Study Unit

Handling and Restraint

By

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About the Author

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In your study unit Behavior, you learned that each animal species has unique behaviors, but also that these characteristic behaviors vary depending upon the individual animal and situation. You can now build upon this knowledge as you learn about one of your primary veterinary assistant responsibilities: handling and restraining animals for examination and technical procedures.

Even the simplest procedure can distress many animals. Some treatments are unpleasant and may cause the animal to resist. These animals, improperly restrained, might jump off an examination table and escape. They might seriously injure themselves and their handlers. Proper animal restraint protects the animals in your care, the people you’ll be working with, and you.

Many techniques and specialized equipment aid animal restraint. All are designed to control the animal’s defense mechanisms humanely. We’ll examine the techniques and equipment appropriate to each species and situation you’re likely to encounter.

When you complete this study unit, you’ll be able to

- Explain the need for humane restraint of animals in a veterinary setting
- Discuss the fundamentals of animal restraint
- Identify the restraint techniques and equipment used for small and large animals
- Analyze the circumstances to determine and employ the appropriate small- and large-animal handling and restraint
# Contents

**GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF ANIMAL RESTRAINT** ........................................ 1  
Proper Animal Restraint  
Animal-Restraint Fundamentals  
Injuries

**DOG AND CAT RESTRAINT** ................................................................. 3  
Handling and Restraining Dogs  
Equipment for Handling and Restraining Dogs  
Approaching a Dog  
Dog-Restraint Techniques  
Handling and Restraining Cats  
Equipment for Handling and Restraining Cats  
Approaching a Cat  
Cat-Restraint Techniques  
Other Cat-Restraint Methods

**OTHER SMALL-ANIMAL HANDLING AND RESTRAINT** ......................... 57  
Bird Handling and Restraint  
Rodent Handling and Restraint  
Rabbit Handling and Restraint  
Reptile Handling and Restraint

**FARM-ANIMAL HANDLING AND RESTRAINT** ........................................ 74  
Horse Handling and Restraint  
Cattle Handling and Restraint  
Sheep Handling and Restraint  
Goat Handling and Restraint  
Pig Handling and Restraint  
Fowl Handling and Restraint

**TRACKING YOUR PROGRESS ANSWERS** ............................................. 127

**GLOSSARY** ..................................................................................... 129

**EXAMINATION** .............................................................................. 131
GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF ANIMAL RESTRAINT

As a veterinary assistant, you’ll be responsible for restraining animals so that they can undergo examination and treatment. You may think this amounts to nothing more than holding the animal as it’s being examined and treated. In a lot of cases, you would be right: the best restraint is often simply holding an animal. So is this really such an important job?

You may also think, “Restraint? That sounds so inhumane. I’m supposed to be helping animals. Instead I have to restrain them?” So let’s take a moment to examine the importance of proper restraint to both the veterinary team and the animal.

Proper Animal Restraint

Proper restraint is crucial to animal care. Veterinarians and veterinary technicians can’t perform their roles and restrain animals at the same time; nor can they perform proper veterinary care unless the animal is kept as calm and still as possible. By handling and restraining animals properly, you make everyone else’s job possible. You also ensure that the animals don’t escape or injure themselves or their handlers (including you). Finally, you provide the physical reassurance that’s one of the animal’s main behavioral cues in an unfamiliar, potentially frightening environment. Not only is restraint humane, but the veterinary team depends upon it.

Much of animal restraint is choosing the appropriate method based upon the different behaviors and anatomies of different animals; you’ll bring this knowledge to the team. Restraint may be as simple as holding the animal, or it may require special equipment, which differs by species. Veterinary assistants keep this equipment clean and in proper working condition. It should be clear by now that restraint is an important job. Who needs it? Every animal and caregiver in a veterinary environment.

Animal-Restraint Fundamentals

Restraint techniques can be divided into three major categories: (1) manual, (2) mechanical, and (3) chemical. Manual restraint is simply using your hands to hold the animal in the desired position. Since this method distresses animals the least, you’ll want to use it whenever possible. Manual restraint
works well for most species during physical examination or minor technical procedures. Always use the minimal force required to keep the animal in position. You should never hold an animal forcefully; if you need more force, use mechanical restraint.

**Mechanical restraint** employs such equipment as leashes, collars, restraint bags, and poles. These devices tend to upset animals, so use them only when absolutely necessary. Most mechanical-restraint aids are designed for one species only. Using a head snare, for instance, on a rabbit can seriously injure the animal and its handler. Once you’ve chosen the correct device for a particular species, you must also use it correctly; incorrect use will also injure the animal. Even when you’ve applied and used mechanical restraint correctly, make sure you check the animal for injury after removing the restraint. Also clean the device thoroughly after each use. This not only keeps the device from spreading disease, it eliminates scent; some animals will resist a restraint device that smells of another animal. We’ll cover the various mechanical-restraint aids and their proper use in the next sections of this study unit.

**Chemical restraints** are sedatives, tranquilizers, and anesthetics. Veterinary professionals consider chemical restraint the least desirable method. While extremely aggressive or frightened animals may require chemical restraint, these agents can interfere with diagnostic testing, and can also complicate diagnosis by masking particular symptoms.

### Injuries

Many injuries happen when an animal bites or scratches a staff member unable to recognize the signs of fear or aggression. Sometimes the minor pain or discomfort of treatment may cause animals to bite or scratch their handlers without warning signs. Even docile and friendly patients may bite during some technical procedures or body manipulation. Practice proper restraint on all patients to reduce the likelihood that you’ll suffer such bites or scratches.

Injuries also result when veterinary staffers lift animals onto tables. The animal may bite or scratch; improper lifting technique may also cause back injuries in the staff members. To minimize the chances of injuring your back, never lift an animal weighing 50 pounds or more without help, and always lift by grasping the animal with your knees bent.

Now that you know the fundamentals of humane veterinary restraint, it’s time to look at the various techniques that apply to different species. But first take a moment to check your knowledge of the basics.
You’ve heard the expression “it’s raining cats and dogs.” You’ll think of it often as a veterinary assistant. Dogs and cats are the two species you’re most likely to encounter. We’ve grouped them here not because of their popularity, however, but rather because they require similar restraint techniques. Let’s look at those similarities, and some important differences, starting with man’s best friend.

Handling and Restraining Dogs

Of all the species you’ll encounter, the dog will likely display the greatest range of reactions to restraint and handling. Some dogs are calm and cooperative; others respond aggressively. These reactions can differ from the dog’s customary demeanor. Often a dog that’s docile and friendly at home will react differently in a veterinary hospital. In your previous study unit, you learned some signs that a fearful or aggressive dog may display. Keep these in mind when handling and restraining any dog.
Equipment for Handling and Restraining Dogs

Collars and Leashes

Any dog you’re handling should wear at least a collar. This allows easier control should the dog suddenly begin to resist. Several types of collars serve this purpose. Remember, whichever you choose, that any collar must be the correct size. Most dogs can easily slip out of a collar that’s too large, and risk injury from a collar that’s too small. (A growing puppy should receive new collars to accommodate its changing size.)

Types of Collars and Leashes

Training collars consist of stainless-steel links with a ring at each end (Figure 1A). The links can be a variety of thicknesses. In general, the thicker links are used for very large, muscular dogs, while thinner links are best for smaller breeds. Training collars are sometimes incorrectly referred to as “choke” collars. A properly-used training collar never chokes the animal. You must, however, apply it correctly to avoid injuring the dog. Choose a collar approximately two inches longer than the circumference of the dog’s neck. The collar should slip easily but snugly over the dog’s head (Figure 1B). The loose end, which takes the leash, should come over the back of the dog at the top of, not underneath, its neck (Figure 1C). Once the collar and leash are in the appropriate position, you can lead the animal, but never pull the collar tight. Apply short, firm tugs that momentarily tighten the collar. Never leave a training collar on an unattended dog. These collars catch easily on cage bars and similar surfaces, and thus can seriously injure or kill a dog.

Nylon or leather flat collars are most appropriate for daily home use. But don’t rely on a flat collar for restraint; dogs can easily slip out of them, and some flat collars are designed to release quickly so that they don’t catch on something and choke the dog.

Any dog you’re leading should wear a leash (Figure 2). Leashes can also aid restraint, and help to prevent animal-to-animal contact in the waiting room. There are many kinds of dog leashes on the market. Veterinary practices often use a slip leash, one made of flat or braided nylon with a metal ring at one end, on all patients. A slip leash applied prior to examination may help to control a dog that resists handling or escapes from its handler. A dog wearing a slip leash is also easier to remove from a cage. Apply the slip leash as you would a training collar. Many veterinary practices imprint these inexpensive leashes with their practice name and give them as gifts to new clients.

Leashes are also made of rope, nylon, chain, or leather, with clips to attach directly to a collar. Leather leashes tend to be quite expensive and are rarely used in veterinary practice.
FIGURE 1—Correct Method of Applying a Training Collar
Leashes come in many thicknesses and lengths. Always use thicker leashes on large dogs. A thinner leash may break if a large dog pulls against it. Shorter leashes are appropriate for moving animals from place to place in the veterinary practice; longer leashes allow the animal to exercise.

Muzzles

A muzzle is any device applied around an animal’s nose and mouth to prevent the animal from biting. Any dog that may become aggressive during examination or treatment should wear a muzzle, applied before the animal shows signs of fear or aggression. Muzzle application can also temporarily distract a dog, allowing you to complete a procedure. Several types of muzzles are available; you can also improvise a muzzle out of available materials. Whatever muzzle you choose, take care that you don’t put it on any dog with signs of breathing difficulties or chest injury. Also make sure that you don’t leave the muzzle on too long. Some muzzles prevent a dog from panting, which it must do to avoid overheating. Muzzles left in place too long can also injure the dog. Finally, a dog that vomits while wearing a muzzle is likely to aspirate the vomit.

Plastic, leather, or wire-basket muzzles are available in a variety of sizes. This last type of muzzle is a small cup placed over the end of the dog’s nose and clipped behind its ears. Because these muzzles allow the dog to pant, you can leave them on longer; some dogs, however, are able to bite through this type of muzzle.

Nylon muzzles, more common in veterinary practice, slip over the dog’s nose and clip behind the head (Figure 3). Some nylon muzzles aren’t adjustable, but most veterinary practices keep enough sizes of them on hand to make the correct size always available. Make sure that the muzzle you choose fits snugly but isn’t overly tight. Wash the muzzle promptly after you remove it.
When you don’t have a commercial muzzle, you can improvise your own from available materials. If the dog has a nylon or leather leash attached to its collar, create a temporary muzzle by wrapping a portion of the leash around the animal’s mouth (Figure 4). Take care not to pull the leash tightly. The leash should be just tight enough to keep the animal from opening its mouth.

FIGURE 3—Dog Wearing Nylon Muzzle

FIGURE 4—Muzzle Made from a Leash
You can also make a muzzle out of gauze roll bandage. To make a gauze muzzle

**Step 1:** Take a long piece of bandage and tie a large loop at its midsection (Figure 5A).

**Step 2:** Approach the dog from the side or back and slip the loop over the end of the dog’s nose (Figure 5B).
Step 3: Quickly tighten the loop and bring the ends of the gauze under the dog’s neck (Figure 5C).

Step 4: Cross the ends over, then pull the ends behind the dog’s neck (Figure 5D).
Step 5: Tie the ends of the gauze in a half bow or slip knot so that it can be removed quickly (Figure 5E).

You must modify this technique for dogs with short or pug noses. For pug-nosed dogs, slip the loop over the dog’s nose with the tie under the jaw. Pull the ends of the gauze behind the ears, then tie them securely. One of the ends of the gauze should then be drawn down across the dog’s forehead and slid under the loop at the top of the nose. This will keep the loop from slipping off the end of the dog’s nose.

**Head Snares**

Vicious dogs should be caught and restrained with a head snare, sometimes called a “rabies pole” or “restraint pole” (Figure 6A). The head snare is a long metal or heavy-duty plastic tubular handle with a thick retractable wire inside it. This wire is long enough for a large loop of it to be pulled out, slipped over the dog’s head, and quickly tightened (Figure 6B). The snare handle allows you to keep the animal at a safe distance (Figure 6C). Once the snare has served its purpose, a quick release mechanism loosens the loop for easy removal from the dog’s neck. Dogs that are especially strong may require two handlers, each with a head snare attached to the animal, to lead the dog. Make sure that the snare will release easily when necessary.
FIGURE 6A—Head Snare

FIGURE 6B—A large loop should be slipped over the dog’s head and tightened.
Approaching a Dog

Whenever possible, allow a dog to approach you first. Often a fearful dog simply needs reassurance that you aren’t a threat. Crouch or kneel down on the floor and coax the dog slowly (Figure 7). Verbally reassure the dog with a calm, cheerful tone of voice. Allow the dog to approach voluntarily. If you must approach a dog, always do so carefully and slowly. Make sure that the dog can both see and hear you coming. Observe the dog closely for any signs of fear or aggression. Slowly hold out your hand, making sure that your hand is no higher than the dog’s nose. The dog may perceive gestures above its nose as threatening, and respond aggressively. Above-the-nose gestures include bending over the dog or attempting to pat its head when it’s still unsure of you. Once the dog has approached you and is accepting your handling without signs of fear, you may slip a leash over its neck or lift it onto the examination table.
The proper method of picking up and carrying a dog depends upon the dog’s size and health. Two prerequisites before picking up a dog: apply a leash, and crouch beside the animal. The leash helps prevent the dog from escaping. The crouch spares your back. Lifting even a small dog from a standing position can injure your back.

