



HOW TO MAKE A Y POLE

The Y pole is an extremely useful tool when working with fearful dogs. For zoos, this tool is great to humanely handle or drug wolves and coyotes. It is used as a safe extension of your hand to teach the dog or wolf that it is safe to submit and allow the Y pole to be placed across its neck. From that point you can put a leash on it or use a head cover and conduct a physical exam and give simple injections or add hobbles to relocate the animal or inject anesthesia with a syringe pole. For this to work, the handler must convey leadership *with compassion* and work in a calm and kind manner.



How can I make a Y pole?

To build a Y pole, find a welder who works with aluminum, so the Y pole will be both light and strong. The handle is typically about 4.5 feet (1.37 meters) long or you can create a 2-piece handle with threaded ends and a coupler to connect the two. This is even more versatile. Weld 6 inch (15cm) tines to the handle in the shape of a “Y” so the tines form a 70-80 degree angle. This is a good size for handling most dogs. Y poles can be made in different lengths and shapes to dress a variety of animal sizes and situations. There is no way to size a Y pole to match the size of the dog. Simply use the Y Pole, get confident with it, and you'll acquire a sense of when it might be better to have tines an inch or so shorter.



Wrap the first layer over each tine with a rugged material to prevent the dog's teeth from touching the metal. This can be PVC tubing (best) or many layers of bicycle inner tubing. Reinforce this first layer with duct tape then add the second layer with closed-cell foam. (Closed-cell foam does not soak up water.)

The easiest foam to work with in the U.S. is pipe insulation shaped like a long tube. Then add many, many layers of duct tape as tight as possible. Don't forget to cover the ends well. There should be no place where the animal's teeth can touch the metal of the tines.



The best Y pole to purchase is the [Freeman Y pole](#) sold by Tomahawk Traps.

For training in animal chemical capture, take [“The Foundations of Wildlife Chemical Capture”](#) taught by Dr. Mark Johnson who introduced the Y pole.

For more information on the Y pole and how to use it, visit our our [YouTube Channel: GWRFeralDogs](#) and our [Feral Dog Blog](#)