

## A Word about Shar-Pei and Collars ©

*Provided by the Public Education Committee of the CSPCA, Inc.*

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(The CSPCA wishes to acknowledge the Centennial Chinese Shar-Pei Rescue organization for the substance of this article . We have taken the liberty to liberally edit its text to more aptly suit our purposes).

The Chinese Shar-Pei is a loyal family dog, but they need to be given time to get acquainted with their new family. Most do not bond instantly. It is advisable to keep a new dog at home for a period of at least three to five days to get acquainted with the dog. During this time we recommend that you not take your dog to public places such as pet stores and parks (*especially dog parks*) until you know that the dog has gone through a bonding process with your family and will come back to you if they get loose. This process is known as “socialization” and is extremely important, not only for your family but with other animals as well!

We have a word of caution about using a buckle collar on a Shar-Pei. We highly recommend that you use a choke chain or choke collar made of cloth when you are taking them outside on a leash. Martingale collars are fine as well. The reason for this is that a buckle collar can come off over the dog’s head, if they decide to lunge for something. You are left holding the leash and collar, but not the dog. Almost any Shar-Pei that is not on a leash will run from you, especially a dog that is new to your home. They will run and run fast. From years of experience, we can tell you that they are almost impossible to catch when they are running loose. If this happens be ready with a plan. Practice calling your dog in your fenced backyard, or in some other similarly protected area, to see what entices him to come to you. Lying down and acting as if you are injured, has been known to work. Also, running in an opposite direction may seem like a game and he may then chase after you. We must warn you **not to chase after the dog**. He will think that is a game you are playing, and run away from you even faster, making it impossible to catch him. Having practiced previously, perhaps with a treat, establishes a pattern of recall which, if reinforced often enough, will probably work in the future should the need arise. Of course obedience training is always useful.

There is some danger from wearing a choke collar on a dog. The loose end of the collar can get caught on something, and if the dog falls or jumps, etc., it can get choked or strangled. To prevent this occurrence or to lessen its danger, it is important that you have only 2” of loose collar when you attach a leash to it. That is the perfect size, when it fits the dog in that manner. Once he has adjusted to the new home, it is recommended that you only have a collar on the dog when you are going out for a walk.

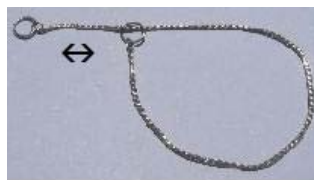
If your dog is unruly on a leash, you will obtain better control with a metal choke chain. If your dog is good walking on a leash (i.e., lead broken) then a cloth choke chain will work fine. You get a little bit better control with a metal choke collar versus a cloth type.

Please do not be swayed to get a buckle collar at the pet store, no matter how convincing the store employee is. We have had years of experience with Shar-Pei, and a store employee is just that, an employee. They do not have the knowledge that we have of this breed.

Please be very cautious when opening doors to the outside until you know your dog, and your dog knows you. They can be out the door in a second, and then you have a dog running loose, and he will be extremely hard to catch. Extra caution should be exercised when the dog first comes into your

home. Since Shar-Pei are very much family oriented, for the first few days, they will be wanting to return to their previous family in any way possible. They will adapt to your family, and you will become their new family, but it takes some time for this to happen. In just a few days, they will be just as loyal to you, but in the meantime, you must use extra caution. Although you might be tempted to show off your new dog at the pet store etc., we ask that you wait until the dog has accepted you as their family in order to avoid any potential trouble.

There is a correct way to put a choke collar on a dog. This is an important process to practice until it becomes familiar. You want the ring, to which you attach the leash, to be on top. So, if you are standing over the dog's back and facing in the same direction as the dog, the part of the collar to which you attach the collar, should be on top and headed toward the dog's right side. This allows the collar to slacken when the dog isn't pulling. If you put the collar on backwards, it will not loosen as easily, and the lead will keep it under constant tension. You do not want that to happen. Dogs do not like tension on their collar. Tension is the signal that they need to straighten up or otherwise heed your command. When there is constant tension on the collar, the dog has no idea what is expected of him – whether or not he is doing good or bad.



**CHOKE CHAIN**

**When the collar is on the dog, you only want 2" of chain between the two rings.**



**Putting on the collar correctly:**

When putting the collar on, the part of the chain connected to the live ring (the ring to which the leash is connected ) should be on top of the dog's neck. When there is no tension, the collar should release and relax.



Push the collar through One ring of the collar



Make a P shape out of the collar



Put the P shape over the dog's head with the live ring on top.

With a Martingale collar, you need to make sure that it is adjusted properly to the size of your dog's neck. It should fit snugly around the neck. The top section, to which you attach the leash, will readily tighten and loosen as you walk with your dog.

After you know your dog, and he knows you, we suggest that you take off the collar and only use it when you are going on a walk. However we urge you to keep the collar on your new dog for the first few days, so that, if by chance the dog escapes, you have something by which to grab him.

Suggestions in this article are made because some dogs occasionally get into danger because of the collar they may be wearing. Ask your breeder for suggestions about collars. The breeder may suggest another kind of collar. If so, insure that you are shown how to properly fit it. Make the decision which you feel is best for your dog. Remember it is our duty as responsible owners to take the best care possible of our pets, and selecting the appropriate collar is perhaps just as important as choosing a proper diet and/or providing adequate housing.