To lift a small, uninjured dog, which weighs less than 50 lbs.,

**Step 1:** Place one arm under the dog’s head.

**Step 2:** Place your other arm under the dog’s abdomen with your hand pointed forward and your fingers between the dog’s front legs.

**Step 3:** Lift the dog straight up and place it on the examining table.

You can even carry small dogs in this position. To lift a small dog that is injured or may be injured

**Step 1:** Place one arm under the dog’s head (Figure 8A).

**Step 2:** Place your other arm around the dog’s hindquarters (Figure 8B).

**Step 3:** Lift the dog straight up and place it on the examining table (Figure 8C).
FIGURE 8A—To lift a small dog (less than 50 lbs.), place one arm under the dog’s head.

FIGURE 8B—Place your other arm around the dog’s hindquarters.
Two people are needed to lift dogs that weigh over 50 lbs. Also, because many dogs are unaccustomed to being lifted, they often struggle. Dogs that struggle should also be lifted by two people.

To lift a large, uninjured dog, which weighs over 50 lbs. or is struggling,

*Step 1:* Two people should crouch down on the same side of the dog (Figure 9A).
**Step 2:** One person should restrain the dog’s head by placing one arm around the dog’s neck and the other arm around the dog’s chest (Figure 9B).

**Step 3:** The second person should place one arm around the dog’s abdomen and the other arm around the dog’s hindquarters (Figure 9C).
Step 4: Simultaneously, both people should lift the dog using their legs, not their backs (Figure 9D).

Taking a Dog from Its Owner

Some dogs are very protective of their owners, and may respond more aggressively than they would in the owner’s absence. Follow the same approaching guidelines when you approach a dog that’s with its owner, but also make sure that you talk in a reassuring tone to both dog and owner. Be especially careful not to make sudden movements. Look at the dog, but don’t stare. Some dogs interpret staring as a threat or challenge.

Take the dog’s leash from its owner and ask the owner to walk away from the dog. If you must lead the dog away from the owner, coax the dog with a cheerful and calm tone.

Removing a Dog from a Cage

Before you remove a dog from a cage, find out if the dog can stand and walk. If it can, and it has no neck, throat, or aggressiveness problems, partially open the cage door and put a slip leash around the dog’s neck (Figure 10). The leash prevents the dog from escaping once the cage door is fully opened; it also permits some control should the dog become aggressive. To slide a slip leash over the dog’s neck without fully opening the cage door, wait at the front of the cage and let the dog approach you. If the dog is small and docile, grasp it by placing one arm under its body and the other arm under its neck (Figure 11). Place the slip leash while holding the dog in this position. If the dog is small but aggressive, place a blanket or towel around it before lifting.
Uncaging larger, more aggressive dogs usually requires special handling. Many veterinary practices keep these dogs leashed, with the leash slipped through the bars of the cage door. This allows the handler to move the dog toward the door by gently pulling the leash. This technique keeps the door between the handler and a dog that may try to bite.
If the dog can’t walk or stand, a leash is unnecessary; gently lift the dog from the cage. For animals with neck or throat problems, use a chest harness instead of a leash. You may also need to remove the leash and apply a harness if the leash interferes with a medical device, like an intravenous catheter, to be placed in the dog’s jugular vein.

**Dog-Restraint Techniques**

The appropriate restraint method for a dog depends upon what its veterinarian is doing, and upon its overall temperament. Veterinarians perform most dog examinations and treatments on a table; your job is to keep the dog in position.

**Standing Restraint**

Veterinarians often complete routine physical examinations with the dog standing. To maintain a dog in a standing position,

*Step 1:* Place one hand in front of the dog’s neck (Figure 12A).

*FIGURE 12A—Place one hand in front of the dog’s neck.*
Step 2: Place the other hand under the dog’s abdomen just in front of its rear legs (Figure 12B).

Step 3: Gently pull the dog towards you until it’s snug against your body (Figure 12C).
Hold this position until the examination is complete. As usual, practice the minimum necessary restraint; being held too tightly can make some dogs fearful.

A variation of this standing-restraint technique is to place your second arm around the dog’s hindquarters rather than under its abdomen. While this technique gives you more control over the dog, it may interfere with some procedures, like rectal examination.

**Sitting Restraint**

Some dogs require restraint firmer than you can obtain with the standing position. For these dogs, you can employ sitting restraint. The sitting position is also appropriate for most routine injections and some minor technical procedures. To perform sitting restraint on a dog,

*Step 1:* Place your arm around the dog’s hindquarters (Figure 13A).
Step 2: Gently tuck the dog into a sitting position (Figure 13B).

Step 3: Place your other arm around the dog’s neck so that its head rests in the crook of your elbow (Figure 13C).

Step 4: Pull the dog snugly against your body (Figure 13D).

Take care not to place your head close to the dog’s mouth; the animal might start snapping during the procedure.
The veterinarian will frequently request that the dog be maintained using reclining restraint (also called lateral recumbency) (Figure 14A). To perform reclining restraint on a dog,

**Reclining Restraint**

The veterinarian will frequently request that the dog be maintained using reclining restraint (also called lateral recumbency) (Figure 14A). To perform reclining restraint on a dog,
Step 1: After lifting the dog onto the table, place the dog on its side (Figure 14B).

Step 2: Stand behind the dog so that the dog’s spine is against the front of your body (Figure 14C).
Step 3: Grasp the dog’s forelegs with one hand, securing your grip by placing one finger between the legs (Figure 14D).

Step 4: Press down slightly with your forearm on the base of the dog’s neck (Figure 14E). Use your other hand to grasp the dog’s rear legs (Figure 14F).
Restraint of Puppies

You can restrain puppies much as you would adult dogs, but with a much gentler touch. Whenever possible, remove the bitch from the room before any examination or treatment of her puppies. If for some reason you can’t remove the bitch, keep her puppies as calm as possible. A puppy that makes vocal signs of pain or distress may cause the bitch to attack.

Restraint of Injured or Ill Dogs

Handle a severely ill or injured dog as if it’s likely to bite. Many times a severely injured or ill animal responds out of extreme pain, and biting is a dog’s major defense against pain. Take extra precautions when handling any injured animal. To prevent a human injury, place a muzzle on an injured animal. You may, if necessary, place a towel or blanket over a particularly violent animal to calm it. Just make sure you move the dog to a proper examination area promptly—this draping technique often produces only a brief period of calm.

Dog Restraint for Venipuncture

Venipuncture, puncturing a vein to collect blood or administer medication, requires careful and firm restraint. A dog that struggles during venipuncture could damage the vein. Restraint techniques for venipuncture vary depending upon the vein. A dog’s most common venipuncture sites are the cephalic vein, along the front of the dog’s foreleg (Figure 15); the saphenous vein, on the outer surface of the dog’s hindleg (Figure 16); and the jugular vein, on the front of the dog’s neck (Figure 17). Venipuncture restraint requires careful positioning so that the vein is accessible and the dog can’t move. You may also be expected to occlude the vein (block the vein’s circulation by pressing on it with your finger). Occluding or “holding off” the vein pools blood in the vein, allowing it to be easily seen and felt. Occluding the vein also provides enough blood for proper venipuncture.
A dog undergoing cephalic venipuncture is usually placed on its sternum (breastbone) on the examination table, its forelegs extending slightly over the table’s edge (Figure 18A). This type of restraint is called sternal recumbency. To restrain a dog for cephalic venipuncture,

Step 1: Stand at the side of the table, facing in the same direction as the dog.
Step 2: Grasp the dog under its neck so that its head rests in the crook of one elbow (Figure 18B).

![Grasp the dog under its neck so that its head rests in the crook of one elbow.](image)

Step 3: Place your other arm across the dog’s back and pull the dog snugly against your body (Figure 18C).

![Place your other arm across the dog’s back and pull the dog snugly against your body.](image)

Step 4: Extend the same arm to grasp the dog’s opposite forelimb at elbow level with your right hand.

Step 5: Hold the forelimb at the elbow and use your thumb to occlude the vein by pressing in and slightly to the side (Figure 18D).
The dog’s elbow should be at the table’s edge. This allows the veterinarian or veterinary technician to grasp the dog’s foot and complete the venipuncture (Figure 18E). Should the dog struggle, reassure it with a firm voice and hold it a bit more tightly. You may also try distracting the dog by lightly scratching the side of its head with your left hand (Figure 18F).
The dog may experience momentary pain when the vein is punctured. Don’t release the animal from your grasp, or remove your hand from its leg, until the venipuncturist tells you to (Figure 18G). A veterinarian or veterinary technician withdrawing blood or administering medication will tell you when it’s time to release the occlusion of the vein.

Once the needle is removed from the vein, maintain your grasp on the leg and place your thumb over the injection site to prevent further bleeding. Applying pressure at this site will allow the blood to clot.
Step 6: Maintain your grasp on the leg and simply lift your thumb straight off it, placing it over the injection site while applying pressure. Continue to hold the dog firmly.

Step 7: Once the procedure is complete, slowly loosen your grip, maintaining moderate restraint to keep the dog from jumping off the table.

Restraint for saphenic venipuncture often requires that the dog be restrained in the lateral recumbent position (as do some x-ray examinations and technical procedures). To restrain a dog for saphenous venipuncture,

Step 1: Position the dog in lateral recumbency (Figure 19A).

Step 2: Grasp the upper rear leg just below the knee so that the skin over the vein is pulled tight to occlude the vein and prevent it from “rolling” while venipuncture is being made (Figures 19B and 19C).

Step 3: Release the vein when directed by the veterinarian or veterinary technician. By using this procedure, medication can be administered or a catheter can be passed into the vein.

Step 4: Apply pressure to the venipuncture site to allow a clot to form and bleeding to completely stop (Figure 19D).

Step 5: Once the procedure is complete, maintain moderate restraint to keep the dog from jumping off the table.

It’s often helpful, should the dog struggle in this position, to raise the legs closest to the table so that they cross the upper legs.
FIGURE 19B—Grasp the upper rear leg just below the knee so that the skin over the vein is pulled tight to occlude the vein.

FIGURE 19C—Grasping the leg in this way also prevents it from “rolling” while venipuncture is being made.
Jugular venipuncture, like cephalic venipuncture, positions the dog on its sternum at the table’s edge with its forelegs extending off the table (Figure 20A). To restrain a dog for jugular venipuncture,

**Step 1:** Stand alongside the dog and place your right hand under its muzzle (Figure 20B).

**Step 2:** Point the dog’s head towards the ceiling. You may have to hold the dog’s mouth closed with your hand (Figure 20C).

**FIGURE 19D**—Apply pressure to the venipuncture site to allow a clot to form and bleeding to completely stop.

**FIGURE 20A**—Jugular venipuncture, like cephalic venipuncture, positions the dog on its sternum at the table’s edge with its forelegs extending off the table.
Step 3: With your left hand, grasp the dog’s front legs just above the feet and hold them together, securing your grip by placing a finger between them (Figure 20D).

Step 4: Pull the feet slightly to align them with the dog’s nose. The venipuncturist will normally occlude the vein without further assistance (Figure 20E).

Step 5: Once the procedure is finished, apply pressure to the venipuncture site.
Bring on the dogs—you’ve now covered the basics of dog restraint. But what about cats? If you’ve spent any time around them at all, you know some of the challenges cats present. It isn’t easy, but yes, it’s possible to restrain our feline friends.

Before moving on to cat restraint, take a few moments to complete Tracking Your Progress 2.
Tracking Your Progress 2

1. A dog shouldn’t wear a muzzle if it
   a. could become aggressive during examination or treatment.
   b. shows signs of breathing problems or chest injury.
   c. has a long nose.
   d. struggles during a procedure.

2. True or False? The best way to accustom a puppy to wearing a collar is to put a training collar on the puppy and leave it there.

