

### Speaker Key

SG Susan Garrett

### Transcript

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SG Today's podcast was inspired by some of my students who I watched struggling trying to work one dog when the other dog in the household keeps interfering. And if you do not have more than one dog, stick with me. This is still going to be super important for you.

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Welcome to Shape by Dog, I'm Susan Garrett. And the topic of working multiple dogs is something that has grown organically for me, because after I got my very first puppy, I actually started bringing in other people's dogs and training them for them. So, my puppy got used to the sight of me training a dog that wasn't them.

So super important. There's a few criteria that are really important. Number one, let's make it really clear, please do not attempt to train any dog when there's another dog present. Unless that other dog is in a controlled position, and they don't have to hold a position. They can be on a raised dog bed or in a crate, and they're not interfering with the dog attempting to work. So, if they're in a crate barking their head off, that could be intimidating for the dog that you're attempting to work.

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So please, for the sake of the dog that you're trying to work, for your own level of peace when working a dog, just put one dog in another room or give them a big meaty bone until you can work through what I'm about to share with you here in this podcast.

And if you only have one dog, this is really important because number one, let's pretend someday you might get a second dog. But also, if you ever want to take this dog out to a family picnic, or maybe even do some sort of sport, all of these things are just distractions for your dog.

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So, the more distractions that your dog can learn to ignore, AKA turn into white noise, the better off or the more comfortable they are going to be, and the easier it is for you to take them places. And especially if those places involve competitions because you want to enter your dog in some sort of sport down the road. Having that dog who can chill and relax when it's not their time is such a blessing to you.

Okay, so how do we get to that place? And I'm going to preface this by saying just this morning Kim and I were working dogs and we had four dogs out there. Our five-month-old puppy Belief was just hanging out in a raised dog bed while I was doing some really, really exciting stuff with my other dog This! So, it's possible for dogs of all ages.

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Now, how did I get there with a five-month-old puppy? It might not be possible for all five-month-old puppies, but I'm going to give you the strategy and it's the same regardless if you're starting with your nine-year-old dog or your ten-week-old dog. So how do I start this with my puppies? As soon as they know [Crate Games](#) then I will take them into an environment where they get to see another dog working.



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But it's not me working. So that's the really cool thing. There's no need for them to get upset. Why does one dog get upset when they watch you train another dog?

Because that other dog, if you train like I do, and chances are you are trying to train like I am or you wouldn't be listening to this podcast, so when dog A sees you training dog B, they know dog B is getting a lot of really cool treats and having a lot of fun with you, and so they want in on that.

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Now, if you don't train in a way that your dog gets really excited about it, then maybe they're like, "Yeah, you can train with them." But if you're listening to this podcast, I'm going to count on the fact that you are a lot of fun when you train your dog.

And so, when a dog gets excited and they bark or they come and chase and they try to get in on the action, please don't lose your patience, please don't get frustrated.

Just know that dog is giving you a critique of how you train them to hold position and wait their turn. And if they're not doing it very good, it's not their problem, right?

It's just feedback for you to maybe take a different approach in how you've trained that.

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And so, let's get to the training, Susan. Start off with a few behaviors, Crate Games, and I mean from start to finish that the dog can chillax with the crate door open, and it doesn't have to be with high level distractions, but you have worked through distractions with the dog in the crate and they can relax when the crate door is open.

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So that's important. Now that will grow to Hot Zone. And here in the podcast if you haven't, please go back and listen to [podcast episode number 134](#) where I talk about how I teach a stay behavior without using any lures or corrections. Now, I'll give you a little spoiler alert.

The stay is just the gap between what you've asked the dog to do and when you release them.

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And when we are building a longer stay, we're just building duration, a longer gap between what you've asked them to do and when you release them. And all that we need to work on is different distractions.

So going back to my puppy, I'll start with them in the crate. As soon as my puppy knows Crate Games, I'll take them to where other people might be training and give them reinforcement for just relaxing in their crate, not getting too crazy when they see these other dogs work.

