



MUZZLE TRAINING FOR DOGS

TRUST • CONFIDENCE • SAFETY





I hope you find this eBook to be a great resource. Our goal here at DogsThat is to enrich the lives of dogs and dog owners worldwide.

Teaching your dog a new training game is going to deepen the bond you have with your dog, grow trust, build your dog's confidence and give your dog a new skill set that they will benefit from every day.

This eBook is a companion to our Shaped by Dog Podcast [Episode 153](#) that will help you create an amazing positive conditioned emotional response for your dog to the sight of a muzzle and to wearing a muzzle.

Here's to setting our dogs up for success!

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading 'Susan Garrett', is positioned below the text 'Here's to setting our dogs up for success!'.

Susan Garrett
www.DogsThat.com





Muzzle Training for Dogs

Trust, Confidence, and Safety

Using fun games to shape your dog to wear a muzzle will help your dog if they should ever need to wear one. Review the video for Shaped by Dog Podcast [Episode 153](#) for the training steps and what to look for in your dog's body language. In all stages, make sure that your [dog's T.E.M.P.](#) is good, so evaluate your dog's body language and confidence. Your goal is to create a positive conditioned emotional response for the muzzle.

You Will Need

A dog bowl with a deep lip, your dog's favourite treats (make sure some will fit through a muzzle), canning funnel or similar, a marker word or clicker, a muzzle that is suitable for your dog.

STAGE #1: FOUNDATION SHAPING GAMES

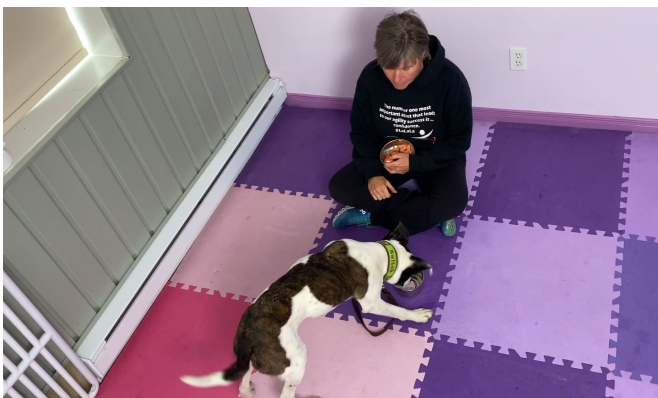
Step 1 – Target Bowl with Food

Place a suitably sized bowl on the ground and drop a treat in the bowl. Release your dog to get the treat from the bowl. Repeat two or three times.



Step 2 – Target Empty Bowl

Put down the empty bowl. When your dog looks at the bowl, release, mark your dog for putting their head in the bowl, and drop in a treat for them to eat. You want your dog to target the bottom of the bowl and hold the target for a couple of seconds.





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Step 3 – Canning Funnel in Bowl

Place the canning funnel in the bowl and have a treat at the base of the bowl. Release your dog to the bowl with the canning funnel to get the treat.



Step 4 – Canning Funnel out of the Bowl

Lift the canning funnel out of the bowl slightly, release your dog, and when your dog places their nose into the canning funnel, reward them with a treat from your hand that is under the funnel. Progress to moving the funnel around and your dog targeting it in many positions.





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STAGE #2: VALUE BUILDING FOR A POSITIVE CONDITIONED EMOTIONAL RESPONSE

Step 5 – Reverse Muzzling

Put your hand in the muzzle and feed your dog from the muzzle. Create a “Muzzle Piñata” of tasty cookies for your dog. You want your dog to think the muzzle is a really good thing!



Step 6 – Muzzle in the Bowl

This is the same as Step 3, but your muzzle will go into the bowl instead of the canning funnel. Make sure the treat you use sits up through the muzzle at the base of the bowl, so that your dog can easily get it when you release to the bowl with the muzzle in it.





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Step 7 – Muzzle out of the Bowl

Repeat Step 4 using the muzzle. Lift the muzzle out of the bowl slightly, release your dog, and when your dog places their nose into the muzzle, reward them with a treat from your hand that is under the muzzle. Progress to moving the muzzle around and your dog targeting it in many positions.



Mix Steps to Create a Positive Conditioned Emotional Response

You can switch between Step 5, treating your dog through the muzzle, and Step 7, your dog putting their head into the muzzle. Go back and forth to create a positive conditioned emotional response to the muzzle. Play a few times a day!