3. Occluding a vein for venipuncture
   a. allows sufficient blood to pool in the venipuncture site.
   b. allows the blood to flow freely through the vein.
   c. calms the animal so it doesn’t struggle and damage the vein.
   d. All of the above

4. True or False? Whenever possible, always be sure to approach a dog first before it has a chance to approach you.

5. Briefly explain the steps for fashioning a muzzle out of gauze roll bandage.
   ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________

6. Name two reasons for leading dogs on leashes in a veterinary office.
   ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________

7. Which of the following is the minimum weight of a dog, in lbs., requiring two people to lift it?
   a. 25        c. 75        
   b. 50        d. 100

8. True or False? A training collar is most appropriate for everyday home use.

9. Which of the following types of dog restraint would be used to give a routine injection?
   a. Lateral recumbency        c. Sternal recumbency
   b. Standing restraint        d. Sitting restraint

10. True or False? You should remove the bitch from the examination room before the treatment or examination of her puppies.

Check your answers with those on page 127.
Handling and Restraining Cats

When it comes to handling, cats are very different from dogs. Most cats are unaccustomed to regular handling. Often the trip to the veterinary practice is the cat’s only time outside. As a result, nearly all cats arrive at the veterinary hospital fearful. Cats tend to respond to fear either by freezing, attempting to escape, or attacking (if they can’t escape). Before you handle a cat, make sure all doors and windows are closed. Cats can be extremely fast when they attempt escape. An aggressive cat may be a particular challenge to a veterinary assistant, since cats ably defend themselves not only with their teeth, but with all four feet. You must take special care to avoid cat bites; they transmit disease and infection much more readily than dog bites, and can make you seriously ill. Fortunately, attack is usually a cat’s last resort, and special equipment can help protect you from it.

Equipment for Handling and Restraining Cats

Collars and Leashes

Cat collars come in various styles and materials, but none of them restrain cats very well. Many cats are simply unaccustomed to wearing collars and will resist them. Most cats can slip out of a collar even if it’s properly fitted. While a harness may work for some cats, it must be fitted exactly, and some cats will resist a harness as well as a collar. Most cats are also unaccustomed to walking on a leash and may not like it. But a slip leash will thwart a cat’s escape attempts if you apply it before picking up or carrying the cat.

Muzzles

Cat muzzles minimize a cat’s ability to bite, but don’t eliminate the need to restrain its head (Figure 21). A muzzle often calms a cat, distracting it from the veterinary procedure and covering its eyes. Various cat muzzles are commercially available, or you can fashion one from gauze as you would for a pug-nosed dog.

Head Snares

A head snare is the instrument of choice for recapturing an escaped cat. Because a cat typically hides after escaping, your first job will probably be to find it. Once you find the cat, slide the loop of the head snares over its head and gently pull it from hiding. A particularly violent cat may require one assistant to hold the ensnared cat while a second assistant sprays tranquilizer into the cat’s mouth.
Restraint Gloves

Some veterinary professionals prefer to handle aggressive cats with restraint gloves, heavy gauntlet-type gloves, typically made of leather too thick for cats to bite through (Figure 22). Because gloves reduce your sensitivity to the animal you’re holding, take extra care not to injure the cat by holding it too tightly. In many cases you’ll use the gloves to subdue the cat while preparing other restraint.
Cat Bags

Cats tend to be calmed by a somewhat enclosed environment. A cat bag provides this environment while reducing a cat’s ability to attack (Figure 23A). Place the cat on the open bag and pull the upper closure around its body, leaving its head exposed (Figure 23B). The typical cat bag is made of nylon. It has a snap, zipper, or Velcro closure along the top, with additional such closures for access along its length (Figure 23C).

FIGURE 23A—A cat bag provides a calming environment while reducing a cat’s ability to attack.

FIGURE 23B—Place the cat on the open bag and pull the upper closure around its body, leaving its head exposed.
The veterinarian or veterinary technician can perform injections or other minor procedures through the access areas. Most cat bags have access areas near the cat's feet, allowing the feet to be gently pulled outside the bag for venipuncture. If you don't have a cat bag, you can wrap the cat with a towel, or roll it into a thick blanket (Figure 24).
Approaching a Cat

Cats are accomplished escape artists. Because a frightened cat’s first instinct may be escape, remember to close all doors, windows, and cabinets before approaching it. Approach the cat slowly, without sudden movements, speaking softly and reassuringly. A frightened cat may also freeze, but beware: a motionless cat may still attack when you approach. Cats are territorial and may vigorously defend their area.

Picking Up and Carrying a Cat

Cats react best when handled with the least possible restraint. You can pick up most cats by grasping the scruff, the loose skin on the back of a cat’s neck (Figure 25A). Place your other hand under the cat’s abdomen, with your fingers between the cat’s front legs (Figure 25B). You can safely carry a cat in this position. A cat that struggles or becomes aggressive may require chemical restraint.
Taking a Cat from Its Owner

The cat’s owner should bring the cat to the veterinary clinic in a carrier or cat box (Figure 26). If this doesn’t happen, ask the owner to place a slip leash over the cat’s neck before you approach it. When the slip leash is in place, approach the cat slowly. Stretch your hand out for the cat to sniff, carefully observing the cat’s response. If the cat displays no aggression, gently pick it up and move it to the examination area.

Removing a Cat from a Cage

To remove a cat from a cage, follow the same procedure you would use for a dog. Remember to let the cat come to the front of the cage before you apply the slip leash.
Catching a Cat

An escaped cat can be a formidable opponent. Cats can squeeze into small spaces and may attack when approached. You’ll usually need a net or head snare to retrieve a cat from its hiding place.

Cat-Restraint Techniques

Basic Cat Restraint

While cats are a challenge to restrain, several techniques work. Remember to use the least restraint possible. Also try to minimize the time you restrain a cat. Prolonged restraint may cause a normally docile cat to become aggressive.

Cat Restraint for Physical Examination

For routine examinations, allow the cat to stand or sit on the table (Figure 27A). Keep it there by placing one hand directly in front of it. Lightly stroke and pet the cat with your other hand. Most cats will stay in this position.

FIGURE 27A—Allow the cat to stand or sit on the table.
For the cat that doesn’t stay in position,

*Step 1:* Place one hand on the cat’s shoulders (Figure 27B).

*Step 2:* Place the other hand on its hips (Figure 27C).

*Step 3:* Gently press it down against the table.
These two restraint techniques work for examinations and minor technical procedures like nail trimming and subcutaneous injections.

**Cat Restraint for Intramuscular Injection**

The two most common restraint methods for intramuscular injections require the cat to be on its side (lateral recumbency). The first method is as follows:

*Step 1:* Grasp the cat by the scruff with your right hand (Figure 28A).

*Step 2:* Grasp its back feet with your left hand, placing one or two fingers between the feet (Figure 28B).

*Step 3:* Lay the cat on its side with its back resting against your right forearm (Figure 28C).

*Step 4:* Gently extend the cat’s body by stretching its legs back and its head forward (Figure 28D).
FIGURE 28B—Grasp its back feet with your left hand, placing one or two fingers between the feet.

FIGURE 28C—Lay the cat on its side with its back resting against your right forearm.
Here’s the second intramuscular injection restraint method:

Step 1: Place your right forearm across the cat’s neck.

Step 2: Gently press the cat down against the table, grasping the front paws between your fingers.

Step 3: Grasp its back feet with your left hand, placing one or two fingers between the feet.

Step 4: Gently extend the cat’s body by stretching its legs back and its head forward.

**Cat Restraint for Venipuncture**

Cat venipuncture restraint techniques, like those for dogs, depend upon the vein being punctured. Remember to use careful and firm restraint so that the cat doesn’t struggle and damage a vein. The most common cat venipuncture sites are the cephalic vein, along the front of the cat’s foreleg (Figure 29), and the jugular vein, on the front of the cat’s neck (Figure 30). You must position the cat carefully to keep the vein accessible and the animal still. You may also have to occlude the vein. To restrain a cat for cephalic venipuncture,

Step 1: Grasp the cat’s head firmly under the jaw with your right hand.

Step 2: Extend your left arm around the cat’s body and grasp the cat’s left leg around the elbow.
Step 3: Hold the forelimb at the elbow and use your thumb to occlude the vein by pressing in and slightly to the side.

If the cat struggles when you start restraint, you may need a bit more force. To restrain a struggling cat for cephalic venipuncture,

Step 1: Grasp the cat by the scruff, rather than under the jaw, with one hand (Figure 31A).
**Step 2:** Pull the cat tightly against your body with your free arm while pressing the cat down firmly against the table.

**Step 3:** Grasp the cat’s elbow and gently extend its leg (Figures 31B and 31C).
Step 4: Use your thumb to occlude the vein (Figure 31D).

FIGURE 31C—Gently extend the cat's leg.

FIGURE 31D—Use your thumb to occlude the vein.
Because cats resist being handled more than dogs do, jugular venipuncture is slightly more traumatic for cats. It requires restraint firmer than you would use for cephalic venipuncture. You’ll want to wrap a towel around the cat’s rear legs to prevent it from scratching you (Figure 32A). Then follow the same technique you would use to restrain dogs for jugular venipuncture:

**Step 1:** Place the cat on its sternum at the edge of the table, its forelegs extending off the table’s edge (Figure 32B).
Step 2: Stand alongside the cat, place one hand under its nose, and point its head towards the ceiling. If necessary, hold the cat’s mouth firmly closed (Figure 32C).

Step 3: With your other hand, grasp the cat’s legs just above the feet, securing your grip by placing a finger between the feet (Figure 32D).
Step 4: Pull the feet slightly to align them with the cat’s nose. The veterinarian or veterinary technician performing the venipuncture will normally occlude the vein without further assistance (Figure 32E).

The medial femoral vein may be the vein of choice when dealing with a fractious cat. Restraint methods require the cat to be on its side. Follow these steps:

Step 1: Grasp the cat by the scruff with one hand.

Step 2: Grasp its back feet with your other hand, placing one or two fingers between the feet.

Step 3: Lay the cat on its side with its back resting against your forearm.

Step 4: Gently extend the cat’s body by stretching its legs back and its head forward (Figure 33). This helps reduce the chance that the cat will be able to bite or scratch.

Step 5: The upper hind leg is gently extended back to expose the medial femoral vein of the leg lying on the table. The veterinarian or veterinary technician will hold and extend this leg while venipuncture is performed.

Step 6: An additional person may be required to occlude the vein. Direct pressure can be applied at the proximal end of the leg pressing the vein against the femur. This person can also gently tap on the cat’s nose to distract it while venipuncture is being performed.

Step 7: This vein must be held off once venipuncture has been completed to prevent a hematoma or excessive bleeding from occurring.
Other Cat-Restraint Methods

We’ve covered the major cat-restraint techniques, but we have a few other methods you’ll want in your bag of tricks. All fulfill your primary goal of using the minimal force required for effective restraint.

Distraction Techniques

Distracting a cat can help you achieve the desired minimal restraint during minor technical procedures. Divert the cat’s attention during physical examination by gently stroking it or scratching behind its ears. Tap the cat lightly on the nose to distract it during jugular venipuncture (Figure 34). Gently shake its scruff to distract a cat restrained on its side for intramuscular injection.
The Fetal Hold

A mother cat moves her kittens by grasping each by the scruff with her mouth. The kitten’s instinct is to go limp and slightly curl its tail and body. The fetal hold, grasping a cat by the scruff of the neck, is named for this position. The fetal hold works well for some procedures, and for carrying small or young cats short distances. Even older cats retain this instinct, although it’s less pronounced. When carrying a cat with the fetal hold, rest the cat’s back along your forearm. Don’t carry large or obese cats with the fetal hold, as their weight can damage muscles and neck skin. Also avoid using the fetal hold in front of the cat’s owner. Most owners don’t understand the reflex, and may object to seeing their cat hanging by the scruff of its neck.

Restraint of Injured or Ill Cats

It’s important to reiterate that you should handle any severely ill or injured animal as if it’s likely to bite. These animals often respond out of extreme pain, and biting is a cat’s major defense against pain. Placing a towel or blanket over a particularly violent cat may calm it momentarily. Since this calm doesn’t last, move the covered cat quickly to a proper examination area.

Congratulations! You’ve learned some of the most important techniques you’ll employ as a veterinary assistant. Now get ready to learn about some of the most fragile creatures you’ll ever handle. But first take a moment to review your knowledge of cat restraint.
OTHER SMALL-ANIMAL HANDLING AND RESTRAINT

Our next grouping consists of animals you can usually fit in one or both hands. These animals are the ones most likely to be injured by handling. But that doesn’t mean they can’t injure you. What you’re about to learn will ensure that both you and your small charges survive their visit without injury or distress.

