

### Speaker Key

SG Susan Garrett

### Transcript

00:00:00

Have you heard the myth about Doodles never shed? It's a myth, because it's genetics. If you breed a shedding breed to a non-shedding breed, we can't predict what we're going to get. Today's podcast episode is all about myths that are commonly accepted as truths. So, I've got 14 myths for you today. So, let's jump right into it.

00:00:32

Hi, I'm Susan Garrett. Welcome to Shaped by Dog. Our first myth I want to debunk is the old adage 'you can't teach an old dog new tricks.' First of all, tell me what the definition of an old dog is? Some would say, "Oh well, when they're seven, they're a senior." Wrong eh. "When they're a teenager." Uh, wrong.

Like, the dog will tell you when they're getting older and even up to the day they die, you can engage with them. You can challenge them just like humans keeping the brain active is what [helps keep that dog young](#). And so, we get this question a lot, when people want to join Recallers they'll go, "Oh, my dog is eight. Do you think he can still you know, learn?"

00:01:13

I used to tell people the oldest dog we've ever had enrolled in any of our programs was a 17-year-old Irish Terrier. This year, that was topped. Our oldest dog to date is an 18-year-old dog. So, yes, you absolutely can teach an old dog new tricks.

Puppies will outgrow their [puppyhood](#). Now, of course they're going to outgrow their sloppy, uncoordinated, teething, all sorts of things. But the behaviors that get reinforced are the ones that keep carrying on for their lifetime.

00:01:45

So, if you have a puppy who is destructive aka like Tater Salad was destroying his family's couches and outdoor patio furniture, and you name it that he could find, he just destroyed it. He was never going to outgrow it. And so, just think that your puppy will outgrow things, dogs do what's reinforcing. And sometimes the naughty behavior is a sign that the dog needs more enrichment, more attention, [more exercise](#), more [actual dog training](#) from you.

So, don't rely on just waiting this out. Trust me, you're going to end up with a lifetime of frustration when you just invest some [puppy games](#) that you're going to have that puppy of your dreams, which will turn into the puppy of your lifetime for the next 20 years, maybe 30. Let's keep going.

00:02:30

The oldest dog on record just passed away at 31. Bobi from Portugal. And to follow up on that, if you go to [podcast episode number 143](#), I go into more detail about the fact you can actually teach a dog of any age.

Okay, this is a myth that kind of gets me a little excited. You have to show your dog who's the boss. You have to eat your dinner first. Never allow the dog to go through the door first. Don't let him dominate you.



# Episode: #244

## Dog Myths Debunked: Separating Canine Facts From Fiction

00:02:54

Please. If anybody suggest this to you, like it's old thinking, it's been proven wrong. It's been proven to be archaic, brutal dog training, that my hallucination is it might be 20 years, it might be 30 years, it might be longer than that, but I'm holding out that it could be sometime in the next 10 years that the vast majority of the dog training you see anywhere around the world will be training not too dissimilar to what I'm promoting here where we're giving dogs agency, where we're treating the dogs like the living sentient beings that they are.

So, if anybody is suggesting to you that your dog's trying to dominate you or that you need to be a stronger pack leader or boss for that dog, or you need to yada, yada, yada, please find yourself a better educator because there's lots of dog trainers out there that can help you. And check out [Shaped by Dog episode number 46](#), where I do a deep dive into do dogs really try to dominate you?

00:03:54

You shouldn't try and train a puppy until they're six months old. Luckily, I don't hear this one as much anymore, but it used to be that people said, "You just got to let the puppy grow up and be a puppy before you train them." And that went back to the last point we talked about, training that was tough and harsh for dogs, that at six months they were just too fragile they couldn't take that kind of dog training.

Well, dog training today is so different. It's so much about cooperation. It's so much about [helping a dog find joy](#) in your life. It's helping the dog understand [how they can earn reinforcement](#). And so, that happens the day they come into your home.

00:04:32

Whether you're the one actually guiding that training, or the dog is finding [other educators in the environment](#), in looking out the window, in fence running with the dog next door, in stealing food off the counter. So, the dogs are learning as soon as they get into your home. So, get in on the fun and start being their educator.

