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How to troubleshoot underground dog fence

Correct Answer: If you have a yard and a dog or two (or three or more!), chances are you're going to need a dog fence. These fences enable your pet to play in a secure space, without risk of running off or getting hit by a car. A dog fence also allows you to open the back door and let your pet do its business, without early morning or late-night dog walks.Local ordinances likely require you to keep your pet leashed or fenced in, so a dog fence also protects you from code violations and upset neighbors.Pros and Cons of Getting a Dog FenceWhile we think a dog fence is a big plus for your pet's safety, here are some pros and cons of getting one.ProsPet safety. Your dog is secure in its yard and unable to run away, fight with other animals or get hit by a car.Lower risk. Your dog can't run around the neighborhood, scare or knock down a child or elderly person, or, heaven forbid, bite a person or another animal.Pet health. A fenced-in yard provides a secure place for your dog to run, play, lay in the sunshine and do dog stuff.Curb appeal. Available in a range of materials and styles, a dog fence can add beauty to your yard.Privacy. If backyard privacy is what you seek, a dog fence can do double duty, protecting your pet and you from nosy neighbors.ConsCost. Even if you go the DIY route, you have to pay for fence materials. Professionally installed fences can cost many thousands of dollars.Space. If you have a small yard, fencing off even part of it may seem like you're cutting up an already small space.Permits. You may need a city or county permit to build a fence, and many homeowner's associations dictate what types of fences are permissible.Maintenance. No matter what type of fence you install, it will require some ongoing maintenance.Types of Dog FencesAlmost any type of property fence can function as a dog fence, depending on the size and nature of your dog.Chain-link or wire mesh is an inexpensive option, but not the most aesthetically pleasing. Wood-slat or vinyl fences can offer privacy. Metal (iron, aluminum or steel) fences offer maximum durability and a wide range of styles. Wooden picket fences add charm, but may not be suitable for large dogs. Invisible fences are another option, but these do not provide privacy or keep other animals from entering your yard.Dog Fence Costs and ConsiderationsBefore you install a fence, check local zoning regulations to see if you need a permit and if there are any rules stipulating what type of fence you can build. If you live in a neighborhood with a homeowner's association, there may be additional rules regarding height, material and easements. If you're installing the fence yourself, make sure you know where buried utility lines are located before you start digging by visiting call811.com and scheduling a site visit.Of course, the size of the fenced-in area is one of the biggest factors in determining the cost of your dog fence. Invisible fencing systems start at around \$100, but figure on spending more like \$300 for a more reliable set-up. Chain-link, wire mesh or picket fencing are among the cheapest options for a dog fence, and are reasonable weekend DIY projects.Wooden privacy fences can also be installed without professional help, as can vinyl, although vinyl panels cost more than wood. Heavy-duty metal fences usually have to be professionally installed, but can be custom-crafted to your taste and are most resistant to the elements. As a result, they're also the most expensive option.Price and durability tend to go hand-in-hand. The more you spend, the longer your fence will last, and with fewer repairs. You also need to decide whether to install the fence yourself or hire a contractor. A contractor will cost a lot more, but remember, the fence has to be built to last. If you're unsure of your DIY mettle for fence-building, it might be best to leave the job to the pros.Dog Fence Maintenance and RepairStrong wind or a downed tree limb are just some of the hazards to your dog fence. Wooden and chain-link fences can be easily repaired without calling in a pro. Skilled DIYers can repair vinyl fencing, as long as they can find vinyl panels to match the existing fence. Metal fences are extremely durable but will require professional repair if damaged.Wood fences require the most maintenance of any type of dog fence; they need to be re-stained, re-sealed or painted periodically to avoid wood rot and warping. Vinyl fences will do well with periodic cleaning. With metal fences, you'll want to touch up rust or scratches. Our editors independently research, test, and recommend the best products; you can learn more about our review process here. We may receive commissions on purchases made from our chosen links. There's nothing quite as easy as letting your pup out by himself to do his business—especially if you have a doggie door that he can open himself. Of course, you'll also want to make sure your dug can't run away—even the most well-trained pooch could get caught up following a squirrel or other dog and wander away. While an electric fence can be a wonderful option, if you don't want to get one for whatever reason, a traditional fence is your best bet. Here, the best dog fences available today. At 6-feet high, this attractive white vinyl fence is tall enough to keep even larger breeds safe and secure in your yard. There aren't any spaces where your pup could gain a foothold and scamper over or even any slats for them to squeeze through. Because it's a privacy fence, they also won't be able to see other dogs or any people walking by and it offers you some seclusion as well from any nosy neighbors. Of course, your pooch will still be able to hear and smell any visitors on the other side of the fence, but without the visual cue, your pup is likely to curb its barking. This fence arrives unassembled and you'll also need to order posts and post caps to go along with it. This galvanized wire and solid welded construction fencing makes for an inexpensive fence that works for a small dog or a puppy. You can also use it in conjunction with an existing fence to make it escape-proof (covering slats that are too far apart) or inside of a fence that's climbable. It's also a lifesaver when you're in need of a quick fix for an existing fence that has a hole in it or a way to keep your pup hemmed in on your balcony. Made in America, this welded wire fence is also very easy to work with—no special tools or other accessories required. This modern interpretation of a white picket fence is made of weather-resistant vinyl materials