Bird Handling and Restraint

Of all the animals you’ll handle and restrain, birds present the biggest challenge. Typically unaccustomed to traveling, birds often reach the veterinary clinic significantly stressed. Even a healthy bird can sicken or die from the stress of handling. But fortunately you can take precautions to help the birds you handle come through with flying colors.
Before Handling a Bird

Make sure you have a net or large towel handy to recapture the bird should it escape its cage. Check that all doors and windows are securely closed, and all exhaust fans are off. Now observe the bird carefully. Is it on its perch? On the cage bottom? A bird on the cage bottom may be extremely stressed. Ask its owner if the bird is trained to hop on a finger or arm. Such birds may be unnecessarily stressed by a capture attempt.

Whether the bird you’re handling is large or small, aggressive or gentle, trained or untrained, your goal is always to hold the bird so that it can’t fly, bite, scratch, or become injured. Despite bird handling’s particular challenges, you must still use the least possible restraint. A mishandled bird may suffer broken wings and even death. Keeping all this in mind, let’s open the cage.

Capturing a Small Bird in a Cage

You can safely handle and restrain small birds, such as parakeets and finches, without any special equipment (Figure 35).

Step 1: Carefully open the cage door. Block the open door as you reach in to the cage. You can block the door with your hand and a towel, or have someone stand behind you and hold a towel over the door (Figure 36A).

Step 2: Remove most of the perches and toys from the cage. This will keep the bird from injuring itself should it become frightened (small birds frighten easily) and fly around the cage.
Step 3: Grasp the bird in your hand by placing your palm against its wings and securing its head between your thumb and index finger. Cradle the bird in your palm and place your last finger gently across the bird’s legs (Figure 36B).

Take care not to cover or press down on the bird’s breastbone area. The breastbone must move for the bird to breathe properly. You can continue to hold the bird in your palm for restraint and for most technical procedures.
Capturing a Large Bird in a Cage

Many large birds can inflict serious bites with their powerful beaks (Figure 37). To protect yourself,

FIGURE 37—Large birds, such as this parrot, can inflict serious injury with their beaks.

Step 1: Locate a large towel.

Step 2: Open the cage door, using the towel to block the opening.

Step 3: Remove excess perches and toys from the cage (Figure 38A).

Step 4: Place the towel lengthwise across the palm of your hand (Figure 38B).

Step 5: Reach into the cage and grasp the bird from behind by placing your hand behind the bird’s head. Position the bird’s lower jaw between your thumb and index finger.

Step 6: Drape the towel around the bird as you lift it slightly toward the door of the cage.

Step 7: As you bring the bird through the cage door, place your other hand on the bird’s feet and hold them firmly in place.
Remember to avoid putting pressure on the bird’s breastbone. You can use this towel restraint for examination and most technical procedures. When working with large, particularly aggressive birds, wear lightweight leather gloves to protect yourself from bites. If the bird is too aggressive, tape its beak shut.

Note: Birds that are trained to hop onto a finger can be seriously stressed or injured if you follow the above procedure. If the bird has been trained to hop on a finger, follow these steps:
Step 1: Reach into the cage and allow the bird to hop onto your finger (Figure 39A).

Step 2: Once you have the bird out of the cage, gently drape a towel around its back.

Step 3: Place your other hand on the bird’s feet and hold them firmly in place (Figure 39B). Be careful not to put pressure on the bird’s breastbone.
Bird Restraint for Technical Procedures

The restraint techniques you’ve just learned are suitable for nearly all technical procedures performed on birds. Some technical procedures may require you to stretch the bird’s neck slightly, or provide access to a wing for injection into the wing vein.

Rodent Handling and Restraint

Rodent handling and restraint varies by species. A small pet rodent whose owner has handled it regularly will rarely bite or scratch, but some rodent species and breeds will vigorously attempt to escape. While restraining the pet securely in your hand will suffice for most treatments, stressful procedures like venipuncture may require mechanical or chemical restraint.

Two mechanical devices used to restrain rodents are the *acrylic rodent restrainer* and the *forceps*. An acrylic rodent restrainer is a clear plastic tube with access ports drilled into it (Figure 40). Allow the rat or mouse to climb up into the device, then place a small plastic gate behind the animal to keep it from backing up.

Typically used for rat and mouse venipuncture, the restrainer allows injection through the openings along its side and bottom.
You can use rubber-tipped forceps to transport small rodents from one cage to another. Grasp either the base of the animal’s tail near its body, or the loose skin on the back of its neck. Don’t dangle the animal for more than a few seconds lest you injure its back.

Now that we’ve covered some general principles and equipment of rodent handling, let’s look at the different species you’ll be handling.

**Mice**

Mice are rarely aggressive, biting only when frightened or in pain. Their small size and high activity level, however, can make mouse handling and restraint difficult. Mice usually reside in small plastic shoebox cages with wire-mesh lids. To remove a mouse from its cage and then restrain it,

*Step 1:* Grasp the base of the mouse’s tail as close to the body as possible (Figure 41A).
Step 2: Lift the mouse straight up and place it down on a wire-mesh cage top or other grid-type surface, keeping hold of the tail. The mouse will grasp this surface with its feet.

Step 3: Gently stretch the mouse’s body by pulling back on its tail with one hand while you grasp the loose skin on the back of its neck with the other (Figures 41B and 41C).

Step 4: Lift the animal up and cup it in the palm of your hand (Figure 41D).

Step 5: Loosely drape your other fingers around the animal’s body, holding the feet and tail between your last two fingers. Don’t hold the mouse so tightly that you impede its breathing.

Rats

Most rats, too, are docile animals that rarely bite unless frightened. Unlike mice, however, rats aren’t overly active. Unlike some other small rodents, they aren’t determined escape artists (Figure 42). Remove a rat from its cage as you would a mouse. Grasp the tail very close to the animal’s body to prevent the skin covering the tail from tearing. Never hold a rat by its tail for long.

You can hold the rat in your hand for technical procedures. To perform hand restraint on a rat,

Step 1: Grasp the rat by placing your thumb and index finger around its lower jaw (Figure 43A). This secures the head and keeps the rat from being able to turn and bite.
Step 2: Pick the rat up.

Step 3: With your other hand, support the rat’s hindquarters while holding its feet and tail still (Figure 43B).

Hamsters

Hamsters, generally the most aggressive small rodents, can be difficult to restrain. Proper hamster restraint reduces the chance of a bite by using the loose skin around its jaws and neck to your advantage. It also helps to know that hamsters tend to sleep during the day, and may hibernate for short periods of time. Since hamsters often bite if awakened suddenly, never try to pick up a sleeping or hibernating hamster. To pick up and restrain a hamster,

Step 1: Make sure the hamster is awake. A knock on the side of its cage usually awakens the animal.

Step 2: Reach into the cage and grasp the loose skin on the back of the hamster’s neck. Grasp as much of the loose skin as possible, or the hamster may still be able to turn and bite.

Step 3: Lift the animal out of the cage and cup it in your palm as you would a mouse.
Guinea Pigs

Guinea pigs have quiet temperaments and almost never bite or scratch. Reaching into a guinea pig cage may cause the animals to run quickly around the cage, making them difficult to catch. To pick up and restrain a guinea pig,

Step 1: Reach into the cage and place your hand in front of the animal to block it from running around.

Step 2: Slide your other hand gently under the guinea pig’s chest.

Step 3: Pick the animal straight up.

Step 4: Immediately place your other hand under the animal’s hindquarters for support.

Avoid placing your hand down on a guinea pig’s back or shoulders too firmly; this may injure its lungs.

Chinchillas

Chinchillas are active and curious rodents. They’re also nocturnal. Many chinchilla owners, however, have acclimated their chinchillas to being handled during the day. Though chinchillas are fairly easy to handle and rarely bite, you must take care to avoid “fur slip.” This expression describes a chinchilla’s tendency to shed patches of its fur if grasped too roughly.

To restrain a chinchilla,

Step 1: Reach into the cage and grasp the animal by the base of the tail (close to the body) with one hand.

Step 2: Pick up the chinchilla by its tail.

Step 3: Immediately support the animal’s body, either with your forearm or your other hand.

You may also hold the chinchilla around the chest as you would a guinea pig.

Gerbils

You can handle a gerbil much as you would a mouse, but remember that gerbils tend to be quite active. They’re also good jumpers, and may try vigorously to escape, so make sure your gerbil is gently but firmly restrained. Remember to grasp the animal only at the base of its tail, close to the body. Picking a gerbil up by the tip of its tail will damage the tail skin’s surface. It’s appropriate, for some technical procedures, simply to scoop up and cup the gerbil in your hand.
Ferrets

Although most ferrets aren't aggressive, a distressed ferret can inflict severe bites. Worse, a biting ferret usually doesn't let go. You may have to put the ferret under running water to force it to release its grip. It’s better, of course, to distress the ferret as little as possible by handling it properly.

You can restrain and handle a ferret much as you would a cat. To restrain and handle a ferret,

Step 1: Place one hand under the animal’s chest, behind its forelegs.

Step 2: Pick the ferret up.

Step 3: Use your other hand to support the ferret’s hindquarters.

Some technical procedures may require you to grasp the ferret’s scruff with one hand and its rear legs with the other. Towels also help to restrain a ferret. If the animal is particularly aggressive, you may hold it with its head between your thumb and forefinger as you would a rat.

Rabbit Handling and Restraint

Rabbits present a tough combination for their handlers: difficult to handle, easy to injure (Figure 44). They’re difficult to handle because their strong back legs can inflict severe scratches. They’re easy to injure because of their delicate skeletal systems. A struggling rabbit can kick violently enough to break its own spine, so correct rabbit handling is a matter of life and death. Also, while cartoon rabbits dangle quite happily by their ears, you should never try this in real life. Lifting a rabbit up by its ears will hurt the rabbit, damage its ear cartilage, and probably cause it to struggle and injure its back.

FIGURE 44—A rabbit is difficult to handle and easy to injure.
So how do you handle a rabbit? First let’s get it out of its cage.

Step 1: Reach into the cage and lightly grasp a small amount of the loose skin behind the rabbit’s ears.

Step 2: Facing the animal away from you, slide your other hand under its rear legs.

Step 3: Lift the animal towards you and press it gently against your body (Figure 45A).

Never hold the scruff too tightly; this may damage the tissue and hurt the rabbit. If you must carry the rabbit, tuck its nose into the crook of your arm, supporting its body along your forearm (Figure 45B). To return the rabbit to its cage, face the rabbit toward you and place its rear legs down in the cage first. This way the rabbit can’t scratch your arm by using it to “push off” as it reenters the cage.
Rabbit-restraint methods depend on the procedure. For most technical procedures, simply place the rabbit on the examination table (Figure 46A), and, depending on the size of the rabbit, place your arms or hands on either side of it (Figure 46B). Because rabbits feel more secure if they’re not sliding around on a smooth surface, place a towel or other rough surface under the rabbit. For intramuscular or subcutaneous injections, gently press the rabbit into the table. Venipuncture may require chemical restraint or an acrylic restraining device. Several rabbit-restraining devices are available. They tend to be expensive and designed for rabbits of a certain size. If the correct size of restraining device is unavailable, you can wrap the rabbit securely in a towel or light blanket (Figure 46C).
Reptiles have become increasingly popular pets (Figure 47). Many veterinary practices routinely see reptile patients. While reptile handling and restraint procedures depend on the species, a general rule is to handle reptiles gently but firmly. A reptile roughly handled may become aggressive.
**Snakes**

Restrain any nonpoisonous snake by grasping the animal behind its head and supporting the body on your arm. Large snakes and constrictors should always be handled by two people. A clear plastic or Plexiglas tube can restrain poisonous or nonpoisonous snakes. The tube should be half the length of the snake, and open at one end. Its diameter should be large enough for the snake to enter, small enough that the snake can’t turn around. Let the snake enter the tube, then grasp the open end of the tube along with the snake protruding from it. This hold prevents the snake from backing up. Snake hooks, used to press the animal’s head against a solid surface like the floor or a tabletop, can also hold a snake in place.

To weigh a snake, place the animal in a large pillowcase. Tie the pillowcase shut and place it directly on the scale.

**Turtles**

Restrain a turtle by grasping its shell. To keep a turtle from moving away, place it on a ledge or pedestal taller than its legs and smaller than its shell. Most turtles will retract their legs or heads inside their shells when frightened. Use tongs, if necessary, to pull its head or legs back out. Never place your face or hands directly in front of a retracted turtle. The turtle may come back out of its shell suddenly and bite.

**Lizards**

Most lizards can be restrained by grasping them around the shoulders (Figure 48A) and using your other hand to restrain and support the hindquarters (Figure 48B). A towel can be placed over the lizard’s eyes to calm the animal and allow for easier restraint.