Dogs are just being defiant or stubborn so sometimes they will just blow you off if there's something better nearby. And again, it's really easy if you think about the beliefs we hold about our dogs, it's easy to put negative thinking on our part into the motives of the dog, but that's just not how they operate.

00:05:09

I believe and I've been proven by my dogs and my students' dogs, that dogs will do the best they can with the education we've given them in the environment that we've put them in. They will do that time and time again.

So, if you think your dog's being stubborn, if you think your dog's being spiteful, if you think your dog is blowing you off, trust me, there is another reason for what you're seeing.

Take a look with compassion in your heart. And check out [Shaped by Dog episode number 51](#), is your stubborn dog frustrating you, for a little bit more insight on this topic. Or [episode number 144](#), also about the potential of having a stubborn dog.

00:05:47

If you feed a dog when they are afraid, you are rewarding their fear. You know, it's really difficult for people to believe this because if a dog is shaking and afraid, it's highly unlikely they're going to take cookies. If you pat them, that may be reinforcing to them.



00:06:04

But think about it, if you were terrified of heights and you were, you know, going to go near the edge of a ledge and somebody said, "Here, I've got peanut M&Ms. That will help you, won't it?" Are you really going to become more fearful because somebody gave you peanut M&Ms? It just doesn't make sense, right?

The idea of giving a dog reinforcement near something they're afraid of is all about desensitization, which I've talked about in [podcast episode number 112](#). And what we want to do is take the dog away from something that they're fearful of. So, they're not over threshold and do reinforcing things near that thing that they're afraid of to help desensitize and [counter condition that fear](#).

00:06:46

A dog who wags its tail is a happy dog. Oh, nay, nay. Yes, dogs who are super excited and super happy, they're going to body wag. They're going to wag that tail. But a wagging tail doesn't mean a dog is happy all the time. You have to look at all the body cues that the dog is giving you as I mentioned in [Shaped by Dog episode number 4](#) and [episode number 157](#).

It's up to all of us to really be keen to explore the nuances of our dogs' communication. Tail is a great communicator, but a low-wagging tail is something very different than a higher-wagging tail. But a very erect, very shallow-wagging tail is something entirely different.

00:07:30

A yawning dog is a tired dog. Now this goes back to the two Shaped by Dog episodes I just referred you to. Dogs are great, far better than us at releasing stress. So, us human beings, we tend to bottle our stress and package it into our joints and into our gut and into places it has no business being.

Dogs are so good at getting rid of stress. Yawning is one way they do it. You'll notice if you have a body worker and the dog's got a sore spot, they might yawn as a way of releasing some of the tension as they're getting work. It's amazing to see.

00:08:05

Also shaking, scratching might be a way that they're showing stress. So again, in those two podcast episodes, I do a deep dive into helping you understand some of your dog's communication.

But yawning has a lot of meanings to dogs. I actually don't even know if dogs yawn like we do to get more oxygen to our brain when we're tired.

00:08:24

Any good dog would tolerate children and whatever a child wants to do to them. Really? No. I can't tell you the number of people who've told me that. No, they are dogs. They are not the same species as us. And even if they were, do you think anybody would tolerate a child like throwing things at them, pulling their face, pinching body parts? Dogs don't even have the reasoning ability that humans do.

So, let's not put dogs in that position. Yes, you may have had dogs in your childhood that put up with a lot of crap from kids. Yes, there might be dogs still today that might put up with a lot of crap. But from my point of view, that's abuse.

And our role as guardians over our dogs is to [protect and grow their confidence](#). Putting them in a precarious situation where an unpredictable child, who doesn't mean any harm, just does potentially injurious things to the dog.



00:09:19

My very first dog I took to a hockey practice back in the Eighties when I first got her. She was quite young, and a young toddler picked up an ashtray and threw it at her. Luckily, I was able to intervene, but that's just the kind of things that might happen.

