

Resource Guarding in Puppies: When Your Puppy Biting Seems Aggressive

Speaker Key

SG Susan Garrett

Transcript

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SG Imagine if your cute, cuddly, lovable, little four-month-old puppy suddenly turned aggressive on you. You know, the thoughts that go through your mind at first you might say, "Is there something wrong with him? Oh my gosh. Like Susan mentioned, the [thyroid problems](#) in a podcast could cause this." That's not likely with a puppy of that age.

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So, then you might think, "Oh, is he trying to dominate me? Do I need to be pack leader?" No. Dominance theory was debunked ages ago. And then you might think, "Well, is there something that I've done wrong?" That is possible. Hi, I'm Susan Garrett. Welcome to Shaped by Dog. And I'm going to share a letter, the exact letter that came into me. And I got Tammie's permission to share this with you.

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"Susan, I'm a member of your Home School the Dog program right now, but I have a question that doesn't relate to the games we're doing. My four-month-old, male Sheepadoodle has been having random bursts of aggression. If my kids or I try to take something he's chewing on, that's new to him, and he really likes it, like a dog bone, he growls and tries to bite, not nip at, but full-on attack mode, whoever is reaching for it. For the most part he's really good at letting us take things from him like a toy or a sock that he's gotten that he shouldn't have, but the aggression has happened a couple of times and it seems like it's getting more often. What can I do to stop it quickly?"

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So very likely what Tammie is describing is something called resource guarding and as scary and unimaginable as it may seem it's a hundred percent completely normal. It's hard wired in puppies. Kind of like loving hockey and apologizing all the time is hardwired in Canadians. Just kidding. I know that's nurture. That's not nature.

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It's the dog or the puppy saying "I've got something of value. I want to make sure nobody takes it". It's a survival mechanism, because let's say for some horrible reason your dog ends up living on the streets, "that couldn't happen Susan", let's just go there for a minute, and he's going to have to fend for himself and find his own food. Now, he finds a half-eaten hamburger. "Oh my gosh. I got this half-eaten hamburger. Oh I'm so, so, so hungry".

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And if some other dog comes by and goes, "Hey, bud, I want that." And he goes, "Oh, okay. You can have it." He's going to starve to death, right? That actually reminds me of another story I'm going to tell you. This comes from another student of ours. It's all pertinent. Trust me. "So, this happened this morning, cutting my breakfast sausage, a bite escaped and shot off my plate. My two Border Terriers approached...". I'll share how that ends a minute. But I'll just remind you, it was breakfast sausage, pretty high value, kind of like found food, like the burger, and they were two Border Terriers.



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So, terriers aren't necessarily known for their politeness, especially when there's a high value resource. So today I'm going to walk you through what the early signs of resource guarding are, so that you can nip it in the bud if you're seeing it in your puppy. I'm going to share with you, what some of the inadvertent things that humans do to make this worse. And I will give you the step-by-step process that I use to help prevent resource guarding, and yes, help those of you who are dealing with it right now.

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Now, if you're listening to this podcast in your car or wherever you're listening to it, you're going to want to jump over to YouTube and watch it at some point, because I'm going to give demonstrations. I went all in on this podcast. And if you are watching it on YouTube, please go ahead and let me know that you value what my team and I are putting together for you by smashing that like button for me right now. Thank you so much!

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Before we get in too deep today, I want to give you this warning. Resource guarding can involve biting as demonstrated by Tammie's letter. Now you do not want to take this lightly. In many cases, you should see a Veterinary Behaviorist. Don't let this escalate too far because human safety is number one. And unfortunately, a lot of dogs get surrendered to rescues for this very reason.

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So, let's not let it escalate because as I said, resource guarding is completely normal for puppies. It's preventable and fixable in most cases. In [episode 66](#) of Shaped by Dog, I described resource guarding when it's dog against dog. I would recommend you take a listen to that episode because it's going to help you with the science of what we're going to be doing today.

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Today we're going to be reflecting on when dogs guard their resources against humans, yourself, or somebody else in the family. And if you're listening to this podcast, you know I have mentioned my friend Jean Donaldson's name before and she says, when we're looking at what we have to dog train, the first thing we have to ask is, "Is there an emotional response with this dog that we need to deal with?" And in this case, absolutely.