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**FIGURE 48A**—Most lizards can be restrained by grasping them around the shoulders.
Guess what? You’ve covered the basics of small-animal handling and restraint. You’re now ready to move on to the big leagues. But before you do, review your small-animal knowledge.

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**Tracking Your Progress 4**

1. When holding a bird, your goal is to make sure that the bird can’t ______, ______, ______, or ______ ______.

2. *True or False?* You should pick up a mouse by the very tip of its tail, where it’s least likely to hurt.

3. *True or False?* Since hamsters are nocturnal and sound sleepers, the best time to pick up a hamster is during the day when it’s fast asleep.

4. *True or False?* The best way to get a retracted turtle out of its shell is to rub the head opening of the shell lightly with your right index finger.

Questions 5–9: Match the animal to the relevant handling concern:

_____ 5. Chinchilla  
_____ 6. Guinea pig  
_____ 7. Gerbil  
_____ 8. Rabbit  
_____ 9. Ferret  

a. It’s a good jumper and escape artist.  
b. Avoid “fur slip”.  
c. Once it bites, it holds on.  
d. Pressing down on its back or shoulders can injure its lungs.  
e. Its kicking can break its own spine.

*Check your answers with those on page 127.*
FARM-ANIMAL HANDLING AND RESTRAINT

Farm animals run the gamut from some of the easiest to some of the most difficult animals to handle. But whether you’re picking up a chicken or trying not to get trampled by a horse, the most important part of your body you’ll employ in handling and restraining farm animals is your mind. Understanding how to keep farm animals calm, and how they’re likely to behave should they become excited, are the keys to safe and effective farm-animal handling and restraint.

Horse Handling and Restraint

If you’re like many people, you may have wondered, upon first encountering a horse at close range, how anyone ever captured, handled, and restrained such a large, powerful animal. These marvels are indeed powerful and can be extremely dangerous. Fortunately for us, horse handling and restraint has long been a science.

Equipment for Handling and Restraining Horses

*Halter and lead.* Horse *halters* are usually made of leather or heavy nylon. The halter encircles the head with a noseband and a throat latch. Most have rings along the side of the nosepiece that take a *lead* (Figure 49). The lead is a guide leash often made of rope or leather which attaches to the halter and allows you to hold an animal. A horse accustomed to regular handling may need only to be held by a lead during a veterinary examination. Chain leads provide more forceful restraint. You can often distract a horse during technical procedures by passing a chain lead through the rings of its nosepiece or along its gum line.

FIGURE 49—Nylon Halter with a Chain Shank over the Muzzle
**Lip twitch.** The lip twitch, usually composed of a long wooden handle with a loop of rope or stainless-steel chain at one end (Figure 50), is one of the oldest and simplest horse restraints. The lip twitch is designed to stimulate a horse’s nerves. The small amount of pain administered by a lip twitch distracts a horse undergoing veterinary procedures. Used correctly, the twitch is a humane, brief restraint for minor technical procedures. Incorrect lip twitch use can injure the horse. We’ll cover correct lip twitch use in the section “Horse-Restraint Techniques.”

**Hobble.** A hobble is a leather strap fastened around a horse’s legs to restrict their movement. Hobbles can keep a horse from kicking, but most veterinarians prefer chemical restraint for a particularly aggressive horse, or one requiring significantly painful treatment. There are several types of hobbles, some commercially available. Hobbles can also be improvised out of a length of heavy rope (Figure 51). One common type of hobble consists of a thick, wide leather band with a buckle at one end. This device can be used to keep the horse’s foreleg in a flexed position.

**Stock.** A narrow enclosure that partially immobilizes a horse for treatment is called a stock. Stocks may be made of metal bars or wooden planks. There’s usually a front and a rear gate. Lead the horse into the stock with both gates open. Don’t enter the stock with the horse. Pass the lead rope along the top of the stock as the horse enters, then close both gates.

**Blindfold.** A blindfold may calm a particularly frightened or otherwise unmanageable horse. A blindfolded horse is easy to lead. Simply place a cloth, such as a towel, over the animal’s head. Blindfolding will also help you lead a nervous horse into a horse trailer.
Approaching a Horse

While you should never approach an animal carelessly, you must be especially careful when approaching a horse. Here are several facts about horses (and ponies) that you should always keep in mind when you’re working with them.

First, because of their unique anatomy, horses can’t see what’s directly in front of or directly behind them (Figure 52). Keep this in mind and make every effort to be seen and heard by the horse as you approach.

FIGURE 52—The eyes of a horse are set on the sides of its head, so that it can see a different view out of each eye and can see back almost to its tail. This illustration, looking down at the horse from above, shows a horse’s field of vision.
Second, they have extremely well-developed nervous systems and can be easily startled or frightened.

Third, horses can be very temperamental. They like to have their own way—and will—if you let them.

Obviously, the worst way to approach a horse is from the rear, where you’re in prime position for a dangerous kick. It’s best to approach a horse from its left side. Horses tend to be apprehensive and suspicious, so pay attention to the animal’s body language. A horse with its ears back and its head lowered may be signaling aggression. Here are some basic guidelines to follow:

- Always approach a horse at the shoulder or near the neck so that it can see you. Never approach from behind if you can help it.

- Speak softly to the horse. Your voice will put it at ease. Also, the horse may be asleep, and talking to it will waken it.

- Don’t make sudden noises or movements that might frighten the horse.

- Once near the horse, pat it on the neck or shoulder and continue to speak softly to it.

If the horse is in a stall, you may have to approach from the rear. Speak to the horse as you enter, and place your hand on its rump. Gently guide the horse to one side to give you room. Walk to the horse’s head and pat it on its neck or shoulder.

Capturing a Horse

If the horse is loose in a field or pen, approach slowly, making sure the horse can hear and see you coming. The sight of someone approaching with a lead rope makes some horses obstinate, so you may want to hide the rope as you approach (Figure 53A). If the horse allows your approach and shows no signs of fear or aggression, simply place the lead rope over the horse’s neck, put on a halter, and lead it away.

If the horse is skittish on your approach, speak softly and move slowly. When you get close to the horse, patting firmly on its neck area or scratching behind its ears may calm it sufficiently. Slowly slip a rope over its neck (Figure 53B). If the horse remains calm, place the lead rope over the horse’s neck (Figure 53C). If the horse becomes frightened, a quick tug on the rope may help you regain control. If the tug fails to calm the horse, release the rope. Better to let go and try again than to risk injuring yourself or the horse. Horses that resist capture may need to be lured into a smaller pen, a feat often accomplished by a bucket of oats.
FIGURE 53A—The sight of someone approaching with a lead rope makes some horses obstinate, so you may want to hide the rope as you approach. (Photograph by Cappy Jackson)

FIGURE 53B—When you get close to the horse, patting firmly on its neck area or scratching behind its ears may calm it sufficiently. Slowly slip a rope over its neck. (Photograph by Cappy Jackson)

FIGURE 53C—If the horse remains calm, place the lead rope over the horse’s neck. (Photograph by Cappy Jackson)
Horse-Restraint Techniques

Horses are quite strong and can be temperamental. You, other handlers, and the horse can suffer serious injury from an inappropriately restrained horse. Try to use the least possible restraint; this tends to keep the animal calm. If you must pass behind the horse, allow about twelve feet of clearance; horses tend to kick about six to eight feet straight back. If you have less than twelve feet of clearance, pass behind the horse as close to it as possible. A horse kick causes less injury at close range.

Because a horse attempting escape will tend to move away from its handlers, stand on the same side as the veterinarian or veterinary technician. This keeps everyone out of the horse’s way, as some horses will simply knock you over as they try to escape. Always stand to the animal’s side. The front of a horse can be as dangerous as its back; the horse may rear up and come down on top of you.

Most procedures require only that the horse remain firmly in position. This usually means head restraint. Most other horse-restraint techniques amount to distracting the horse from the procedure. While a horse not frightened or in pain may remain in position if you simply stand and hold its lead, most horses need some additional distraction during examination and treatment.

Halter and lead rope. To apply the halter and lead rope, follow these steps:

Step 1: Hold the neck strap and buckle end of the halter in your left hand (Figure 54A).

Step 2: Stand on the horse’s left side and reach over its neck with your right hand (Figure 54B).

Step 3: Grasp the neck strap from your left hand and pass the entire halter back over the horse’s neck (Figure 54C).

Step 4: Gently slide the nose band of the halter up over the nose (Figure 54D), then buckle the halter to the neck strap (Figure 54E). The rings of a correctly applied halter don’t press tightly against the horse’s face; its straps are away from the eyes (Figure 54F).

Step 5: Once you’ve properly applied the halter, attach the lead rope to the center ring just beneath the horse’s nose.
FIGURE 54A—Hold the neck strap and buckle end of the halter in your left hand. (Photograph by Cappy Jackson)

FIGURE 54B—Stand on the horse’s left side and reach over its neck with your right hand. (Photograph by Cappy Jackson)

FIGURE 54C—Grasp the neck strap from your left hand and pass the entire halter back over the horse’s neck.

FIGURE 54D—Gently slide the nose band of the halter up over the nose. (Photograph by Cappy Jackson)
Leading a horse. Never attempt to lead a horse by holding onto its halter. To correctly lead a horse, follow these steps:

**Step 1:** Stand on the horse’s left, holding the lead rope in your right hand about 18 inches from the horse’s head (Figure 55).
Step 2: Hold the remainder of the lead rope in loose loops in your left hand. Make sure that the lead rope passes in front of your body and isn’t wrapped around your hand; otherwise it could seriously injure you if the horse bolts.

Step 3: Walk on the horse’s left, keeping your body in the zone between the animal’s head and left shoulder.

**Twitches.** Two assistants and one twitch can distract a horse long enough to complete a procedure. One assistant holds the lead rope, the second applies the twitch to the horse’s upper lip. To play the second assistant’s role,

Step 1: Hold the twitch handle in your right hand. Be sure to hold it firmly so that you won’t lose control of it if the horse pulls back or strikes. It can easily become a flying weapon and seriously injure someone.

Step 2: With your left hand, place the ends of your fingers through the loop of chain or rope.

Step 3: Grasp the horse’s upper lip with your left hand and slide the rope or chain high up around the lip.

Step 4: Tighten the twitch by twisting the handle.

Step 5: Slightly tighten the chain or rope, loosen it, and then tighten again. Repeat tightening and loosening throughout the procedure.

You want to change the pressure because steady pressure numbs the horse’s lip, making the twitch ineffective. If this happens, you can, only as a last resort, apply the twitch to the lower lip. This is a last resort because the lower lip is very delicate. You must take extreme care to avoid injuring it. Never apply a twitch to the horse’s ear. This hurts the horse and can severely damage the ear.

Other types of twitches are also available; some can be attached to the halter. This is an advantage if you don’t have a second person to assist in restraint, but the halter-type twitch can slip off and strike you if the horse throws its head.

**Chain shank.** A *chain shank* is a long leather lead or rope with about a two-foot length of chain and a snap hook at one end. The chain shank is a distraction device you may use in several ways. The first is to pass the chain through the cheek ring on the halter and then across the bridge of the nose, attaching the snap hook to the opposite cheek ring (Figure 56). A second method is to attach the chain to the same cheek rings, but pass the chain across the horse’s upper lip, between the lip and gum. To do this, first slip the chain shank over the nose. Then, with your thumb and forefinger, slip it over the horse’s top teeth (Figure 57A). Slide the chain shank over the teeth to the gum (Figure 57B). Keep some tension on the shank by pulling on the lead. Some horses will object strongly to this method and injure their lip and gums, so be careful. Both of these methods keep the horse’s attention on its nose during procedures performed elsewhere.
FIGURE 56—Chain Shank across Bridge of Nose
(Photograph by Cappy Jackson)

FIGURE 57A—Use your thumb and forefinger and slip the shank over the horse’s top teeth. (Photograph by Cappy Jackson)

FIGURE 57B—Slide the chain shank over the teeth to the gum. Keep tension on the shank by pulling on the lead.
**Cross-tying.** The *cross-tying* restraint method restricts a horse’s side-to-side head movements, and also helps prevent the horse from turning around or rearing up. Attach two ropes to the halter and tie them to the cross-tie rings, which are normally securely in place in the barn or stall area (Figure 58). If rings aren’t available, two securely placed poles on either side of the horse can be used. Ensure the ropes are placed sufficiently high so that the horse can’t rear up and entangle itself. Always tie the ropes so that they can be released quickly should the horse start to resist. Horses that are being shipped may be cross-tied in their trailers.

