



*Garden fencing wired to upright chain link panel using the "sewing technique"*

## Pen Pals

Building an escape-proof pen takes a bit of time and effort, but it is worthwhile for a few reasons. First, you will have peace of mind knowing that your wolfdogs are safely contained. Second, a pen will stop your wolfdogs from digging up your yard and wreaking havoc on anything they can get their big paws on while you are gone. And last but not least, since your pen will be built at least two feet in from your perimeter fence, there will be no chance of children teasing your wolfdog through the fence and possibly being bitten, or someone poisoning or stealing your beloved companion.

An even better option than simply building your pen away from your yard fence is to build a perimeter fence two feet out around

your pen. But for now, let's get your main pen built. Don't be intimidated by the construction aspects of this project. It is actually simple, although you will probably need a helper to maneuver the chain link panels into place and to help with the top. Just remember, you only have to build it once, and it's worth it. *Proper containment can save your wolfdog's life.*

Most dog pens are four-sided chain-link enclosures. Your pen, however, will be six-sided, as containing a wolfdog requires a top and a dig-proof bottom. Measure the area to determine what length chain link panels to use. The larger you can build the pen, the better. Do it right the first time—tearing down and expanding is no fun, believe me. If you plan to make the pen twelve feet wide, either six- or twelve-foot panels will work. Regardless of the width you choose, the panels should be at least six feet high and made of at least eleven-gauge chain link. (Nine-gauge is stronger; the lower the number, the stronger the chain link.) You could also use chain link panels across the top. Chain link panels can be purchased from a building materials supplier. You might also find used panels or even a second-hand dog run in your local newspaper classifieds.

Choose a flat area, set back at least two feet from your perimeter fence. Set up the four side panels first and secure them to each other using clamps and bolts. Try to keep the panels lined up and flush, and be sure all nuts are tightened. Now we move on to the dig-proof bottom. If you own your home and can build something permanent, concrete can be poured. If you are lucky enough to already have a concreted patio area, you might consider using part of that as the floor pad. If concrete flooring is not possible, read on.

The best way to dig-proof the bottom of your pen is with rolled