

# Dogs in utes

## Dog welfare and safety when travelling on vehicles



Thousands of dogs are injured each year while travelling in the back of utes because they haven't been properly restrained.

Common causes of injury are:

- dogs being struck by tree branches
- dogs being struck by oncoming or passing vehicles
- dogs being dragged along the side of vehicles after overbalancing
- dogs attempting to jump from moving vehicles.

To avoid these kinds of injuries, your **dog should be caged or tethered** at all times when travelling in the back of utes, tray backs or trucks.

Being caged or tethered properly stops a dog from falling out or injuring itself.

It also fulfils your legal obligation to make sure your dog is safe.

### Provide shelter with an enclosed cage

The safest way to transport a dog in the back of an open vehicle is by using an enclosed cage.

To maximise your dog's safety and comfort, make sure the cage is:

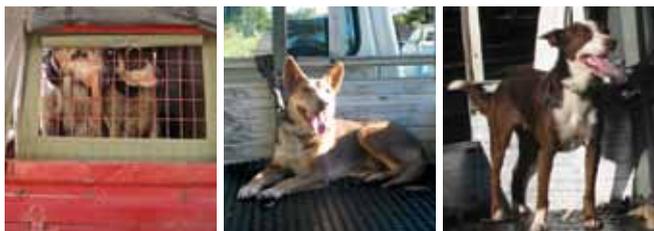
- the right size (to prevent cramping and overcrowding)
- well covered (to provide shelter from sun, wind and rain)
- placed behind the cabin (to minimise exposure to dust and wind)

### Tether properly to the cabin

There a number of things to consider when tethering your dog to the back of the ute.

Make sure that the lead/chain is:

- attached to a secure neck collar or properly fitted dog harness
- secured to a point in the middle of the cabin (see photo)
- the right length (long enough to allow the dog to move about comfortably, but not long enough for the dog to reach the ute's side)
- has swivels at both ends to prevent it becoming entangled.



## Take extra care in hot or dusty conditions

Dogs left in the sun for long periods can suffer heat stress. Avoid this by providing sufficient shelter.

Utes and tray backs made of metal can heat up quickly and burn dogs' paws. In hot conditions, consider covering the metal floors.

To prevent dehydration during long journeys and in hot conditions, allow for frequent stops to give your dog water.

Dust particles can harm dogs' eyes, ears, nose and lungs so extra shelter should be provided when travelling in very dusty conditions.

## Secure loose equipment

Loose tools and equipment can become missiles in transit and may seriously injure your dog. Secure loose equipment.

## Avoid choker chains

Leads with attached choker chains can strangle dogs when vehicles brake suddenly. Don't use them.

## Be aware of pedestrians

Don't let your dog harass pedestrians.

## Understand your legal obligations

Apart from wanting to make sure your dog is safe, secure and comfortable while in transit, you are also legally required to do so. In fact, if you don't, there are considerable penalties that apply.



A covered cage provides shelter from the sun, wind and rain.

- Under the Animal Care and Protection Act 2001, you are obliged to ensure your dog's safety and wellbeing at all times. You can be fined up to \$30 000 or jailed for a year if you don't.
- Under the Transport Operations (Road Use Management – Road Rules) Regulation 1999, it is illegal to travel with an unsecured load on the back of your vehicle. An unrestrained dog can be considered 'an unsecured load'. You can be fined up to \$2000 if you don't comply.

## Dog welfare websites

### DEEDI

[www.biosecurity.qld.gov.au](http://www.biosecurity.qld.gov.au)

### RSPCA

[www.rspcaqld.org.au](http://www.rspcaqld.org.au)

### Model Codes of Practice for the Welfare of Animals (livestock series)

[www.publish.csiro.au/nid/22/sid/11.htm](http://www.publish.csiro.au/nid/22/sid/11.htm)

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