And no, dogs and puppies, especially our older dogs, we should be being the buffer between the [children and the dogs](#) and helping the children to understand how they should be respectful of dogs. And until that point where they can logically figure that out, we keep them separate.

00:09:48

Puppies loved being hugged. Okay, this kind of can be related to the kids as well. Although there's a lot of adults who love to hug their dogs. It is rare to find a dog that loves being hugged. I think a lot of dogs possibly may tolerate it. But would you want somebody to do something to you that you just tolerate? There are dogs, rarities, but there are dogs out there that do love being hugged, but they are not common.

So, be respectful and communicate with a dog in the way that they understand. With scratches behind the ears and long body strokes, and maybe some skin rolling where you just start at the base of their tail while they're laying down and relaxed, and you just roll their skin between your fingers. Those are ways that you can show your love for your dog in a way that they really might enjoy it.

00:10:34

Dogs can only see in black and white. Now, that's not true either. It's true that dog's vision is very different than ours and their colors are limited. Certainly, they don't have the spectrum that we do.

If you go and look at Shaped by Dog [podcast episode number 54](#), it's talking about toys, but I share the app Dog Vision that gives you an understanding of the spectrum that dogs can see and why it would be important for us as dog owners to know that.

00:10:59

Dogs know they're wrong by their guilty look. Again, this goes back to understanding your dog's body nuances. And if a dog has been yelled at or even if they haven't, let's say there's feces on the floor when you get home and the dog has their ears pinned, they're stress panting, you can see the whites of their eyes and you go, "You!"

And so, they might be stressed because there's poop in the house. And they are freaked out by the fact there's poop in the house. They have zero connection that it was actually their poop from three hours ago. They're just freaked out because, "Why is there poop in the house? Poop shouldn't be in this house. This is crazy."

00:11:37

Some dogs, like my dog This! she doesn't like urine or feces anywhere. If I'm outside, she doesn't want to walk near it. And so, some dogs just are sensitive that way. That look is not guilt. It's they're being stressed about the situation. Especially if there's a history of you yelling when you come home and find something you don't like, or worse, rubbing their nose in it.

Oh, please. There are still people that do that. Come on, have respect for dogs. Okay. I know you maybe just didn't know that wasn't something you should do with a puppy but no. No, that's not how dogs learn.



00:12:11

Rescue dogs are damaged and have a lot of problems. You don't want to take them on because they just won't make good pets. You know, there's a lot of [rescue dogs](#) out there that have had some horrific things done to them, sadly, because some people are hurt, and they express their pain by showing pain to another creature.

But my experience has been with rescue dogs is that they appreciate being treated well. They appreciate being engaged and talked to and trained in a way that's kind. And they actually make unbelievably amazing pets.

00:12:45

Plus, most of those rescue dogs have had some form of house life. And so, they have an idea to urinate and defecate outside, which is one of the biggest problems to deal with. Now, I'm not saying all rescue dogs come house trained, but a lot of the older ones do.

So, do not be afraid by what baggage that dog may have, think about it as an old soul that needs somebody to show them some empathy. And I think you're just going to have the most amazing life with that rescue dog.

00:13:17

And finally, you should get two puppies as puppies need company for each other. Oh my gosh, please no. [Podcast episode number 91](#) of trying to raise two siblings in the same house. Now there's some of you out there that have done it and have done it successfully, but if you want an amazing relationship with your dog and you want the dog that loves to train with you and thinks you are the center of their world, it is exponentially harder to get that if you bring in two puppies.

And for some reason, the [less ethical dog breeders out there](#), you can tell if they're less ethical because when you've had your puppy for a few weeks, they're going to phone you and say, "You know, Lola has been so sad since you took Roxy home and I think they'd be a great pair to raise together." That's not a breeder who cares about the wellbeing of their puppies. Trust me.

00:14:08

Single puppy in the home bonds far better to humans. And that's what we want. If you want a dog that you can ignore because you don't have time for it so you think it's good to have two dogs so that they will entertain each other, you my friend are in for a lot of surprises because those two are going to cause amazing havoc and it will be double the trouble when you don't have time to train.

