

DOG CRATE SAFETY

It was a Saturday afternoon in 1993. I had a 10-month old puppy. We had been outside walking and playing for about an hour and I put her in her crate in the dog room to rest before I gave her her dinner. I was in the living room watching television. I dozed off and was suddenly awakened by awful thrashing around noises coming from the dog room. When I got there, I saw my wonderful puppy frantically trying to unloosen the metal ring on her training collar (which I had forgotten to take off her) from the wire squares of the dog crate. Needless to say, it was a miracle I was at home; otherwise, I may have found a strangled or seriously injured puppy inside the crate. All was well when I freed her from her peril.

The moral of this short story is REMOVE ALL COLLARS; BUCKLE, SNAP-AROUND, TRAINING-TYPE; while the dog is confined inside any dog crate. While the wire crates present a greater danger for the dog, even the fiberglass or airline-type crates have metal air passages and doors in which the collar could get caught.

Also, be sure crate doors are securely fastened. I like to use a bolt clip to ensure the dog cannot slide the door fastener and open the crate. Some of the less expensive wire crates have tops that are not secured with clips, both in the front and in the back. A bolt clip or cable ties can be used to secure these tops and ensure the dog does not get his head/neck caught as he pushes on these openings.

Be sure the crate pan is secured inside the crate. If the dog pushes the crate pan out of the opening where it slides into the crate, injury could occur if the dog tries to push itself out through that opening. A couple of cable ties usually work well for this.

The Humane Society offers three Puppy & Dog Training Classes each week—Wednesday at 11 AM, Thursday at 7 PM and Saturday at 1 PM. The class is a 6-week session; each once-a-week class is about 1 hour. For information contact Connie at 772-388-3331, Ext. 19.