**Tail tying.** Horses’ tails are quite strong and *tail ties* can be used to move the animal. It may also be necessary to tie the tail out of the way for some procedures. Never tie the end of a tail rope to a fixed object. The tail tie is used only to attach the tail to the animal’s own body. To attach the tail rope,

*Step 1:* Locate the end of the last vertebra in the tail.

*Step 2:* Lay a piece of rope across the tail at that site and fold the rest of the tail up and over the rope.

*Step 3:* Pass one end of the rope behind the tail, making a long, sharp loop in the rope as you go.

*Step 4:* Bring the loop over the folded tail and pull it tight through the rope that’s looped around the tail. You can then use the other end of the rope to tie the tail to the horse’s front leg or neck. *(Note: To view illustrations of tail tying, see Figure 68 in the section on tail tying.)*
**Picking up a horse’s feet.** If a horse is moving around excessively, you can hold it temporarily in place by picking up a foot. You must also pick up a horse’s foot to examine its hooves. The technique for front and rear feet is different.

To raise a front foot, follow these steps:

*Step 1:* Stand alongside the animal, close to its body, facing towards the back end.

*Step 2:* Place one hand on the horse’s shoulder (Figure 59A).

*Step 3:* Firmly run your other hand down the horse’s leg to the fetlock, just above the hoof (Figures 59B and 59C).

*Step 4:* Place your palm under the fetlock and wrap your fingers around the joint (Figure 59D).

*Step 5:* Gently squeezing the foot, lift it up (Figure 59E).
FIGURE 59B—Firmly run your other hand down the horse’s leg. (Photograph by Cappy Jackson)

FIGURE 59C—Continue down the leg to the fetlock, just above the hoof. (Photograph by Cappy Jackson)

FIGURE 59D—Place your palm under the fetlock and wrap your fingers around the joint. (Photograph by Cappy Jackson)

FIGURE 59E—Gently squeezing the foot, lift it up. (Photograph by Cappy Jackson)
Use your shoulder to lean into the animal. This will prompt the horse to shift its weight onto its other three legs. Bring the foot up and slightly out to the side (Figure 59F). Keep the horse’s leg flexed. Hold the foot with one hand (Figure 59G).

To raise a rear foot, follow these steps:

**Step 1:** Approach the horse from the side at the shoulder.

**Step 2:** Place your hand on the horse’s side (Figure 60A).

**Step 3:** Run that hand along the horse as you walk toward its rear (Figure 60B).

**Step 4:** Standing alongside the horse’s rear with one hand on the horse, run the other hand down the horse’s leg (Figure 60C).

**Step 5:** Grasp and lift the foot as described for the front feet (Figures 60D and 60E).
FIGURE 60A—Place your hand on the horse’s side. (Photograph by Cappy Jackson)

FIGURE 60B—Run that hand along the horse as you walk toward its rear. (Photograph by Cappy Jackson)

FIGURE 60C—Run the other hand down the horse’s leg. (Photograph by Cappy Jackson)

FIGURE 60D—Grasp and lift the foot as described for the front feet. (Photograph by Cappy Jackson)
Approaching, Handling, and Restraining Foals

Foals (young horses under one year old) can be quite skittish when approached. The easiest way to catch a foal is to lead the mare into a small enclosure. The foal will likely try to hide behind its mother. When the foal attempts to move behind the mare, block the foal’s progress by placing one arm in front of it and one arm behind it. You may want to secure the foal by holding the base of its tail. If possible, work it toward a secure fixture, such as a wall. Always keep an eye on the mare while working on the foal.

Transporting Horses

Horses are usually loaded into trailers designed to prevent the horse from easily turning or moving around (Figure 61). Double-stalled trailers often have dividers to separate the individual animals. To minimize the likelihood of injuries during transport, the horse should wear commercial shipping boots or stall leg wraps. The trailer should also be inspected for loose floorboards or protruding nails and screws. Lead the horse into the trailer. You may restrain it with a cross tie. If the horse is shy about entering the trailer, apply a blindfold first. A horse in transit should be offered water every four hours, and food according to its regular feeding schedule.
Cattle Handling and Restraint

As a veterinary assistant, you may need to assist the veterinarian or veterinary technician at a cattle or dairy farm. You’ll find beef cattle more difficult to handle and restrain because of their limited interaction with humans. Most dairy cows, on the other hand, are used to daily human contact. In either case, however, you must be careful. Cattle are extremely large animals and improper restraint could cause serious injury.

Approaching and Capturing Cattle

Because cattle tend to be less fearful than horses, you can usually approach them without fear. Some animals will be indifferent as you approach, then aggressively attempt to escape once you get closer. Observe the animal’s body language closely to stay out of its likely escape route. Otherwise, you may be trampled. While cattle are easy to approach, they aren’t easy to lead. Even those used to frequent handling will often refuse to budge. It may be especially difficult to separate one animal from the group. Try herding the animal with a small group towards the examination area. Then direct the selected animal toward a cattle chute for further treatment. You can herd cattle by urging them with your voice, or by gently prodding them. Try not to panic the herd. A panicked herd can be difficult to calm.

Most dairy cows are just driven to the barn door and then find their way to their own stalls, which hold them while they’re being milked. Some stalls are designed so that they can also be used for restraining purposes. Approach a cow in a stall as you would a horse—slowly and on the left side (Figure 62).
Equipment for Handling and Restraining Cattle

*Cattle chute.* The typical cattle examination area channels animals into progressively smaller areas. One area is usually an alleyway just big enough for a single animal. At the end of this alley is the *cattle chute* (Figure 63). At its other end is a gate to be closed once the animal enters the alley. The front of the chute has an opening that holds the animal’s head in place (called a *stanchion*), and poles on either side for cross-tying. Some chutes also have side walls that can be pressed in to move the animal to one side of the chute.
**Halter.** Even restrained in a chute, cattle move their heads considerably, making treatment difficult and handling dangerous. Most cattle restraint is designed to hold the head in place. Halters generally serve that purpose. The cattle halter resembles a horse’s. It can be made of flat leather straps or improvised from a length of rope (Figure 64). To improvise a rope halter,

**Step 1:** Make a loop in the rope and pass it around the animal’s neck so that it falls behind the ears (Figure 65A).

**Step 2:** Pull the free end through the first loop and over the nose, forming a second loop that acts as a noseband (Figure 65B).
Step 3: Use the end of the rope to control the head and lead the animal (Figure 65C).

Nose lead. A nose lead, large metal tongs with large ball-shaped ends, also serves to control the head when a halter isn’t sufficient (Figure 66). Place the ball-shaped ends into the nostrils to gently squeeze the *nasal septum* (the tissue between the nostrils). You can then tie the nose lead to one of the poles at the front of the cattle chute. Many bulls have permanently attached nose rings, making nose tongs unnecessary. To cross-tie a bull by its nose ring, attach two lead ropes to the ring and tie them to opposite poles of the chute. You can also help restrain the head with a *bull staff*, a long-handled metal rod with a large hook at one end that clips to the nose ring.
Hobbles. Hobbles can prevent an animal from kicking. Various types of hobbles are available. *Milking hobbles* look like leg irons: two metal bands connected by a length of chain. Place the hobbles on the animal’s rear legs, just above the hock. The chain should pass in front of the legs. You can also improvise hobbles out of rope.

*Tail jacking and tying.* Tail jacking usually serves to distract the animal from procedures performed elsewhere on its body, but tail tying may also be necessary to prevent the animal from swinging its tail into your face as you work (Figure 67A). The tail tying procedure is the same as that described for the horse. Remember to always tie the tail to the animal’s body and not to a fixed object.
Tail jacking is a method of lifting the tail up. To jack a cattle’s tail,

**Step 1:** Grasp the tail with both hands nearest the animal’s body.

**Step 2:** Lift the tail up gently but firmly, taking care to keep the tail in line with the spine and not deflected out to either side (Figure 67B). Because a cow’s or bull’s tail isn’t as strong as a horse’s, handle it carefully to avoid fracturing the vertebrae.

![Image of tail jacking](image)

To tie a tail,

**Step 1:** Locate the end of the last vertebra in the tail.

**Step 2:** At a spot about 18 inches from one end of the rope, lay the rope across the tail so that it lays over the end of the last vertebra. Fold the rest of the tail up and over the rope (Figure 68A).
Step 3: Pass the short end of the rope behind the tail, making a long, sharp loop in the rope as you go.

Step 4: Bring the loop over the folded tail. Pass the loop through the rope that’s looped under the tail (Figure 68B). Pull the longer end of the rope to tighten it (Figure 68C).

Step 5: Use the longer end of the rope to tie the tail to the cattle’s front leg or neck (Figure 68D).

When complete, the tail tie should appear as shown in Figure 68E.
The casting rope. The casting rope serves to place an animal on its side. There are several ways to use a casting rope. All of them require the animal to wear a strong halter or nose lead. The most popular method:

**Step 1:** Place the rope across the animal’s back so that its ends fall between the forelegs and cross under the sternum (Figure 69A).

**Step 2:** Pull these ends up (Figure 69B) and cross them over the animal’s back (Figure 69C).

**Step 3:** Let these ends drop down so that they fall near the animal’s rear legs.
FIGURE 69A—Place the rope across the animal’s back so that its ends fall between the forelegs and cross under the sternum. (Photograph by Cappy Jackson)

FIGURE 69B—Pull the rope ends up. (Photograph by Cappy Jackson)
Step 4: Pass the ends of the rope through the animal’s rear legs and pull (Figure 69D). This will cause the animal to lay down.

Step 5: Use the rope to guide the animal into position on its side.

Calf Handling and Restraint

While a calf can be restrained fairly easily once separated from its mother, be careful (Figure 70A). Cows are very protective of their calves. A mother cow may charge if she senses that her calf is in danger.
To pick up a small calf (80 lbs. or less),

Step 1: Place one arm in front of the animal’s chest.

Step 2: Place your other arm behind the animal’s hindquarters.

Step 3: Once your arms are around the calf, lift up (Figure 70B).
Handle larger calves with a rope halter, or herd them into an examination area. Always handle calves gently to avoid frightening them. A calf handled gently now will be easier to work with later as an adult.

**Transporting Cattle**

Cattle usually travel on large trucks, fully loaded to prevent the animals from moving about. A few loosely loaded animals are likely to become quite active during the trip, injuring themselves and making the truck impossible to drive. Cows, on the other hand, are normally transported on smaller trailers, similar to horse trailers (Figure 71).

**Sheep Handling and Restraint**

Sheep are the most timid domestic animal. They have reason to be: a sheep has no natural defenses. Their usual response to danger is to run, and they rarely bite or kick. They’re also unaccustomed to regular handling, so sheep are usually quite nervous when you approach them. Because sheep have fragile skeletal systems and thin skin, your primary goal in restraining a sheep is to hold it in position without harming it.

**Equipment for Handling and Restraining Sheep**

With the exception of a few barriers that can be used for temporary pen areas, sheep require very little specialized equipment. A shepherd’s crook can immobilize an individual animal. Place the hook high up on the animal’s back leg, then grab and hold the animal quickly to prevent it from struggling and injuring its leg.
Approaching and Capturing Sheep and Lambs

Sheep usually reside in open fields as part of a flock. Approach the animals while talking in quiet, calm tones. Since sheep move with the flock, it’s usually easier to drive all the flock into a small area or pen, then remove an individual animal for treatment. A good sheep dog can be a real asset when gathering a flock (Figure 72).

Once you have the flock gathered in a small area or pen, you must remove the individual sheep from the flock. To do this, get the sheep to move around the pen by using a small prod. As the sheep pass by, determine which particular sheep you need to restrain, and separate it out from the flock (Figure 73A). Once you’ve selected the animal, reach quickly around it, placing one arm around its forequarters under the neck and one arm around its hindquarters (Figure 73B). This hold allows you to direct the animal to a smaller holding or treatment area. When a flock of sheep receives medication, the restrainer marks each animal with a marking crayon so that no animal gets a double dose.
Restraining Adult Sheep

Most examinations and minor procedures can be performed with the sheep placed up on its rump. To restrain a sheep on its rump,

Step 1: Stand on the animal’s side.

Step 2: Place one arm around the sheep’s neck at the shoulder and with your other arm, reach over the animal and under its abdomen as far as possible, depending on the animal’s size (Figure 74A).

Step 3: Gently lift the sheep and tilt it back onto its rump (Figure 74B). Stand directly behind the sheep so that its back rests against your legs. Tilt the sheep’s body slightly back so that it’s off balance. A sheep in this position rarely kicks or struggles (Figure 74C).
FIGURE 74A—Place your one arm around the sheep’s neck at the shoulder and with your other arm, reach over the animal and under its abdomen as far as possible, depending on the animal’s size. (Photograph by Cappy Jackson)

FIGURE 74B—Gently lift the sheep and tilt it back onto its rump. (Photograph by Cappy Jackson)

FIGURE 74C—Tilt the sheep’s body slightly back so that it’s off balance. (Photograph by Cappy Jackson)
Carrying and Restraining Lambs

Carry a newborn lamb with one hand between its front legs, supporting its chest with your arm. You can also pick up and carry a newborn lamb as you would a medium-to-large-size dog.

