

Why I Do Not Dock My Dog's Tails

Dr. Jeannie Thomason

As part of the dog's spinal column that consists of 6-23 vertebra enclosed in muscles, 4-7 pairs of nerves and supporting tendons and cartilage. The tail is used in movement, communication and balance.

The tail is used by a dog as an important balancing tool. This balancing ability of the tail is especially useful when the dog is walking on a narrow passage or running and wishes to make a quick turn in another direction. A dog will also use its tail as a rudder to swim more efficiently.

Hunting dogs are acclaimed for their speed. Hunting dogs have to be fast and lithe to capture the prey. Similar to tightrope walkers that use bars to maintain balance, dogs make use of the tail as a counter balance when scaling cliffs. Used as a counter balance, the tail also prevents a dog making a sharp turn from tumbling over.

The Poodle's tail is sickle shaped and held curved over their back.

A dog's tail can be used for preventing fly and insect bites. A dog swings its tail to prevent flies and other insects from irritating the dog. In the same way that a horse or cow uses its tail to shoo flies away, a dog will move its tail to get rid of insects and flies.

Dogs need their tails because without it, dogs do not have the many advantages that the tail provides to the dog.