

# Desensitizing Dog to Head Halter

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Stage 1 – Do the following exercises in order without skipping steps. The goal is to keep the dog comfortable the ENTIRE TIME. You want this to be like learning a trick. As the dog gets better and more excited to continue on, we progress through the steps. If the dog at any time is uncomfortable, go back a few steps to where the dog is comfortable and work that step a few more times before moving on.

## Hints & Tips:

- Use no more than pea sized treats since you will be using so many
  - Each head halter will be fitted by the behavior team. Head halters are supposed to fit very snug so please do not resize them. If you think a halter is too tight, ask a member of the behavior team and they will double check the size with you.
1. Show the dog the head collar. Treat.
  2. Touch the dog's neck and show the dog the head collar. Treat.
  3. Touch the back of the dog's head with the head collar. Treat.
  4. Touch the dog's nose with the head collar. Treat.
  5. Attach the head collar around your dog's neck, but like a regular collar – just let the nose loop hang down. Treat.
    - a. Take it off after 1 second. Treat.
  6. Repeat the above, taking it off after 2 seconds. Treat.
  7. Feed the dog a treat through the head collar (from now on, the treats you give will all be through the nose loop of the head collar)
  8. Put a bit more of the nose loop over the dog's muzzle. Treat.
  9. Leave the nose loop on for a 1/2 second longer. Repeat this step until the dog will allow the nose loop on the face for several seconds. Treat, Treat, Treat the entire time.
  10. Put the nose loop on the dog's muzzle and then bring the straps behind the head, without clipping them. Immediately release. Treat, Treat, Treat!
  11. Repeat the above, keeping the head collar on the dog 1/2 second longer each time, until they can do it for several seconds. Treat while you wait. Treat, Treat, Treat!
  12. Put the head collar on all the way. Toss a ball or feed treats. Take a step, then take the head collar off. Treat, Treat, Treat!
  13. Do steps 11 and 12 several times without hooking a leash to the head collar
  14. When the dog loves putting the head collar on, do step 12 and treat, then hook the leash to the collar, treat and remove. Do several times.
  15. Finally, walk the dog taking one step at a time and treat after every step. Slowly progress to treating every few steps and walk further. Treat, Treat, Treat. Slowly remove treats as dog becomes comfortable.