Restraining a Lamb for Tail Docking and Castration

Between its first and second week, a lamb usually has its tail docked, and a male lamb is castrated. Handlers begin this process by herding the lambs to a small pen. This makes it easier to remove individual lambs from the group.

There are several ways to restrain lambs for tail docking and castration. Here’s one:

*Step 1:* Sit down.

*Step 2:* Grasp the lamb’s right legs with your right hand and its left legs with your left hand.

*Step 3:* Place the lamb on its back, supported by your legs.

A second method is to stand and support the lamb’s back against your body while holding the legs as described in Step 2.

Now that you’ve finished this section on some common farm animals, take a moment before moving on to test your knowledge by completing *Tracking Your Progress 5*. 
Goat Handling and Restraint

Goats are the least predictable of domestic animals. Generally quite docile, goats can quickly become agitated or aggressive, especially if you handle them roughly (Figure 75). An agitated or frightened goat may kick or try to butt you. Goats are also playful, a trait less amusing when you’re trying to handle and restrain them. Working with goats requires patience.

Tracking Your Progress 5

1. True or False? The correct way to approach a horse is from its left side, speaking reassuringly in low tones, and carefully observing the horse’s body language.

2. Most cattle restraint is aimed at restricting the animal’s ability to move its ______.

3. True or False? Horses can’t see what’s directly in front of them or directly behind them.

4. You must be careful to prevent injury when handling sheep, as they have fragile ______ and thin, delicate skin.

Questions 5–11: Match the restraint device to its description.

_____ 5. Cross tie  a. Helps place an enclosed animal on its side
_____ 6. Casting rope  b. Keeps a horse’s attention on its nose
_____ 7. Stock  c. One of the oldest and simplest horse restraints which stimulates a horse’s nerves
_____ 8. Hobble  d. Restricts side-to-side head movement
_____ 9. Chain shank  e. Leather strap fastened around the leg to restrict movement
_____10. Nose lead  f. Large metal tongs which squeeze the nasal septum
_____11. Lip twitch  g. Narrow enclosure which immobilizes an animal for treatment

Check your answers with those on page 128.
Equipment for Handling and Restraining Goats

Goats require very little specialized equipment. Most goats wear neck chains or heavy, flat leather collars. The ideal neck chain is composed of sturdy, flat links, the type least likely to catch on fences the animal may rub against. Attach a lead to the goat’s neck gear and lead the animal into the treatment area. Goat handlers sometimes make treatment easier by confining goats in small enclosures created by fences and portable barriers.

Restraining a Goat for Examination and Venipuncture

You can keep a goat still for routine physical examination by lifting one of its front legs (Figure 76). Most goats will remain calm in this position. Holding onto the goat’s chin or beard may also help keep it in position (Figure 77). Some procedures (and goats!) require firmer restraint. In these cases you can hold the goat on its side. To restrain a goat on its side,

**Step 1:** Position yourself alongside the goat.

**Step 2:** Reach one arm over the goat’s back and one arm over the goat’s neck (Figure 78A).

**Step 3:** Grasp the legs closest to your body (Figure 78B) and gently lift up. This will force the goat off balance and onto its side (Figure 78C).
FIGURE 76—Lifting a Foot to Restrain a Goat for Routine Physical Examination  (Photograph by Cappy Jackson)

FIGURE 77—Holding Chin or Beard to Restrain a Goat for Routine Physical Examination  (Photograph by Cappy Jackson)

FIGURE 78A—Reach one arm over the goat’s back and one arm over the goat’s neck.  (Photograph by Cappy Jackson)
For venipuncture, restrain a goat as you would a dog. Hold the goat’s chin or beard with one hand and place your other arm around the goat’s neck to hold it in place (Figure 79A). The veterinarian will perform the venipuncture (Figure 79B) and then either the veterinarian or veterinary assistant will apply pressure to the site after the blood is drawn (Figure 79C).
FIGURE 79A—Hold the goat’s chin or beard with one hand and place your other arm around the goat’s neck to hold it in place. (Photograph by Cappy Jackson)

FIGURE 79B—The veterinarian will perform the venipuncture. (Photograph by Cappy Jackson)
Pigs appear rugged, but must be handled gently (Figure 80). Pigs aren’t very athletic and have relatively fragile skeletal systems. They do, however, have strong jaws that can inflict severe bites. Tusks of male pigs can also be very dangerous. As though pig handling didn’t present enough problems, it’s rather difficult to capture a single pig from a group.
Approaching and Capturing Pigs

Pigs have poor vision and are easily frightened. A frightened pig will often run off, so always approach the pig slowly, avoiding sudden moves. Should the pig run off, keep in mind that pigs overheat easily in these situations. Your first priority should be to cool the pig immediately; an overheated pig is likely to die of heat stroke. Since pigs don’t sweat and can’t pant effectively to cool themselves, sprinkle the pig with water to cool the overheated animal. By wetting the pig’s skin with water, evaporation will cool the pig.

Pig handlers typically herd a small group of pigs, including the one to be captured, into a series of progressively smaller pens. Gently prodding a few pigs with a flat stick or cane will move the herd; tap the animals lightly at the shoulder. Handlers also use *hurdles*, flat shieldlike pieces of plastic or plywood about three feet square, to direct a group of pigs into an enclosure.

Once the group is in the enclosure, the pig to be captured can be isolated with a hurdle or simply lassoed with a rope. Handlers typically tie the rope into a harness for maneuvering the pig to another location.

Equipment for Handling and Restraining Pigs

*Pig catcher.* A *pig catcher* is a long-handled, large clamp with a rope that holds the ends of the clamp shut. Apply the clamp to one of the pig’s rear legs, then pull the rope to hold the clamp tight around the leg.

*Snare.* Pig snares look and function like dog snares. The snare has a long metal handle enclosing a rope, cable, or chain loop which protrudes from one end of the handle. A pig snare is often used to capture large pigs. To use a pig snare, place this loop quickly over the pig’s snout and pull it tight from the handle end (Figure 81).

*V-trough.* Small pigs can be restrained on their backs in a V-shaped trough. The V-trough is usually made of plywood. To restrain a pig in a V-trough,

**Step 1:** Capture the pig.

**Step 2:** Lay the pig on its back in the trough.

**Step 3:** Attach a rope to one front leg.

**Step 4:** Pass the rope under the trough and tie it to the other front leg.

**Step 5:** Repeat Steps 3 and 4 on the back feet. The trough can be tilted to the desired position.
Snubbing rope. A snubbing rope is a rope with a loop at one end, tied with a slip knot so that the loop can be tightened (Figure 82A). A snubbing rope helps to restrain a captured pig’s head. To restrain a pig with a snubbing rope,

**Step 1:** Place one end of the rope in front of the pig’s snout (Figure 82B).

**Step 2:** Wait for the pig to open its mouth (Figure 82C).

**Step 3:** When the pig opens its mouth, slip the loop into its mouth and push the loop quickly up so that it rests just behind the tusks (Figure 82D).
FIGURE 82B—Place one end of the rope in front of the pig's snout. (Photograph by Cappy Jackson)

FIGURE 82C—Wait for the pig to open its mouth. (Photograph by Cappy Jackson)

FIGURE 82D—When the pig opens its mouth, slip the loop into its mouth and push the loop quickly up so that it rests just behind the tusks. (Photograph by Cappy Jackson)
Step 4: Tighten the loop across the top of the pig’s snout (Figure 82E). Either hold the snubbing rope or tie it to a stationary object (Figure 82F). Never leave a pig unattended with a snubbing rope in place; the pig may start to chew at the rope. You can cross-tie a particularly temperamental pig with two snubbing ropes.
**Hobbles.** Hobbles restrain a pig on its side. You can buy hobbles, or fashion them using the pig’s snubbing rope (never apply hobbles to a pig that isn’t already wearing a snubbing rope). Use the snubbing rope’s free end as a casting rope. Pass this end around the pig’s rear leg, making a half hitch. Pull up on the rope to draw the pig’s leg toward its nose, forcing the animal off its feet.

**Approaching and Capturing Piglets**

Small pigs and piglets should also be directed toward a small enclosure before attempting to capture an individual (Figure 83). Avoid chasing the animals; this may cause them to become overheated or frightened.

To capture a piglet,

**Step 1:** Approach the piglet from behind (Figure 84A).

**Step 2:** Quickly grab the animal by one or both of its rear legs (Figure 84B).

**Step 3:** Place your other arm under the animal’s chest and lift straight up.

**Step 4:** To carry the piglet, release the rear legs and place your hand under its abdomen (Figure 84C). Never grasp or hold a piglet by its tail. Not only is this painful to the animal, but the hold allows the piglet to slip easily out of your grasp.

*FIGURE 83—Always direct pigs and piglets to a small enclosure before attempting capture. (Photograph by Cappy Jackson)*
FIGURE 84A—To capture a piglet, approach it from behind. (Photograph by Cappy Jackson)

FIGURE 84B—Quickly grab the animal by one or both of its rear legs. (Photograph by Cappy Jackson)
Restraining Pigs and Piglets

Pig catchers, snares, V-troughs, snubbing ropes, and hobbles can be used to restrain both pigs and piglets. Small pigs and piglets can also be restrained manually. For administration of oral medication, lift the pig by its front feet and hold it up with its rear legs remaining on the ground (Figure 85). For injections or other minor technical procedures, you can hold small pigs by their rear legs, as follows:

**Step 1:** Grasp the animal by its rear legs (Figure 86A).

**Step 2:** Lift the body (Figure 86B).

**Step 3:** Place the animal’s head between your knees (Figure 86C). The pig’s front legs should touch the ground and its back should be centered between your legs.
FIGURE 85—Restraining a Piglet for Oral Medication
(Photograph by Cappy Jackson)

FIGURE 86A—Grasp the animal by its rear legs.
(Photograph by Cappy Jackson)
Transporting Pigs

Pigs are transported by herding them in groups into trucks or trailers (Figure 87). Under crowded conditions, however, pigs can easily become overheated. Pig transports must allow maximum air circulation between the animals. Truck beds and trailers composed of steel slats are commonly used for this purpose. Male pigs and females with litters should be transported in individual crates.
Fowl Handling and Restraint

Fowl must occasionally be restrained for collection of blood or vaccination. Chickens and turkeys are usually group housed in large pens. These generally docile animals are no problem to restrain, but be more careful with roosters (Figure 88). They can be quite aggressive. A hen may also attack when you attempt to remove eggs from her nest.
Equipment for Handling and Restraining Fowl

_Catching net._ A catching net serves to remove individual birds from a flock. The net is usually attached to the end of a long-handled wooden pole. The net is placed over the bird and then turned up, trapping the bird inside. Nets are least likely to injure the bird, but must be used gently.

_Catching hook._ A catching hook is often used to catch chickens and turkeys. The hook is usually about five inches long and attached to a long-handled pole (Figure 89). Loop this hook around the bird’s leg.

Approaching and Capturing Fowl

While chickens and turkeys aren’t especially aggressive, they can be a challenge to capture. Animals kept in an outdoor enclosure may scatter as you enter it. Always enter the enclosure slowly and confidently. Most fowl will allow you to approach them in an open yard. To capture a chicken,

*Step 1:* Approach and stand next to the bird (Figure 90A).

*Step 2:* Reach down and grasp the animal’s legs quickly (Figure 90B).

*Step 3:* Pull the bird up so that its head is facing the ground (Figure 90C).
FIGURE 90A—Approach and stand next to the bird. (Photograph by Cappy Jackson)

FIGURE 90B—Reach down and grasp the animal’s legs quickly. (Photograph by Cappy Jackson)

FIGURE 90C—Pull the bird up so that its head is facing the ground. (Photograph by Cappy Jackson)
You may carry tame chickens in this manner or under your arm (Figure 91). Don’t chase them if the birds are especially excited; use a catching hook or net to hold them in place, then pick them up by the legs. Turkeys should also be grasped first with a catching hook or net. Once you’ve caught it, approach the bird and wrap your arm around its body. Pull the animal close to your side as you pick it up. Carry the turkey under your arm with its head toward your back.

FIGURE 91—One way to carry a tame chicken is under your arm. When carrying a more disagreeable chicken or one not used to handling, carry it backward with its head between our arm and body. (Photograph by Cappy Jackson)

Approaching and Capturing Chicks

Chicks will usually scatter quickly when you approach. You can either scoop them up with a net, or herd them together and direct the group toward an examination area.

