



**DVGRR**  
DELAWARE VALLEY  
GOLDEN RETRIEVER  
RESCUE, INC.

# Training Tip

(Reprinted from our *Golden Opportunities* magazine)

## Keep Your Dog Safe!

By Heather Hatt, *Manager, Lynne Glennon Sanctuary for Senior Goldens & Puppy Mill Survivors; Director, Project Home Life; Golden Groomer*

Connecting with DVGRR dogs as if they were our own, we feel heartache just as an adopter does when we're notified that a dog has gotten loose or is missing.

While there's plenty of information about finding a lost dog, we have suggestions to prevent your dog from getting loose – especially important for fearful dogs.

### Tools

**Martingale Collar:** A martingale collar when on leash is excellent when fitted correctly. If the dog is startled and tries to back up, he won't be able to slip his collar.

**Harness:** Some harnesses keep your dog secure and some are easy to escape from! We use a front-clip harness, attaching the leash to both the martingale collar and harness. This is extra secure, and no matter how hard your dog pulls, he will not be able to slip out.

**Two Leash Method:** Some people prefer to use two leashes: one attached to the collar, one attached to the harness. Others prefer one leash attached to the collar coupled with a slip lead. If the dog slips out of one, the other is still attached.

Slipping your hand through the leash hoop and wearing it like a bracelet is helpful to keep it secure; however, be cautious with strong pullers!

**Tags and Microchips:** Every dog should be microchipped and have a collar tag with a current phone number, so anyone finding your lost dog knows who to contact. If you adopted your dog from DVGRR, your dog is already microchipped!

### Preventatives

Periodically check your fence (if you have one) to ensure there are no holes in or under the fence. Use clips or a lock on your gate, so it can't be easily opened. Hang signs to remind family members or yard/utility workers to latch the gates. Finally, it's always a good idea to supervise your dog in your yard. You never know when digging might become a hobby or a loud noise may send them scampering over the fence.

### Training

The most important thing you can do is teach your dog a reliable recall. "Come" is most often used, but you may want to train an emergency recall word – and attach a specific word to it –

one that isn't commonly used in training, such as "Pickle!" The emergency recall is trained like the regular recall but is used only in urgent situations such as your dog taking off after a squirrel and ripping the leash from your hand.

Many dogs escape through the front door when visitors arrive, but you can prevent your dog from bolting. First, give instructions to guests before they arrive or write them and tape to your front door. In the instructions, you could include, "Do not hold the door open. Dog will escape!" or more simply, "Knock before entering!" which will give you time to place your dog somewhere safe. Learn to swiftly move in and out of your door or walk backward out the door, ensuring your dog stays. Also, teach your dog "Place" where your dog retreats to a certain place (like a blanket or dog bed) or teach your dog to "Sit" when the doorbell rings. If training is not reliable, consider setting up a safety zone between the dog and the door. You could use an X-pen around the door. Walk through first, close the X-pen and safely walk through the door. You could also baby gate your dog in a room or crate your dog.