

Canine Sports Productions

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Coaching veterinarians, trainers and owners to discover and embrace the unique needs of the canine athlete through teaching, mentoring and print/visual media

Problem Harnesses & Excellent Solutions

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Sensation, Sensible, Easy Walk and other similar harnesses are not appropriate for performance dogs. These harnesses are currently a fad in the dog world, including the agility world, but there are at least two problems with them:

1. There is a band of webbing that runs across the shoulder joint. This severely restricts the ability of the dog to move its front leg forward, and after a while, the dog learns to move with a restricted gait, even when not wearing the harness. Not extending the front limb is the worst kind of gait restriction with respect to performance.
2. The band that lies across the shoulder often has a metal buckle that lies right over the biceps tendon, creating extra pressure there. Veterinarians are now seeing shoulder injuries due to the use of restrictive harnesses.

Some examples of popular agility harnesses that are restrictive and therefore not recommended are:

Julius K9 Harness

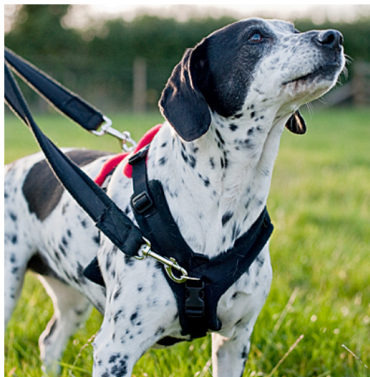
Brilliant K9

ComfortFlex Harness

I strongly recommend use of nonrestrictive harnesses. Some examples are provided below:



Balance Harness
<https://www.blue-9.com>



Perfect Fit Harness
www.cleanrun.com



3-in-1 Harness
www.premier.com

The Balance and Perfect Fit harnesses are my two favorite because they can clip around the neck as well as around the trunk. Because you don't have to slip the neck piece over the dog's head, it is easier to make the harness appropriately tight around the neck so that it doesn't slip back against the dog's shoulder blades.

In addition, there is an excellent book on training dogs not to pull, called *My Dog Pulls, What Can I Do?* By Turid Rugaas. Ultimately that is the ideal solution for a dog that pulls.