

Mushing Vocabulary

Yukon Quest vocabulary terms.

- **A'right** - Also Hike! or OK! - A command used to get the team going. "Mush" is not used.
- **Basket** - Area in the sled where freight or passengers are carried.
- **Booties** - A sock-like boot, usually made of polar fleece. Mushers put them on a dog's feet to prevent snow and ice build-up between the toes.
- **Brake** - Heavy metal fork. When the prongs are forced into the snow, the sled stops.



- **Brushbow** - Curved, bent piece around the front on a dogsled.
- **Checkpoint** - Designated stop along the trail where the musher "checks in" and resupplies. Mushers may also eat, rest or repair equipment at a checkpoint.
- **Dog Box** - Large wooden box tailored to the size of a truck bed and divided into sections for individual dogs. Installs on the truck for traveling and transporting the dogs.
- **Dropped Dog** - A dog that the musher has dropped from his team at a checkpoint or other approved location along the trail. The dog is cared for by Vets or handlers.
- **Dog Sled** - A sled on runners pulled by a dog team.
- **Dog Yard** - Area where dogs are tied, chained or kenneled at the musher's home.
- **Driving Bow/Handlebar** - Top handle gripped by the driver while riding on the sled.
- **Drop Chain** - Cable or chain that can be fastened between trees, trucks, posts, etc. with short leads attached to hold individual dogs while awaiting transport.
- **Gangline** - Central line leading from the yoke at the front of the sled. Attaches the sled to all the dogs. The dogs are attached to the gangline via a tugline secured to the very back of each harness.
- **Gee** - The command to go right.
- **Handler** - The person who helps the musher train, transport and take care of the dogs.
- **Harness** - The diamond shaped, cloth strap web around the dog's chest, front legs and

- across its back. The harness attaches to the gangline and allows the dog to pull the sled.
- **Haw** - The command to go left.
 - **Holding Area** - The staging area at the race site where dogs are staked out and hooked up for the running of the race.
 - **Husky** - A type of dog bred specifically for strength, endurance and cold climate survival; often used to pull a sled.
 - **Ice hook** - Metal hook fastened to the yoke at the front of the sled. It is jammed into the snow when the musher needs to hold the team securely. Usually the driver is off the sled for some reason while this is being used.
 - **Kennel** - A shelter or boarding area for dogs.
 - **Lead dog(s)** - The front dog or dogs in the team.
 - **Litter** - Group of puppies born at the same time to one female.
 - **Malemute** - Large, pure, northern breed raised originally by coastal Eskimo people.
 - **Mush** - To go or travel over snow with a dog team and sled.
 - **Musher or Driver** - Person who runs the dog team.
 - **Neckline** - Line (12 - 15") which fastens the dog's collar to the gangline.
 - **On by** - Command used to direct the team past another team.
 - **Pedaling** - Pushing the sled with one foot while the other is on the sled runner.
 - **Purse** - The total amount of prize money that is split between the winning mushers in the race.
 - **Race Marshall** - The person who makes sure the race is run according to the rules.
 - **Runner** - The underside surface on which the sled slides.
 - **Sled dog race** - A running competition between teams of dogs attached by a line to a sled with a dog driver or musher at the back. Not a "DOG SLED RACE".
 - **Stakeout chain** - Used to tether a dog, usually about 6 feet long. Swivels around a stake in the ground at the home kennel.
 - **Stanchions** - Upright pieces fencing in the side of a sled. They run between the runner and the top rail.
 - **Swing dogs** - The pair of dogs directly behind the lead dogs.
 - **Team dogs** - Any of the pairs of dogs between the wheel dogs and swing dogs.
 - **Tighten up** - The call to the lead dog to get him to hold the line out taut.
 - **Trail!** - Demand used for the right-of-way on a trail.
 - **Tugline** - Line of about 3' which fastens the back loop of the harness to the gangline.
 - **Wheel dogs** - The pair of dogs directly in front of the sled in the team.
 - **Whoa** - Also Hold! Stop! - Stop.