



Fall 2010

Vol 4:3

"Improving dogs' lives by positively changing dog-owner relationships through balanced training."

Deer Season

The holidays are just around the corner, but first in WI we need to get through the gun deer hunting season.

Dog owners cringe this time of year. While the vast majority of hunters are ethical and not a problem, there's always a horror story floating around somewhere.

Living in the woods, we take extra precautions during the rifle season.

We do not leave our property with our dogs off lead. Every dog has blaze orange vest or at least a scarf around their neck before they leave the house, even just to go to the car.

Most of you have seen our dogs. They are big and vaguely deer colored.

Making your dog stand out is critical.

There are commercial vests out there to make your dog stand out, but we chose instead to custom make ours to better fit our pack of giants.

Sharon chose a simple pattern based on her dog's search and rescue vest from decades ago. All you need is a rectangle of bright material, some nylon webbing and two plastic quick release buckles. The nylon webbing and buckles can be found at home improvement stores in the tie-down and strap department or in camping sections. Reflective tape is another option.

A sewing machine is helpful, but if you're handy with a needle and thread, it's not mandatory. Measure your dog from the shoulders, about where the neck ends to approximately his last rib. This will give you lots of material for hunters to see, but stop the vest short of the giving the male dogs material on which to pee. :0)

We then measured across the shoulders from elbow to elbow. This way the vest doesn't hang too low and interfere with running and playing. We chose to double our material just by folding it in half for extra strength.

On each of the four corners, we sewed a small length of nylon web strap. The length of the strap will vary by the size of your dog, how far down the dog your material vest comes, how much growing your dog still has to do, etc. Our straps are generous enough to give us the ability to use vests on a greater variety of sizes because we have dogs coming and going from our house pretty routinely with fosters and guests.

After you've prepared the straps the length you'd like, make sure you heat the ends of the straps to melt them slightly and keep them from fraying.

You will attach a strap on each corner of your rectangle, but they will not all lay in the same direction!

One side of the vest, the straps will lay the long length of the rectangle. On the other side, the straps will lay the short length of the rectangle. See photo:



The vest laid out on the floor for illustration. You may have to increase the size of your newsletter to read the photo captions.

Finishing off with a little reflective tape adds even more to it. Placing a special adornment near the front to sit over the shoulders will help you quickly assess which direction the vest will

go on your dog so you don't have to readjust each time you dress your dog. Now add the buckles to the strap material. We'll assume you purchased quick-release snap buckles because that makes life simple. Separate the pair of buckles into their separate pieces. You should have 4 pieces: 2 "male" ends that slide into 2 other "female" ends. Place the male ends to one side and the female ends to another side. Lay your rectangle out in front of you so one of the short sides is closest to you. The buckles you thread on these straps will be the same: either the 2 female ends or the 2 male ends. (What buckles you've purchased will dictate how you thread them on the straps. See your package for details.)

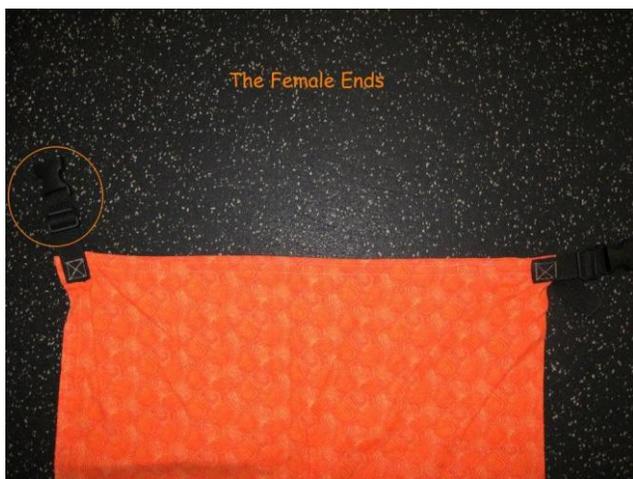
Viola! There you have your custom blaze orange dog vest for your rifle season and beyond. (We have been known to use it to form the base of a pumpkin costume for Halloween!)



Quig models a finished vest.



Illustrating the "Male" buckle ends.



Illustrating the "Female" buckle pieces.

If you need to enlarge the photos for a better look, just change the % at the top of the PDF viewer from 55.5 (default) to something larger...200% usually works well. If you'd like to see a vest in person, contact us and we can arrange that...but we won't make one for you!

Seasonal Tips

The temperatures are dropping and the leaves are gone. Ice will soon be forming on our many lakes. Be aware of changing conditions and don't let your dog run near the lakes until the ice is safe. Dogs being lost or hurt falling through the ice is a preventable tragedy. Be extra cautious and safe!

Holiday season is fast approaching. Please remember in all the hustle and bustle to give your dog space to get out of the festivities, away from pestering company and relax. Spend some time WITH him in that quiet place and you'll BOTH have more enjoyable holidays.

When decorating the house, make sure you keep tinsel, ribbon and breakable ornaments out of your dog's reach!

Consider baking some special treats for your dog, but keep the chocolate and other human treats for the people celebration. Also remember turkey can upset dogs' stomachs and even

cause pancreatitis in some! A bite or two will probably be fine, but don't overdo it. (Moderation and balance...hmm, that sounds like good advice for us two-leggeds also!)

Upcoming Classes

SCENT 101

A new offering starting in January is Scent 101. Dogs have an amazing sense of smell and a natural desire to hunt. This class focuses on teaching you how to encourage and develop your dog's natural scenting abilities by using their desire to hunt and their love of toys, food and exercise. It's a great class for your dog to have fun, build confidence, and burn lots of mental and physical energy and for you find out just how good is your dog's nose. Classes are open to any dog of any obedience level or age level. If you want to compete with your dog but aren't into obedience or agility, this may be what you've been looking for. If you just want to have fun and tire out your dog, this is for you! If you want something to do with your elderly or physically challenged dog, this is for you! Class size is limited so register early!

Tricks

A fun class disguising some obedience as tricks! Get out of the house this winter for some fun with your dog! A treat-based, relaxed class designed for fun. Basic obedience or approval of instructor is a pre-requisite.

E-DOGS CLASSES

These classes may be offered on a limited basis throughout the winter. We'll keep you posted.

Keep an eye on the calendar at
www.caninecoach.net
for updates and additions to our schedule.



Sam's ready for Trick or Treat!