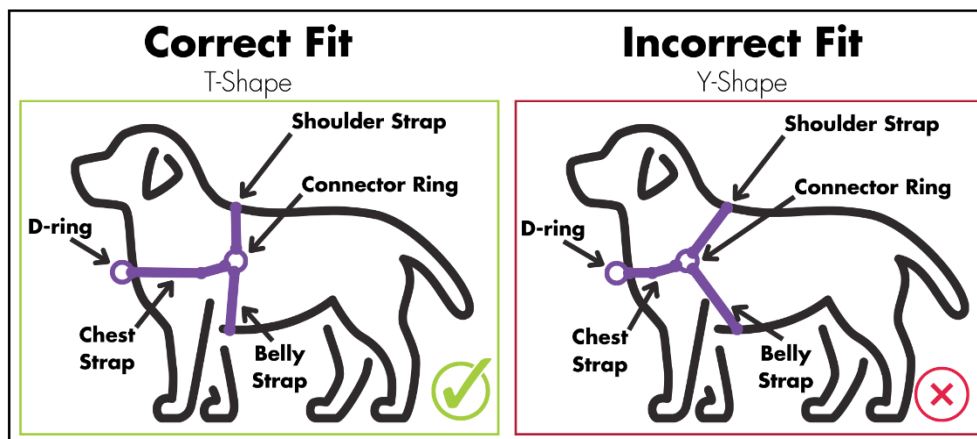
This harness uses a horizontal chest strap, which attaches to the leash to help manage leash pulling.



- This harness is not for long term use because it restricts shoulder movement. If your dog pulls on leash, we recommend teaching them loose leash walking skills and transition to another front clip harness that doesn't restrict movement.
- This harness should only be worn for walking. Do not use this harness for running, jogging or biking with your dog.
- When using this harness, monitor your dog's gait. Once your dog has mastered the skill of loose leash walking, transition them to a harness that does not restrict their movement

Fitting the Easy-Walker Harness

1. Start with having the shoulder strap buckled and belly strap unbuckled. Put the shoulder strap over your dog's head.
2. Adjust the shoulder straps. The O-ring that connects the shoulder and belly strap should be above and behind your dog's legs on both sides. Adjust the straps to create a snug fit, but where two fingers can slide under the straps.
3. Next buckle the belly strap. Adjust these straps so two fingers can fit under and ensure they form a straight line with the shoulder strap.
4. Next adjust the chest strap. To find where the chest strap should sit on your dog – find their breastbone by gently pressing your fingers on the lower part of the front of their chest. The chest strap should rest directly over the breastbone, not hang loose or have a gap, and the D-ring will be at the centre of their chest.
 - The chest strap has two sliders to adjust the size. When adjusting the chest strap, be sure you move each slider the same amount to ensure the D-ring is at the centre of the dog's chest. You may also need to adjust the shoulder strap to help the chest strap sit correctly.
5. Check the fit: The shape of the straps should look like a sideways T when looking at your dog from the side. The shoulder and belly straps will be a vertical line, and the chest strap will go across the chest horizontally without drooping or being pulled up too much.



Using a well fitted harness makes walks safe and enjoyable, so it's important to take the time to find the harness that works best for both you and your dog.

Additional Resources:

For more information on the RC Tempo - No Pull Harness, please visit:

<https://rcpets.com/tempo-no-pull-harness/>

For more detailed information and on the Easy Walk Harness, please visit:

<https://support.petsafe.net/s/article/How-to-use-your-Easy-Walk-Harness>

For more free resources from EHS for pet guardians, visit our website:

<https://www.edmontonhumanesociety.com/what-we-do/education-training/behaviour-resources/>

Recommended reading:

- [Selecting Walking Gear](#)
- [Touch Sensitivity](#)
- [Dog Enrichment](#)

Did You Know?

You can also ask us behaviour questions by emailing:

askthespecialist@edmontonhumanesociety.com

It takes approximately \$7 million to keep the Edmonton Humane Society operational for one year and 40% of these funds come from generous donations made by supporters like you. Please [Donate](#).