

Luxury unleashed



Collar Me Beautiful

Jennifer Lopez is a pop star, dancer, actress, clothing designer, and perfumer. But more importantly, she is the owner of three dogs – a Chihuahua, a Cocker Spaniel, and a Mastiff. J-Lo is faced with the challenge of styling three distinctive dogs without detracting from her own demanding lifestyle. Although their Ma may be Jenny from the block, the only hoods these hounds frequent are Beverly Hills, Miami, and New York. Their celebrity pooch status demands they be fashionably accessorized with the latest leashes and collars.

Rumor has it that Lopez, frustrated by the limited choices of canine styles, thinks designing accessories for pampered pets might be fun. She would actually be following the lead of celebrities, such as Sean "Diddy" Combs, with his Sean John Pet Collection and Pamela Anderson, who created Pamela's Pets.

While we're waiting for J-Lo to create a line of her own, I'll suggest some of my favorite new leashes and collars that are already available.

Good breeding. Prosperous Greenwich, Conn., is home to the up-and-coming pet manufacturer Shadow Brown Design, LLC. The company creates delicate leashes and collars with stylish buckles. Browse www.shadowbrown.com for fine-looking choices.

The color of bling. Colored diamonds are more popular than ever. Now you can buy your dog sophisticated collars and leashes, each with a dazzling selection of tiny pastel crystals. Shop for jewelry at www.diamonddogs.us

Mod style. Canini's Zip-a-dee leather collar features a silver-finished buckle and lead with an urban-style metal ring. Choose from Lemonade Yellow or Lipstick Red. Visit www.caninipet.com

The Western. Milla's Italian leather collar and leash have a mass of rivets to create an opulent look. Both are sized for big or small dogs. www.milla-accessories.com

Call of the wild. Feeling exotic? While you strut in your faux animal-skin pumps, your pampered pet can wear a Gator or Pitone leash and collar. To shop Donald J. Pilner's exclusive designs, visit www.donaldjpilner.com

Step into it. Bella Bear's Step-In-Harness and lead sets are whimsical and manufactured in the San Francisco Bay area. The Sweet Dot is a particular favorite of mine. See www.bellabeancouture.com

Charlotte Reed is a television and radio pet care expert. She lives in New York, where she owns Two Dogs & A Goat, a full-service pet care provider since 1996.

By Charlotte Reed

Expert canine fashion tips

Having as many dogs as I do, I am constantly updating my leash and collar collections. My canine brood needs leashes for spring, summer, winter, and fall. And there are times, of course, when I want my accessories to match my dogs'.

I have learned the hard way that, although a collar or lead may be gorgeous, it still needs to fit my dog properly. Here are some ideas to help you ensure your set is appropriate and safe for your canine companion.

- Consider breed type and coloring so your pet can look her best.
- Make sure the set is strong enough to hold your dog. Test the strength of the buckles as a safety measure.
- If two fingers fit between the collar and your dog, it fits correctly.
- A long lead can tangle in a small dog's legs, and a short leash can hinder a larger dog's movement. Be conscious of the leash length before buying.



Details from the designers

Debbie Weiss of Poochee says, "Collars, harnesses, and leashes should be both stylish and functional."

Tina Nguyen of Jax and Bones: "Fashionable dog owners always consider the finest materials (leather, crystals, ribbon, brass, etc.) for their pampered pets."

Mark Drendel of Canine Styles advises careful measuring. "No two collars and leashes fit exactly alike."

Carolina Fay of Urban Hund believes, "A collar and leash are like a good pair of shoes. Change the set each season and don't wear white after Labor Day."

