As with any type of animal, the amount of restraint to be used depends on the temperament of that particular animal. Always use the least amount of restraint needed to get the job done.

**Horses**

The halter is the most common form of restraint used with horses. With a rope attached to it, the horse can be lead into a stall or a stock. The rope can also be tied with a slip knot so that the horse does not walk away from you while you are picking the hooves or some other minor procedure.

Twitches have been used commonly for many years. They are distracting to the horse because they stimulate the nerves in the lips. This causes him to think about something other than the procedure being performed. When placed around the lips, the twitch is twisted so that the upper lip is caught up in the twitch and it is held in place. Never twist too tightly or for extended periods of time. This can do damage to the horse's skin. Also, never use a twitch on the horse's ear, as it can do irreparable damage to the ear and the muscle. There are several twitches available for purchase. You can also use everyday items to make a temporary twitch if it is necessary. For example, using a loop of rope over the head of a hammer works. Once the rope is around the horse’s lip, the hammer can be rotated so that it causes the rope to tighten. Three types of twitchs include the humane twitch, rope twitch, and the chain twitch.
Mouth gags are used for dental procedures, but must be used with the horse sedated. When using a mouth gag, never put your arm into the center of it. They can pop off and crush your arm. Hobbles make the horse unable to use his legs. It consists of a band of material that is wrapped around the horse’s leg. There are leather hobbles which look like a small belt and there are hobbles made of woven material. Some have metal loops on each end where you can run a rope through and thus tie the rope. Casting harnesses are used for cases where the horse must be completely confined. This can be dangerous to you and the horse and should never be attempted unless the person has a lot of experience and the animal is not going to be falling onto hard pavement or uneven ground. With the many injectable sedatives available today, casting is rarely performed. Muzzles can be used to keep the horse from biting or chewing.
Cattle

The number one type of restraint for cattle is a squeeze chute. Cows can be unpredictable and if you are restraining using only a rope, you may be in for a big surprise. Squeeze chutes are used when the animal’s head needs to be immobilized or if the animal is unable to be handled otherwise. They are located at the end of a chute. Some are operated by hand and others have a mechanism so that when the cow steps on a certain area, the squeeze chute closes around the cow’s neck. Nose leads can be used when the procedure is going to be quick, such as an injection. They are big rings that are placed in the cow’s nose so that each end of the ring is in a nostril. This distracts the cow the way the twitch works on the horse. Hobbles can be used for cattle also. They are placed on the cow’s back legs. Typically the hobbles are attached with a chain. Once in place, the cow can only move its legs as much as the chain will allow.
Goats and Sheep

There are not many pieces of restraint equipment on the market for goats and sheep. Typically, a good handler can restrain the goat or sheep well enough for any procedure to be performed, including tail docking, castration and dehorning.
Swine

A snare, similar to the ones found in small animal practices, can be used to aid in catching a pig in an open area. The snare should be heavier and stronger than the typical ones used for canines. The loop of the snare is slipped over the nose and upper jaw. It should catch behind the upper canine teeth. When the snare is pulled tight, the pig will resist by pulling back on the snare. Therefore it immobilizes itself. This type of restraint is used for minor procedures. Hobbles similar to the ones used for horses can be used with pigs. For pigs, the hobble is usually made of cotton rope running through a metal ring. A piece of rope is run through the ring and can be used to lift that leg for whatever purpose.