Restraining Fowl

You can restrain fowl for physical examination and most technical procedures by holding them against a solid surface. Don’t handle the bird roughly. Birds have very fragile skeletal systems and their legs and wings break easily. Hold the bird’s head loosely in one hand and restrain its feet with the other (Figure 92). If the bird is receiving oral medications you’ll usually have to hold it with its neck outstretched.
Transporting Fowl

Fowl must be placed in small crates before transport. The crates, which may have dividers to separate the animals, are loaded and stacked on trucks.

Congratulations! You’ve covered the fundamentals of animal restraint. You now understand the importance of restraint to the animal care team, and the most humane and effective way to handle and restrain the species you’ll encounter as a veterinary assistant. You’ve familiarized yourself with the special equipment various restraint techniques employ, and its proper maintenance and use. You command knowledge that makes you a valuable part of the animal-care team. Once you’ve completed your last set of review questions and studied the unit’s key points, you’re ready to take your examination.

The glossary of this study unit contains many key words that you’ve just learned as you completed your study unit. Before taking the examination, be sure to turn to the glossary and review the key words.
1. True or False? A chicken can be safely carried hanging from its feet with its head facing the ground.

2. True or False? Goats require very little special handling equipment because their behavior is so predictable.

3. Flat, shieldlike pieces of plastic or plywood that direct pigs into an enclosure are known as _______.

4. Briefly explain the steps for restraining a goat on its side.

   ______________________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________________

5. True or False? In order to capture a piglet, try to grab it by its tail to immobilize the animal.

6. Name two reasons for restraining fowl.

   ______________________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________________

Check your answers with those on page 128.
1. proper animal restraint
2. d
3. chemical
4. False
5. False

2.
1. b
2. False
3. a
4. False
5. The steps for making a muzzle from gauze roll bandage are (1) tie a large loop in the middle of a large piece of bandage, (2) approaching the dog from the side, slip the loop over the dog’s nose, (3) tighten the loop and bring the gauze edges under the dog’s neck, (4) cross the ends and pull them behind the dog’s neck, and (5) tie the ends in a half bow or slip knot for quick removal.
1. b
2. False
3. c
4. cephalic
5. scruff
6. False

3. A cat that won’t remain in the sitting or standing position should be restrained by placing one hand on its shoulders, the other hand on its hips, and pressing the cat firmly but gently down against the table.
2. False
3. c
4. cephalic
5. scruff
6. False

4. fly, bite, scratch, or become injured
2. False
3. False
4. False
5. b
6. d
7. a
8. e
9. c
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>True</td>
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<td>True</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>head</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>False</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>True</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>hurdles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>skeletal systems</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>To restrain a goat on its side, (1) position yourself alongside the goat, (2) reach one arm over the goat’s back and one arm over the goat’s neck, and (3) grasp the legs closest to your body, lifting up. This will force the goat onto its side.</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>d</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>False</td>
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<td>Fowl occasionally need to be restrained for vaccination or for blood collection purposes.</td>
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<td>11</td>
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This glossary gives the definitions of all important key words you’ve just read about in your study unit. Take a moment to study these terms you’ve just learned. Then, be sure to review these words and their definitions before taking your examination.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Glossary Item</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>acrylic rodent restrainer</strong></td>
<td>Used for rat and mouse venipuncture, a clear plastic tube with holes drilled into it that holds a small rodent.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>bull staff</strong></td>
<td>Restraint equipment for cattle that consists of a long-handled metal rod with a large hook at one end that clips to the nose ring, helping to restrain the head.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>casting rope</strong></td>
<td>A rope used to place an enclosed animal on its side.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>cat bag</strong></td>
<td>A restraint device designed to enclose a cat’s body while providing access to treatment sites.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>catching hook</strong></td>
<td>A hook, usually about five inches long, attached to a long-handled pole for the purpose of catching chickens and turkeys.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>catching net</strong></td>
<td>A net, usually attached to the end of a long-handled wooden pole, used to remove individual birds from a flock.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>cattle chute</strong></td>
<td>A cattle examination area large enough to hold one animal, often with poles for cross-tying and an opening to hold its head in place.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>cephalic vein</strong></td>
<td>Venipuncture site along the front of the foreleg.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>chain shank</strong></td>
<td>A long leather lead or rope with about a two-foot length of chain and a snap hook at one end, used to distract a horse.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>chain twitch</strong></td>
<td>A horse restraint, usually composed of a long wooden handle with a loop of stainless-steel chain at one end, designed to distract a horse by stimulating its nerves.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>chemical restraint</strong></td>
<td>Use of sedatives, tranquilizers, and anesthetics on an animal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>cross-tie</strong></td>
<td>A restraint method which restricts an animal’s side-to-side head movement by tying two ropes to the halter and to cross-tie rings in a barn or transport trailer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>fetal hold</strong></td>
<td>The technique of grasping a cat by the scruff of the neck.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>forceps</strong></td>
<td>Instrument which grasps small rodents and allows for their transport from one cage to another.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>halter</strong></td>
<td>Gear composed of a noseband and a throatlatch which encircles the head of a large animal such as a horse, allowing a lead to be attached for restraint.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>head snare</strong></td>
<td>A long metal or heavy-duty plastic, tubular handle with a thick retractable wire inside it, forming a large loop designed to be pulled out, slipped over an animal’s head, and quickly tightened.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>hobble</strong></td>
<td>A leather strap fastened around an animal’s legs to restrict their movement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>hurdle</strong></td>
<td>Flat, shieldlike piece of plastic or plywood three feet square, used to direct a group of pigs into an enclosure.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>jugular vein</strong></td>
<td>Venipuncture site on the front of the neck.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>lateral recumbency</strong></td>
<td>Animal restrained on its side and stretched out (also called reclining restraint).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**lead**  A guide leash, often made of leather or rope, which attaches to a halter and allows you to hold an animal in place or guide its direction.

**manual restraint**  Using your hands to hold the animal in the desired position.

**mechanical restraint**  Use of equipment like leashes, collars, restraint bags, and poles on an animal.

**milking hobbles**  Two metal bands, connected by a length of chain, used to prevent a cow from kicking.

**muzzle**  Any device applied around an animal’s nose and mouth to prevent the animal from biting.

**nasal septum**  Tissue between the nostrils.

**nose lead**  Large metal tongs with large ball-shaped ends, designed for cattle to hold their heads in place.

**occlude**  In venipuncture, to block or “hold off” a vein by pressing on it with your finger, allowing blood to pool in the vein.

**pig catcher**  A long-handled, large clamp with a rope that holds the ends of the clamp shut.

**restraint gloves**  Heavy gauntlet-type gloves, used to handle cats, typically made of leather too thick for cats to bite through.

**rope twitch**  A device just like a chain twitch, only made of rope.

**saphenous vein**  Venipuncture site on the outer surface of the hindleg.

**slip leash**  A leash of flat or braided nylon with a ring at one end, designed to tighten momentarily the way a training collar does.

**snubbing rope**  A rope with a loop at one end, tied with a slip knot so that the loop can be tightened, designed to help restrain a captured pig’s head.

**stanchion**  An opening at the front of a cattle chute which holds the head in place.

**sternum**  Breastbone.

**sternal recumbency**  Animal placed on its sternum at the edge of the table, its forelegs extending off the table’s edge.

**stocks**  Narrow enclosures that partially immobilize a horse for treatment.

**tail jacking**  Used to prevent the animal from kicking, this technique restrains an animal for minor technical procedures. It involves lifting the tail up in line with the animal’s spine to prevent fracturing the vertebrae.

**tail tying**  Technique that involves tying an animal’s tail out of the way for certain procedures.

**training collar**  Stainless-steel links with a ring at each end, forming a dog collar designed to tighten momentarily with a short, firm tug.

**venipuncture**  Puncturing a vein to collect blood, administer medication, or pass a catheter.

**V-trough**  A V-shaped trough usually made of plywood used to restrain a pig on its back.
Handling and Restraint

EXAMINATION NUMBER:
08800300
Whichever method you use in submitting your exam answers to the school, you must use the number above.

For the quickest test results, go to http://www.takeexamsonline.com

When you feel confident that you have mastered the material in this study unit, complete the following examination. Then submit only your answers to the school for grading, using one of the examination answer options described in your “Test Materials” envelope. Send your answers for this examination as soon as you complete it. Do not wait until another examination is ready.

Questions 1–20: Select the one best answer to each question.

1. The least desirable method of restraint for a cat is
   A. holding the cat while wearing heavy gloves.
   B. holding the cat with your bare hands.
   C. placing the cat in a cat bag.
   D. using a tranquilizer to calm the cat.

2. Which of the following should you avoid doing before opening a bird's cage?
   A. Closing all doors and windows so the bird can't escape
   B. Turning on exhaust fans so the bird doesn't overheat
   C. Putting a net or towel close at hand to recapture the bird if it escapes
   D. Asking the owner if the bird will hop on a finger or arm

3. The best place to apply a chain twitch to a horse is
   A. the horse's rump.
   B. the horse's upper lip.
   C. over the horse's nose.
   D. between the horse's teeth.
4. When holding a horse for examination, always stand on the
   A. horse’s left side.
   B. horse’s right side.
   C. side opposite the veterinarian.
   D. same side as the veterinarian.

5. Mechanical restraint aids should be cleaned
   A. after each use.
   B. when they’re dirty.
   C. once a week.
   D. if an animal resists its scent.

6. What’s the correct and safest method of picking up a hamster?
   A. Grasp the loose skin on the back of its neck.
   B. Pick it up at the base of its tail.
   C. Scoop it up with a small net.
   D. Grasp it by placing your thumb and index finger around its lower jaw.

7. You’re correctly holding an animal by its rear legs, its head between your knees, its back between your legs, and its front legs touching the ground. The animal you’re holding is a
   A. lamb just learning to walk.
   B. small pig receiving an injection.
   C. goat undergoing venipuncture.
   D. dog being restrained for blood collection.

8. For jugular venipuncture, a dog should be restrained
   A. standing up.
   B. sitting.
   C. lying on its side.
   D. with its forelegs off the table.

9. The “fetal hold” should never be used on
   A. overweight cats.
   B. young adult cats.
   C. kittens.
   D. small, older adult cats.

10. Rubber-tipped forceps can be used to
    A. restrain a gerbil for venipuncture.
    B. transport a rabbit to another cage.
    C. transport a gerbil to another cage.
    D. restrain a rabbit for venipuncture.

11. When returning a rabbit to its cage, it’s best to position the animal
    A. head first, so its rear legs can use your arm for traction.
    B. facing toward you so its rear legs go in first.
    C. cradled gently with its rear legs on either side of your forearm.
    D. on its side.

12. You place a slip leash and collar on a dog, carry the dog to an examination table, and hold the dog in the appropriate positions for examination and treatment. What restraint type have you avoided?
    A. Manual restraint
    B. Mechanical restraint
    C. Chemical restraint
    D. None: you’ve employed them all.
13. A _______ is a long tubular handle with a thick retractable wire inside it.
   A. muzzle  
   B. slip leash  
   C. head snare  
   D. training collar

14. The primary purpose of muzzling a dog is to
   A. prevent it from panting.  
   B. distract it.  
   C. prevent it from biting.  
   D. calm it down.

15. You catch this animal with a catching hook, approach it, wrap your arms around its body, pull it close to your side as you pick it up, and carry it under your arm. You’re correctly handling a
   A. newborn lamb.  
   B. piglet.  
   C. goat.  
   D. turkey.

16. For minor technical procedures, sheep are best restrained by
   A. tilting them onto their rump.  
   B. applying a shepherd’s crook to the rear leg.  
   C. being pushed up against a barrier.  
   D. being cross-tied in stocks.

17. A _______ has a loop at one end tied with a slip knot and is used to help restrain a captured pig’s head.
   A. V-trough  
   B. hobble  
   C. snubbing rope  
   D. pig snare

18. When properly applied to a dog, the loose end of the training collar will be
   A. out to the side and directly under the dog’s neck.  
   B. out to the side at the top of the dog’s neck.  
   C. straight down under the dog’s neck.  
   D. over the back at the top of the dog’s neck.

19. To break a biting ferret’s grip, it’s best to
   A. place the ferret under running water.  
   B. distract the ferret with several brisk taps on the nose.  
   C. gently occlude the ferret’s jugular vein.  
   D. cover the ferret’s eyes.

20. Which of the following are you most likely to need when recovering an escaped cat?
   A. Restraint gloves  
   B. A head snare  
   C. A cat bag  
   D. Pepper spray