Now, if you have a dog that's really spun and they're already crazy, then this isn't a great idea. Maybe keep them outside of the building and give them reinforcement for being calm when other dogs are working.

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The next thing I want that puppy to do is to be able to go in the Hot Zone.

And if you go to the video I have on YouTube, which is called [Perch Work \(Pivots and Spins\)](#), I actually share with you how you can train a Hot Zone right there in that video. And so, we have a dog that will stay in a Hot Zone.



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Now, for me, my preferred Hot Zones will be a raised dog bed, a Klimb is a great thing if your dog is small enough to fit on a Klimb comfortably, as long as you might be training. A couch, if you're just training in your living room, a couch will do. And obviously a crate can be used either door open or door closed.

So those are the areas where my dog will be when they're waiting their turn to work with me. So, we need a dog or a puppy who has duration. Now that duration is built by, super important, they have a brilliant understanding of their release cue which means, guys please, if you're still using the word "okay", I really encourage you to change that because you just say it so much in conversation.

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So, the release word is something that the dog doesn't hear in conversation. So, we have Crate Games, we have a release word, we have Hot Zone, let's go. Let's do this. And so, what you're going to do, let's say you have two dogs, you might have 10 dogs. If you want to work on your dogs watching other dogs, you have to decide what that criteria is.

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For me, I do not like barking. So, if the dog is vocalizing while they're watching me, that's not going to fly for me because it just irritates me when I'm trying to train. And so, I'm going to make sure that that doesn't happen. So, the easy way that I work through it, is I just teach a dog to hold a toy while they're watching another dog if they're really driven to bark when they watch.

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But you decide, if you don't mind dogs barking while they're watching, then have at it. Drives me a little cray cray. Now, the criteria is that they have to stay on the Hot Zone or in the crate or wherever it is that you've decided. And them going on and off and on and off and on and off and on and off, doesn't count. They are giving you feedback on the training you've given them, and I would strongly encourage you to not accept that, because here's what happens.

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It starts as an on and off, on and off, and then it goes further and further and further away from what they came off on, if that makes sense to you. And so, you might be working you know, a hundred feet away and your dog is now not just jumping on and off their Hot Zone, they're jumping off the Hot Zone, running all the way down where you're working and running back and coming back on the Hot Zone. Not acceptable. Come on, rein it in. Let's listen to this podcast and let's do a retrain on that alright?

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So, I have my puppy and I'll take that Hot Zone, and I love it when I can go and watch other people train. Now obviously, I've done lots of distraction work so that the puppy will stay in the Hot Zone. Now, when you're working Hot Zone guys, it isn't about correcting the dog for leaving. It's all about telling the dog when they can leave with a release cue, which means you need to give frequent release cues.

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Because if the dog flies off of that Hot Zone without a release cue, then they're just giving you feedback on you haven't built up the distractions and slow enough increments and they got overwhelmed or triggered and so that boom, they're going to fly off that Hot Zone or off the chair if you put them in a chair or off the couch or out of their crate. Not good.



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Just take a step back. You've got to layer those distractions up, frequent release words so that we're telling the dog that 'you are right'. Now obviously we're going to throw cookies back to them. You can use a remote feeder. I might use that occasionally, but I want to get rid of it because it is just a big old lure to my dog that they can be quiet and stay in their Hot Zone when, you know, their friend the remote feeder is there. But as soon as it's gone, all good behavior is gone. So, you might keep the remote feeder there and maybe throw cookies back, but don't ever trigger the remote feeder.

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So, after they've learned to be quiet when the remote feeder's there, we've got to fade out the remote feeder. So, which means you never actually feed from the remote feeder anymore. So now we've got a dog that you've built up these distractions so you can do this test. However many dogs that you want to do this with, put them all in their raised Hot Zone. Now, Hot Zones I'd like to have either up off the ground or there's a ledge. So, if you're going to just use a dog bed, please don't just let it be a towel, because it's super hard for you to see if they're like a toe across the line.