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Step 8 – The Snap of the Buckle is Good

The buckle of some muzzles will make a “snap” sound when you connect the strap. Condition your dog to the sound so that it’s a good thing. Have the snap almost closed, put it in front of your dog, complete the snap, and give your dog a treat. Gradually progress to snapping the buckle behind your dog’s head and give your dog a treat. We want the dog to be okay with the sound before we ever buckle up the muzzle when they have it on.



STAGE #3: VALUE TESTING CONNECTING THE MUZZLE

Make sure your dog maintains a positive conditioned emotional repose to a muzzle and keep evaluating their T.E.M.P. with all progressions. If your dog’s body language tells you they are opting out, go back to earlier stages and build value.

Step 9 – Connect the Muzzle

Have your dog target the muzzle and when their nose is inside, connect the straps. Give your dog a treat and undo the straps. Repeat several times. Your dog will only be wearing a muzzle for a second or two.





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Step 10 – Give it a Name (Hey-Ken-Yew!)

When your dog is loving the muzzle coming out and you can connect it, name it. Put the muzzle behind your back, say in an excited voice “hey, can you!” and bring the muzzle out for your dog to target. If you’ve not watched the podcast video or listened to the audio, check out from the 21 minute mark of [Episode 153](#) for why we name it “hey-ken-yew”!



Watch the podcast video or listen to the audio to see why naming it “hey-ken-yew!” can help your dog on walks.

PROGRESSING MUZZLE TRAINING WITH DURATION AND DISTRACTIONS

Duration

Grow the duration that your dog is wearing their muzzle. Ping pong duration between 5 to 10 seconds at a time and gradually increase the time your dog is wearing the muzzle. Aim for your dog to be able to relax wearing their muzzle for 5 to 10 minutes.



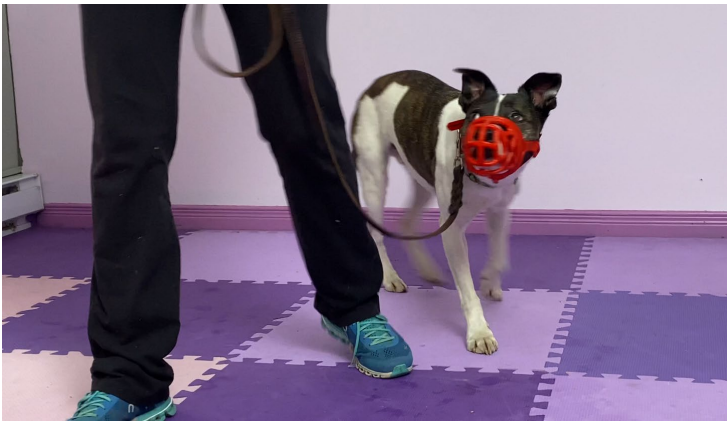


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Movement

Advance to your dog moving with the muzzle on. Put a cookie on top of an upturned bowl, walk with your dog around the bowl and release them to get the cookie. Progress to walking with your dog wearing their muzzle and feeding your dog through the muzzle as you are walking.



Touch

Progress to touching your dog when they are wearing a muzzle - paws, ears, and general handling of your dog.



Different Locations and People

Take your muzzle games to different locations. Advance to someone else touching your dog.

Important! Keep Value Building

Every time you add something new, make sure to go back and put “money in the bank” for a muzzle and repeat Steps 5 and 7. Always keep an eye on your dog’s body language to maintain a great positive conditioned emotional response for the muzzle.





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About Susan



A world-leading educator of dog trainers, Susan is also one of the most successful agility competitors of the last three decades. She has won multiple Gold Medals at National or World Championship events with every dog she has ever owned over the past 30 years. Susan was one of the very first dog trainers to share knowledge online when she opened her “Clicker Dogs” website many years ago. Susan has helped hundreds of thousands of people enjoy a great relationship with their dogs through her workshops and keynote speaking around the world, award winning books, DVDs, magazine articles, blog posts, podcasts, free dog training and dog agility video series, and online dog training programs.

A natural teacher and an entertaining speaker, Susan is world renowned for her dog training knowledge and practical application of that knowledge. Her understanding of how to apply science-based learning principles to both competitive and family pet dog training has been pivotal in changing how dogs are trained.

Susan is now helping many thousands of dog owners in over 100 countries have the best relationship possible with their dogs. The real joy for her comes from bringing confidence to dogs and their owner through playful interactions and relationship building games that are grounded firmly in the science of how animals learn.

Meet Us Online

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