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That dog is showing some aggression, they're [telling you they are emotionally concerned](#), that they are fearful, they are concerned this might get taken away. And I can't recommend Jean's book enough, all of her books, but this one in particular called "[Mine!](#)", is all about resource guarding. So, for sure grab Jean's book.

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Let me just put this into human perspective. Let's say you've bought yourself a brand-new mountain bike. You've saved up a thousand dollars, and you went out and you bought this mountain bike, you went for a nice little mountain bike and on the trail there's a little place you could stop and buy some water, you lean your mountain bike up against the front window.



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And as you're going in, you see some dude kind of eyeing up your bike and you don't really pay much attention to it. Lo and behold, he jumps on it and he starts pedaling off. So, you come running out of the store, screaming, "Hey!". What is your emotional response right then? You're angry, right? You are not happy.

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Now, imagine you've saved up enough money to buy yourself a second thousand-dollar mountain bike. You're kind of down in the dumps about losing that first one, but to make my story really work, you don't think to buy yourself a lock. Now, in the same store, you're not quite as relaxed because you're looking "Is somebody taking my stuff? I don't want anyone taking my stuff."

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And so, you're kind of trying to buy your water, but you're looking and all of a sudden you see that same dude. Whoa, 0 to 60, right? You're not a fighter. You're not a big person, but you go all spider monkey and go flying out that door, "You are going to have it!". That kind of make sense that you would have that response, right?

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Resource guarding is in all of our dogs. But it's kind of like a smoldering flame. It's a smoldering flame that you might not really even notice it until the unconscious acts of the puppies owners kind of pour gasoline on that flame and fan it a little bit. I'll give you an example.

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Let's say, in our example, that Tammie says sometimes the dog runs off with a sock, the dog takes something that they shouldn't have. And what people do, and I honestly don't know if Tammie did this, but what people do is they get angry. "What are you doing with that sock?!"

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Now think of it from the puppy's point of view, "Look what I found! What a good puppy am I! Look what I got." And then you get mad, and you might scold them and take it away from them and some people might escalate and give that puppy a little smack, "that's my stuff! Don't take my stuff!" The next week, the puppy finds a shoe. Now they're maybe not going to come near you with it. They might play a little keep away and it might be a little more difficult to get that shoe away.

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Every interaction that you have with a puppy or a dog is education. Whether you want to or not, you don't have to have a clicker and a cookie. Dogs learn, puppies learn. And this is the thing about education. Intention counts for nothing. It doesn't matter that by scolding the puppy you intended on him learning "don't touch my stuff". Education is in the eye of the learner. So, it doesn't matter what you're teaching. All that matters is what the learner is learning.

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And your dog, through conditioning, is learning "when you grab stuff, keep away from that person". And that is how we start pouring gasoline on the flame. You don't realize how many times your dog finds something you just take it out of their mouth and put it up high, or maybe we scold them. So, the scolding makes it worse. Taking it from them and taking it away from them, that's not great either.



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What I would do, is call the puppy to me and give them something appropriate, like a bone for them to chew on, or something else. Eventually we're going to work on them not grabbing your stuff and so you don't have to keep rewarding them, because we know reinforcement builds behavior and what you might be creating, is a dog or a puppy that starts looking for your stuff so that they can get or earn a reward of you giving them the bone.

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So that's how it starts, is just be aware. I want to give you a second mountain bike story. We're just going to clean the slate. Your memory is cleansed. This is your first ever mountain bike you've just bought, you paid a thousand dollars for it. You go on a little hike and you lean it against the store window.

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You're in the store and you notice some dude looking at it. So, you finished buying what you want, you come out and the guy's like, "Wow, this is a really nice mountain bike." And you're like, "Yeah. I saved up for a long time for it." And he says, "You know, I have this brand-new mountain bike helmet that I was going to just take and donate because I bought it, doesn't fit me. Would you be interested? It's still in the box and everything." This guy gives you this helmet for cycling. Win.

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And then, a week later, you're at the same place and the guy says, "Hey, I was hoping I'd run into you. I'm sponsored by a big equipment company and they give me all these mountain bike shorts, and I was noticing you were cycling in jeans. It can't be comfortable. And we're both the same size. Can I, you know, give you a couple of pairs of pants." "Wow. That'd be awesome." "Hey, do you mind if I take a look at your bike?" "No, no", "that's beautiful". "Yeah. It's gorgeous".