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And if you go, "Oh Susan, toe across the line is okay. I don't mind that." Well trust me, that toe across the line will turn into what my now passed dog, Feature, used to do, come all the way off the bed with one toe remaining in the bed. So, I like the raise dog beds. The beds with a roll that you can see 'this is correct, this is not correct'. So, if any paws touch the ground, that's not correct.

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Now my old girl Feature, her daughter, is quickly turning into what Feature was and that she keeps two feet on and her two front feet off. Again, I have to address that. It's not her fault. She's seven and a half years old and I'm just letting it slide. Full disclosure, I should be fixing it, but I'm not. I'm teaching all of you instead.

And so, get all your dogs in a Hot Zone, however many you want to. And the first thing you're going to do is you're going to see if you can give these dogs individual cues from their Hot Zone. Can you ask a dog to sit or lie down in their Hot Zone?

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So, I would say the dog's name and ask them for one of those cues. Now, you could do it separately if you are unsure, and what we want is if you hear your name, so if I was to say "This! sit, This! down, This! break", break means she can come off the Hot Zone and you're going to go through that with each of your dogs.

Can they on one cue do those behaviors? If they can't, go back and put value in those cues. Now we're going to put all the dogs in a crate and close the door. Believe it or not, that's even more difficult than being in a Hot Zone because you have the frustration barrier that happens. And so can all your dogs be in a crate, and you just walk by them.

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You don't have a dog out. All the dogs are crated. You should be able to do that ideally. Now, can you run by them? Can you skip by them? Can you dribble balls by them or kick a soccer ball by them? At one point, do some of the dogs start vocalizing? Then you know that's their threshold that I suggest you work on, that they need to understand they can be quiet.



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Now of course you're not going to keep doing things until they start barking. You're going to be doing a couple of easy things, go and reward everybody, do a couple harder things.

Here's the way that I look at it. The easy things are things that I'm doing by myself, like I'm just walking, you know, doing cartwheels. Yeah, okay. Use your imagination. Doing things in front of their crate. And that's lower level.

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The highest level would be things I know the dogs love to do. Which is why I really work hard on this before my puppies turn into adolescent dogs and learn that something like agility is a lot of fun. Or learn that swimming in the pond is a lot of fun, so "I can't stay when other dogs are swimming". Whatever it is that I know eventually they're going to learn to love, I want them to learn to hang out in Hot Zones when they're puppies.

So, you can do it later in life. I choose to do it right off the bat because A - it's an easy behavior to teach my dogs, B - if they can hold Hot Zones under all these distractions, do you think that's going to hurt or help my start line in agility? Yeah, it's an asset. And so, I take my puppies and that's what I do. I'm not working, I'm still here and then I start to work some distance with them.

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Now, I know what dogs after doing my lineup of crates are the ones I have to take out and work Crate Games separately so they're not going to bark. Or you say, I'm just going to do it with crate door open. Does that change anything? I bet the dogs that bark are less likely to bark because of frustration barrier isn't there. And then you're going to do the same exercise with them on raised Hot Zones like a dog bed or a Klimb, something that gets them off the ground that is easier to see the criteria.

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Now you've isolated who's really good at this and who isn't, you're going to take these dogs and work them individually, which means all the other dogs need to be somewhere else. You know, give them a big meaty bone to chew on. Give them a stuffed Kong while you work on this dog.

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When you know your dogs have great skills individually and you can do all this distraction work in their crate or in a Hot Zone or both ideally, then you can add one dog to it. And here's what this is going to look like. You're going to do all these behaviors with just you and then call one dog off, reward them, and then reward the dog that held position. And then send the dog back to the Hot Zone and call the other dog off.

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So that's just a simple thing, I need to be able to 'you hold there while I call your friend or your sister'. Just because I'm calling your sister doesn't mean you get to go. So, staying nice and close, I just want them to learn to come off and get back on. When is it your turn and when I ask you to get back on, I want you to just jump right back up.

And eventually I'll grow that distance with just how many dogs? Yeah, that was two dogs. If I'm doing agility, I might want to send a dog to the Hot Zone from a hundred feet away. And then when they get up, I'll call the next one.