If you don't have time to train, then put off getting that dog for just a little bit until you say, "I've cleared my calendar. I've got this next six months that I can invest light schedule of work and I can really invest the time in bonding and engaging with a new puppy or rescue dog and setting them off on the right track." And so, six months down the road, it'll be so much easier to live together.

00:14:53

Okay, that's it for myth busting. If there's a myth out there you've heard that I haven't covered, jump over to [our YouTube channel](#) and leave a comment and let me know what that myth is.

And while you're there, go ahead hit the subscribe button if you're not yet a subscriber but please be sure to give the video a like because that lets YouTube know, 'You know, this lady knows what she's talking about.' I'll see you next time right here on Shaped by Dog.







# Episode: #244

## Dog Myths Debunked: Separating Canine Facts From Fiction

### Resources:

[GoFundMe: Help Us Put an End to Puppy Mills](#)

[Podcast Episode 62: 12 Keys to Helping My Dogs Live a Long and Happy Life](#)

[Podcast Episode 218: Puppy Development Stages And Your Dog's Behavior](#)

[YouTube Video: 15 Ways To Exercise Your Dog](#)

[YouTube Playlist: Dog Training Games with Susan Garrett](#)

[YouTube Video: Susan Garrett's 5 Games for Puppies](#)

[Podcast Episode 143: Is It Ever Too Late To Train Your Dog](#)

[Podcast Episode 46: Is Your Dog Trying to Dominate You and What You Can Do About It](#)

[Podcast Episode 206: First Dog Agility Competition: Creating Joy For This! By Maximizing Reinforcement](#)

[Podcast Episode 205: The Hidden World Of Reinforcement For Dogs And Why You Need To Know](#)

[Podcast Episode 197: Outsmarting Distractions: How To Use Environmental Reinforcement in Dog Training](#)

[Podcast Episode 51: Is Your Stubborn Dog Frustrating You?](#)

[Podcast Episode 144: Teach Your Dog To Listen No Matter What... Even If You Think They Are Stubborn](#)

[Podcast Episode 112: Stressed Dog? How Trigger Stacking Might Be Putting Your Dog Over Threshold](#)

[YouTube Playlist: Fearful Dogs Help with Susan Garrett](#)

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

[Podcast Episode 157: Dog Body Language: Understanding Canine Communication Signals And Emotions](#)

[Podcast Episode 243: Training My New Puppy, What He Knows So Far: Susan Garrett's Plan And Puppy Schedule](#)

[Podcast Episode 58: How to Create Kid Friendly Dogs and Dog Friendly Kids](#)

[Podcast Episode 54: Dog Toy Checklist: What's Good and What to Avoid](#)

[Podcast Episode 78: How to Train a Rescue Dog with Behavior Problems](#)

[Podcast Episode 91: Why Judgement Does Not Help People Or Dogs: ItsYerChoice LWT](#)

### About Susan

DogsThat.Com



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.



### Meet Us Online

Website	<a href="https://dogsthat.com">https://dogsthat.com</a>
Facebook	<a href="https://www.facebook.com/SusanGarrettDogAgility/">https://www.facebook.com/SusanGarrettDogAgility/</a>
Instagram	<a href="https://www.instagram.com/SusanGarrettDogsThat/">https://www.instagram.com/SusanGarrettDogsThat/</a>
TikTok	<a href="https://www.tiktok.com/@dogsthat">https://www.tiktok.com/@dogsthat</a>
LinkedIn	<a href="https://www.linkedin.com/company/dogsthat">https://www.linkedin.com/company/dogsthat</a>
Pinterest	<a href="https://pinterest.ca/dogsthatcom/">https://pinterest.ca/dogsthatcom/</a>
Twitter	<a href="https://twitter.com/susangarrett">https://twitter.com/susangarrett</a>
YouTube	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/c/DogsThat">https://www.youtube.com/c/DogsThat</a>
YouTube	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/user/ClickerDogs">https://www.youtube.com/user/ClickerDogs</a>