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So, then the next time he sees you he's like, "Hey, can I take that bike for a spin?" "Yeah, give it a go. There's a little path." And magically, it's magical because it's my story, when he brings your bike back all the metal is replaced with titanium, really lightweight and it's major thousand-dollar bike now, like a \$10,000 bike.

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Now what's going on emotionally. You're like, "this guy is amazing", right? Like if you ever see him walking in the village, "Dude!", you probably know his name by now, "Dude! How's it going bud?" He could, you know, "Can I borrow your bike for the weekend?" "Oh, absolutely. I'm not using it." Like you've got a relationship and it's one built on trust. There's a conditioned emotional response, C-E-R, that's a really positive one.

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That is what we're going to do for your puppy, we are going to increase their confidence, and decrease their fears about what might happen if they get stuff, which increases their trust in you or anybody in the house, which grows an amazing relationship. So, we want to replace doubt and mistrust with confidence and a lot of trust between you.



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Now, when you see resource guarding, as with any problem, there's three things we can do. Number one, we can ignore it. I promise you it's likely going to escalate if you ignore it. It's not going to go away. Because the dog is showing resource guarding, there is a conditioned emotional response to them having a high value reward, when they see whoever, they are going to show you that they're not comfortable with that person nearby.

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So, ignoring, that's not going to work. It's going to escalate. The second thing you can do is you can manage. And a lot of people do that. They know that if they give their dogs a big meaty bone, they're going to growl if people walk near them. So, what are they going to do? They're never going to give them big meaty bones. Well, sad for the dog. And you have not dealt with that C-E-R.

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The dog is still going to want to guard their stuff. Putting the bones away might not stop it. They're going to find something else to guard. So, the best thing to do is train it. And there's two ways of training any behavior, right? Number one, you can punish it. There's likely many dogs out there who people have been bullied, and suppressed that aggressive response so that they don't show it towards them.

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That doesn't mean they won't show it to a kid someday. Cause it's always there. That flame is there. You've just smothered it a little bit around you. And plus, what kind of relationship is that going to make? And you're probably not going to be that kind of person if you're listening to this podcast, right? So that leads us with, we need to create a new C-E-R. One that your dog looks at you, walking near them when they have a bone or a great meal or fantastic treats like you just replace their bike with titanium.

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Your dog probably doesn't want to ride a bike, but you get my drift. They look at you as a dealer of \$10,000 gifts. There's a lot of bad advice out there on how to help dogs that are showing resource guarding. You can do an internet search and that's why you probably shouldn't because for everybody who has owned a dog, they believed that they now have all the answers to all dogs.

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And these solutions are out there because they have worked for one or two dogs, maybe a few more, but it's bad. It's really flawed advice for somebody to say, "when your puppy is eating their food, take that bowl away so he knows that you are the leader and that you are in control of everything good." Let's think about that.

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I am eating my chocolate chip cookie and you come, and you grab the rest of it from me. We no longer are friends. Just so we're clear. Bad advice, really bad advice. Another one that you'll hear, is people will say, "make sure when your puppy is eating that you put your hands in his bowl." No! Number one, I feed raw. Number two, no. If I was eating and you started sticking your fork in my bowl, that's inappropriate behavior and it's unnecessary. And then the advice will escalate from there, telling people to alpha role. Let's not go down there.



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Our goal in counter conditioning is that number one, everybody stays safe. Number two, that we escalate the dog's trust and confidence. That's what we want. And that begins with record keeping. I know if you're listening to this podcast, you know what I'm going to say. Grab your journal. And I talked about this on episode number 66.

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You need to write down what are the resources that your dog is guarding? Now, there's the obvious, like their food bowl, some dogs guard their food bowl when people come near. Some dogs guard things that are of high value that they chew, like meaty bones, a pizzle, or a rawhide. Don't give your dogs rawhide. Some guard toys, some guard locations, "I'm up on the couch. And I don't want you near this spot because I like this spot."

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Or "I might be laying on your pillow on the bed and you want to go to bed. But I like this pillow." Some dogs will guard against a spouse or a partner. So, if you're sitting on the couch and your partner wants to come and sit beside you, "Oh Nay nay" says the puppy. That's not how it works.