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Honestly what happens, the dog who's next learn whose turn it is. So, if I say, 'Feature's turn' or 'Swagger's turn', they immediately go, "Yeah, that's me." And it kind of makes me smile. And with Momentum, she's learned when I say, 'it's your mother's turn', that it's going to be her turn. It's crazy. She knows it's not Swagger's turn, she knows it's her turn. When it's from This! to Momentum, it's crazy.

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So now we've got two dogs that they know when they can come off and when they come on. Now we'll work on easy distractions. So, we take the one dog and at this lower level, this is really important. The dog that you're working will get some reinforcement, but the dog that's in the Hot Zone gets more reinforcement. It sounds crazy. So, I'm going to be tossing things. If you have somebody who can help, they can reinforce.

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But really, I like to do it myself. Toss things back and if it bounces off the Hot Zone, they don't get to just run and get it. [ItsYerChoice](#) is always in play. Alright, so there's another game that I should have said at the beginning is part of this. So, they don't just leave their Hot Zone. They never leave the Hot Zone unless they've been given a cue to leave the Hot Zone.

So, you're just going to build that up.

You can just walk that other dog by and then swap dogs out. And then you can have that other dog work in a sit and come and drive into your side and you're going to work at that dog running with you, playing tug with you. Everything you do that's a little bit more exciting, your dog that's in the Hot Zone is going to tell you when this is too much anxiety for them.

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Ideally, I want the dog in the Hot Zone just sleeping. Just you know, they could be watching but just relaxing. If I've done my job right, that dog is just going to chill while I'm playing with the other dog. Now they might be alert and watching, but honestly my dog This! often, she'll just chill, you know. She is [completely relaxed](#) when I work on other dog. And once you've got two, then if you've got more dogs, you can add them in.

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But the most important thing in this, guys, is don't ever lose your temper when a dog comes off Hot Zone. Just take it as feedback and go, "you know, you're right. I actually haven't built in a new level of distraction". It's just another fun game to play with your dogs. How can anything go wrong when you're having a fun game?

Be patient, take it slowly. Remember, I'm just going to remind you one more time and I've reminded you of this many times on the podcast, [the 5Cs: connection, clarity, confidence](#).

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We are working confidence in all different scenarios, in all different distractions. Too often people say, "We're gonna teach two dogs to tolerate you working with another dog by putting them on a Hot Zone with a correction." And so, what they're doing is, our 5C pyramid challenge is level four and complexity is level five. A lot of people are just starting right off the bat at challenge. How fair is that to the dog?



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You want to build trust in your dog. You want to build confidence. You want to grow their abilities by adding layers of confidence all the way up. It's exactly how I train my dogs. It works for me, I know it will work for you.

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If you don't have a second dog, get started on this now. Just take your dog around where there are other people training and start to build their duration. Now, of course you don't want them to interfere with those other people training, so you might get a leash so that you can get further away and see how well your dog does with this. Eventually you can get to the point where the leash is off and you can call them over, play a game of tug with them, send them back. Lots of fun.

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Let me know if this makes sense to you. Let me know if you've tried this and you've had a problem. Because I would like to know what that problem is so I can help you out. If you're watching this on YouTube, please help us out and give this video a like. And if what we're saying is of interest to you and you think 'you know what, I think this could help my friend', please be sure to share the podcast with other dog loving folks out there. Alright, I'll see you next time right here on Shape by Dog.

### Resources:

[Crate Games Online](#)

[Podcast Episode 134: How To Teach A Dog Stay WITHOUT Luring, Collar Pops Or Using The Word "Stay"](#)

[YouTube Video: Susan Garrett's Perch Work Dog Tricks \(Pivots and Spins\)](#)

[Learn ItsYerChoice](#)

[Podcast Episode 137: Is Your Dog Hyper At Home? How To Teach Relaxation](#)

[Podcast Episode 172: How To Teach Your Dog Anything With My Training Plan](#)



### 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 82 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.



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