that not only last forever it will look good in your front yard or back. With no-dig installation, it's easy to install yourself, plus if you ever move, you can readily take it with you. It's 3 feet high with a narrow 2.25-inches of spacing between the pickets so your small dog won't be able to get over it or squeeze through it. The only downside is that some who've tried it say it needed extra stabilizing, but overall it works well for bulldogs, shih tzus, and other small breeds. This chain-link slat fence offers many of the same advantages of a privacy fence—at about half the cost. The slats in the chain link prevent your pooch from climbing it and at 6-feet high even large breeds won't be able to jump over it. The slats are made of High-Density Polyethylene (HDPE) material with UV inhibitors that help make this fence able to withstand ice, snow, saltwater, sunshine, you name it. It's easy to install yourself, though you'll also need to pick up fence spikes, sold separately. Another important thing to remember: don't place any furniture or large planters near the fence that your pup may be able to climb and use as a booster to get over the fence and out to the other side. An invisible electric fence that you install yourself offers the advantage of being, well, invisible so it's not an eyesore on your property and doesn't require any HOA approvals. Because you set it up yourself—this version from PetSafe doesn't need to be buried underground—is more affordable than an electric fence with professional installation. The one major downside is that it requires a commitment to training your pet, and if you don't spend the time doing that, they could get hurt or run away. This system covers 0.5 acres and is portable, so you can take it on vacation, to a friend's house, or if you move. The collar can correct your pooch via either tone only or with five levels of static correction (a mild shock)—you should always start with the lowest level possible. When your dog crosses the electronic barrier, they'll receive a correction for up to 30 seconds. Once they are inside the barrier again, it stops and it doesn't go off when they cross back into the safe zone. Create an indoor or an outdoor play yard for your pup with this foldable fence kit. It has 16 individual panels that you can shape into a rectangle, square, or octagon—whichever fits your space best. The doors have latch panels that are easy for you to operate, but not your pet. The black powder-coated fencing is just under 2-feet high, so this will work for puppies or smaller dogs who don't jump but isn't suited for larger breeds. The kit comes with everything you need and arrives ready to be assembled. When you want to contain your pooch in a room or specific area of your home, an extra tall baby gate is the best choice. This one from Regalo is 41 inches tall and expands to fit openings 29 to 36.5 inches wide. It comes with a pressure mount kit that's easy to use and there's no added hassle of needing to drill or screw anything into your walls. With slats spaced a narrow 2.5 inches, there's little chance even small dogs will be able to squeeze by it. The gate is easy to open, even with one hand. Have a digger on your hands? Prevent them from escaping (but not digging, unfortunately), by fortifying your existing fence with this Dig Defence. Simply hammer the 4-gauge steel rod fencing with 15-inch spikes spaced 1.5 inches apart into the ground along your fence to make your fence impervious to diggers. It also works to keep animals that burrow, including bunnies, and predators (especially handy if you have chickens) out of your yard. The only caution: you can't use this along a tree line where it would hit tree roots. We recommend installing this after a rainy day when the ground is soft. As you might expect, the height of your fence is of the utmost importance when it comes to keeping your pooch in your yard. The larger the dog, the larger the fence you'll need—but if your pup's a jumper, your best option might be an invisible fence. Your pooch may be able to squeeze through the rails and escape if they're spaced too far apart. The exact best size for your dog will depend on his size, but in general a max spacing of 3-inches should do it. Dogs, and other animals, can squeeze under fences, too. The closer the fence reaches to the ground, the better. Another way dogs can escape is by climbing a fence. If your dog is a climber, skip a simple chain link fence as they are all too easy for dogs to maneuver. In general, a 6-foot high fence is sufficient for larger dogs, while smaller dogs are typically contained by a 3 or 4-foot fence. That all goes out the window, though, if your dog is a jumper, in which case you'll either want to opt for something even taller or an electric option, which will prevent dogs of all shapes and stripes from escaping. If your dog likes to dig, you've probably already learned that there's little you can do to completely stop the instinctual behavior. Encourage your dog to dig in a safe place that's far away from your fence—and any flower beds, too. We realize that's easier said than done, so as a secondary precaution, consider using an anti-digging fence along with your regular fence. These fences have tightly-spaced spikes that extend a foot or more into the ground to deter your dog from digging. By and large, yes, but it's up to you to be a responsible dog owner and spend the time training your dog to correctly use it. If you have any doubts that you're up to the task yourself, consider reaching out to a professional invisible fence installation company as many include training as part of their packages. Whether you're working with a trainer or on your own, it's important to use the lowest level of correction possible on the collar. You can gauge your dog's responsiveness by training them inside your home first to see which level corrects their bad behavior, be it not sitting on command or jumping on your counters. Then you can move your training outdoors. If you don't train your dog to understand and respect the fence, they may breach it and run away. Lastly, an invisible fence won't keep other animals or people out of your yard, so keep that in mind when deciding if this truly is the best style of fence for you and your dog. This piece was written by Anne Fritz, who has been writing about pet products for The Spruce for more than two years. Before writing this article, she consulted with her own dog trainer and gathered information from customer reviews and third-party articles. She is the proud owner of two rescue dogs.

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