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A lot of these things you really need to consider seeing an Animal Behaviorist because me giving you advice over a podcast, I can't see where it's escalated to. And if you've got all of those things going on, I strongly encourage you to seek the advice of a Behaviorist.

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What we're going to do is, we're going to record keep "what is the trigger?". What does the dog have that they feel the need to show you that they are uncomfortable with it? Number two in your record keeping is "who is it against? Who is this dog resource guarding against?". Who's coming near that's setting them off.

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Number three "what time of day?". Things like, "how long after feeding or before feeding or did they just come inside? What behavior are they demonstrating?". So, remember when your dog is showing this they are saying "Right now, I'm not sure I can trust you or that person." And here's some of the common ways that they will show you this, and take note because a lot of people don't notice it or don't take note until it's escalated into the higher level.

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So early on your puppy or your dog is going to show you that they're not comfortable by freezing. Now they might be eating their food, or they might be chewing on a bone and you walk near, and they'll just freeze. Or you might be trying to take the bone from them, and they might freeze. They might freeze and stare off away from you. Some might glance up at you.

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So freezing is an early sign. Moving the resource. So, let's say you're walking near, they'll take that bone and they're going to go into a corner somewhere or onto a bed, maybe they'll go into a crate where you're going to less likely to try and take it from them.



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Freezing or freezing and staring, moving the resource, if that's a possibility, if the puppy is eating food and they think that there's a chance that somebody told you to take the food away, they'll start gulping their food and eating really fast. So, not good for them. But that's a sign "I don't feel comfortable with you near my resource."

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Another great one that seems innocuous, but it isn't, it's a key. It's a sign. Is the dog might try to cover the resource. So, they might lean their body into it. They might stand up and hover over it. They might turn away so their bodies between you and the resource. All of that is going to lead up to a point where they're going to give you a low growl. Just a "You know what? I don't normally talk to you like this, but you missed the first four signs, now I'm letting you know. This is mine, and I want to keep it".

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From the low growl it may go to an air snap, just a warning. You might get growling and air snapping. You might then go to numbers, I think I'm at seven, this is where you might get growling, air snapping, and a lunge towards you. They're not coming anywhere near where they can hit you, that's number eight. Number eight is an inhibited bite, meaning they will grab your hand, but they won't break the surface of your skin.

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Or they'll grab at your pants, but they're not tearing anything. Then we go to an uninhibited bite where you'll get a puncture wound, maybe and now and then you're going to count as a one, two. Hopefully you're not going to have to do that. If you are at the point where you have a puncture wound, actually, if you're at the point where your dog is growling, snapping and lunging, I would call in an expert there.

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Now let's talk about the fix. The best way to fix this is to never let it happen in the first place. Okay Susan, great advice there. The best way to fix it is prevention, obviously. But we want to, while we're preventing it, to create really positive C-E-Rs for the dog in all of those situations.

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So, this is what you're going to do. It's going to be the same if you're preventing it, or if you are trying to fix something. So, we've got our record keeping and then you're going to manage the environment. So, you're going to pick up things that your dog might be guarding. That the guarding could also be things like leashes or your shoes. So, whatever it is, you're going to pick them up so that they're not available to the dog to have an episode. We want to eliminate rehearsals of this episode.

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Which means when you feed the dog, the dog is going to have to be somewhere away from traffic especially if you have kids so that the dog can feel "this is my place I can eat here". Now I wouldn't recommend that that stay like that all the time. We are going to counter condition this and create a C-E-R that when the dog's eating they're not going to be worried at all when people walk by their food. All right, but for now, eliminate rehearsals, give them a safe place to eat, it might be in a crate.



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I'd like to do it in [an ex-pen](#) because we can actually work on really positive C-E-Rs while they're in that ex-pen. There's three behaviors that are going to be gold for you. And yes, coincidentally these three behaviors are all from our Home School the Dog program, but one of them I'm going to help get you on right away, so you don't have to be in any of my online programs.

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The first one is [ItsYerChoice](#). So, it's the dog sees a valuable resource and they have the impulse to not dive on it. And that is what happened with our Border Terriers. So, Paula mentioned that she was cutting her breakfast sausage and a piece fell off her plate onto the floor and the two Border Terriers approached and she said they stopped and stared at the sausage.

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"We've been playing ItsYerChoice on and off working to expand the locations and distraction levels and still find success. We've also been combining crate games with ItsYerChoice. I released my pups from their crate, I'm about two or three meters away, and I have handfuls of treats. They charge out of the crates and they're becoming more and more successful at stopping." She'll have an open hand with cookies. They stop before they get near her hand with the treats.

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"But this morning", Paula writes. "This morning, breakfast sausage people." and they're Terriers right. "Two dogs made the right choice." Which makes it doubly hard with two dogs. Because if one you know said, "I'm going to go towards that." the other one will go, "No!", all rules would be off. "I'm looking forward to using this victory as a springboard to more success for all of us. If you haven't figured it out, it's the human who needs the training." She says in brackets, "(at least in the case of my house!)"

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You know what, it's the case in all of our houses. We're all growing and learning about our dogs. So, if you want or need access to ItsYerChoice, I'm going to put a link in the show notes. ItsYerChoice is a part of all of my online programs, but you don't have to pay for it. I am going to make it available to you because I think it's important that we start teaching these puppies and dogs impulse control.

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Number two, Paula mentioned was [Crate Games](#). Number three, this is such an important skill for life. And that is the skill of your dog wanting, and being driven, to bring you things. So, I have a program it's called Bring Me. At the time of this recording, it's only available inside of our Home School the Dog program.

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It will be available at some point where you can buy it. But at the time of this recording, we'll put a link in the show notes when it does, we'll also put a link to the Home School the Dog. Why not? You know what I can't do that because Home School the Dog, you have to get it from our website and right now it's on our website. I think it's like \$300. But if you're really interested in Home School the Dog, write my team. Write my team and say, "I watched resource guarding and I need help".



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Then we will give you access to register and join Home School the Dog at this crazy discount that we give out once in a while, just to special people. So those three games are huge to rehearse for the dog. Good resources, but I show impulse control, when my mom or dad says, "bring me", my dog could be chewing a bone, but if I say "bring me", they put it in my hand. We're going to get your puppies to that stage too.

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I'm going to share with you what the process is that I do for prevention and to fix it, you can skip to step five, but I'd rather you didn't, but I understand not everybody has an ex-pen. If you have a puppy, you should have an ex-pen. So, it starts with an ex-pen. Let's say my puppy has a problem with their food bowl, I'll put an empty food bowl in that ex-pen.

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If my puppy has a problem guarding bones, I will put in a medium to low value bone. It's got to be high enough that my puppy will chew on it, but not so high that they're like a saber tooth tiger, "I don't want anyone to take it!". Medium to low value. Step number one, you walk by and you toss a high value reward, big chunk of meat, chicken, steak, or something of big value. Throw it in there and then keep walking.

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And you're going to do that a couple of times until you see "okay there's no growling, everybody's cool". Then you're going to stop. You're going to pause, and then throw the cookie in. That step number two. Then you're going to come up and stop, and you're going to just say something. Because a lot of times, especially if you've been taking things from your dog, your voice may trigger the response.

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So, you're just going to praise the dog, "Good!" Stop, praise, throw the cookie. Step number four now, you're going to stop and as you're praising, you're going to get lower so you're on the level of the dog. Just kind of stoop down. Stop, "Good boy!" toss the cookie. Now we're going to do the same thing, those same four steps with your dog tethered.

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Put them on a leash and tie them to something that is immovable around your house. You can do it in your backyard if you don't have anything around your house. Immovable. Don't do it to the leg of your chair, maybe the leg of your sofa it's super heavy, but it's got to be immovable. That way we know if your dog does the lunging bite, they can't get to you. So now with our dog on her tether, we're going to repeat all of those steps above.

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So, you are going to walk by and drop the cookie, but there is no gate between you guys and you're going to go all the way down so you're stooping and tossing. By this point, there should be a C-E-R developed. A conditioned emotional response that's a good one that your dog sees because we had one before that wasn't so good. They were snarling. Your dog sees you coming and they're going to go, "What happened to that chicken? Are they coming?" That's what we're looking for.



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You keep moving in this stage until you get the dog to not be tense, not freezing, not staring at you, they are relaxed. And now we're going to be kneeling down, but we're far enough away that the dog can't lunge and get anywhere near you. Now, hopefully you've read all their signs and they're completely relaxed.

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You've got to this point where you're bent down. I want you to put the cookie in the bowl. So, your hand is getting closer. If they're chewing a bone, you don't have to bend down. You don't have to be face to face. I just want you to bend over a little bit enough that you can place the cookie on or near the bone. So, it's placing it. You're not tossing it now from a distance you are placing.

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You're placing it in, then you're just going to get up and keep moving back and forth. I'm just going to bend down a little bit and place it. Now we want to get to the place where we're going to actually touch the bone. So, you're going to come in and you're going to give them a cookie, touch the bone, give them another cookie. Redo that.

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Walk in, give them a cookie, touch the bone, give them another cookie. When I say cookie, I mean a really high value reward. Now we're going to not give that first cookie. Come in, touch the bone, give a high value reward, leave. Now this next step, our dogs should be really chilling and you're not going to get through all this in one go.

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You might just get to step three. And then the next session you might start at step one and get down to step five, right? It depends on the relaxation and the acceptance of your dog. We want to get to a place where you come in, give them a cookie, pick up the bone, stuff in another high value reward. Now when you pick up the bone, you're not taking it away. You're keeping it just hovering above your dog's feet.

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And if you've been playing ItsYerChoice, they're not going to try and grab that food from you. You're just shoving that high-value food into the bone, and then you're giving it back to the dog and walking away. And if it's their dog dish, you're going to give them a cookie, pick up their dog dish, put another cookie in it, put it back down.

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The cookie that we give at first, we want to eliminate it because it kind of masks the conditioning, but I want to keep people safe so we're going to do it this way at first. Cookie, touch, and then another cookie, and now when we know our dog's chill you're just going to come in, pick up the bone, stuff a good cookie in it and walk away. And that's where I am with my puppy whenever I see her chewing a bone in an appropriate place which is a dog bed, I'll just walk up and stuff a cookie in it and walk in like I want them to know "I like you chewing dog bones on the dog bed".



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There's no need for the dog to get worried. Once we've got all of that with a tethered dog, and you can do this with your partner, both people do this. I would advise you jumping right in and doing it with the kids just depending on the age of the kids of course. Then we're going to do it with a higher value reward, a higher value bone. You're going to maybe give them their dinner and walk by and put more cookies, a higher value than the dinner, in the bowl.

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Do it when they're tethered with higher value rewards. And make sure that you're not seeing any tenseness. And then when you get through all of this process with high value rewards, then we're going to do it without a tether. And you're going to start all over with a medium value reward and you should have no problem. That is preventing and that is reconditioning, but I can't stress it enough.

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You may be in a place where you need to call in a Certified Veterinary Behaviorist to help you with this. Because remember, number one goal always is to be safe. Keep all the members of your family safe, and you're going to manage the environment and prevent rehearsals from your dog while you're working on this great daily conditioning program.

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You know, it took me a long time to say it, but it really should only take you 5 to 10 minutes to do a couple of stages of this. Several times throughout the day and before you know it, you're going to have this amazing puppy that when you say "bring me", they could be chewing on the best dog bone ever invented and they're going to come and put it in your hands because they trust that you're not going to take it away or be angry. That's it for today. I'll see you next time on Shaped by Dog.





Episode: #82

Resource Guarding in Puppies: When Your Puppy Biting Seems Aggressive

Resources:

[Podcast Episode 81: Sudden Aggression and Your Dog's Thyroid](#)

[Podcast Episode 66: Resource Guarding: Dog vs Dog Aggression](#)

[Podcast Episode 4: T.E.M.P. \(Tail, Eyes/Ears, Mouth, Posture\)](#)

[Book: Mine! A Practical Guide to Resource Guarding in Dogs by Jean Donaldson](#)

[Learn How to Play ItsYerChoice \(IYC\)](#)

[Crate Games Online](#)

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[Podcast Episode 6: The Art of Manipulation](#)

Ex-Pen Information:

[Ex-Pen: Rover Modular Pet Enclosures](#)

[Ex-Pen: Plastic 8-Panel](#)

[Ex-Pen: Folding Metal](#)



Resource Guarding in Puppies: When Your Puppy Biting Seems Aggressive

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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