

What No One Tells You About The Best Place To Train Your Puppy Or Rescue Dog

Speaker Key

SG Susan Garrett

Transcript

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Hi there, I have a question for you. Why is it do you suppose that some puppies grow up to be amazing companions for their family? While, others are rehomed long before their first birthday.

Like why do some rescue dogs get returned back to rescue time and time again? Why is it that some dogs make the cut while others just don't?

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Hi, I'm Susan Garrett. Welcome to Shaped by Dog. And today I'm going to share with you what I feel is the number one reason that dog owners are led towards that downward spiraling pathway of frustration and disappointment that leads to them eventually giving up on their puppy or dog.

And I'm also going to share with you the three critical strategies I know every dog owner can implement immediately so that their puppy or new rescue dog or current dog could end up living their best life ever, turning into the most amazing family companion that they could have ever dreamt of.

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Now, I've raised 11 dogs over the past 35 years as a professional dog trainer. Every one of those 11 dogs turned out to be an amazing companion. The envy of people who met those dogs. Not only were they international and world champions in the sport of dog agility, but they were companions that I could take on an off-lead hike into any forest or pasture.

Or I could take them on a leashed walk in a downtown city where they'd go by dogs and kids on bicycles and buses and cars, and you name it. Every single dog I've raised. So, it can't be just luck.

And not just my dogs, it's also the tens of thousands of students who've gone through our online Recaller programs, who have been able to start from a place where they saw no hope to a place where they're living their best life.

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Now that might seem impossible to you, but I'm going to help you start today. You see, the number one mistake that dog owners are making that start the spiral to a place they don't want to go is they put too much expectation on a puppy or a new rescue dog growing into an amazing family pet without thinking about their role in the process.

Take for example, my now seven-year-old rescue Bulldog, Tater Salad. Now, when I first heard about Tater Salad, his name wasn't Tater Salad at that time. When I first heard about Tater, he was a six-month-old designer dog, Bulldog crossed with a Boston Terrier and a Pug who was meant to be a lap dog.

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This family had visions of this cuddly little lap dog. Well, he grew into a 50-pound strong and confident Terrier crossed with a Bulldog. By six months old, he had destroyed his first couch, been thrown out of his first daycare, and was well on his way to being a terror in his household. Now his owners did as many do and put all of their eggs in the training school of hope. Meaning they were hoping he would eventually grow tired of these behaviors.



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They were hoping he would eventually find his way to being a great dog. They were hoping he would eventually outgrow these puppy antics. But by 15 months when he had now destroyed three couches, and he had been thrown out of three daycares and he couldn't be walked on a leash, nor could you get near him to clip his nails because he was such a headstrong, determined dog, they decided he needed to find a new home.

They didn't see an end to the problem that was Tater Salad. You see, hope does not create a great plan for your dog's future. There will always be one educator in your dog's life. It'll either be you or somebody in your family. Or it will be the random serendipitous events in the environment.

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Take any puppy outside on leash to any environment, say the city, are they going to give you immediate focused attention? Heck no. A leaf blowing in the wind, garbage on the ground, any smells that they might catch. Anything is going to be more interesting than you. The environment is a great educator, but what is that puppy or dog learning?

They're learning when they get into environment A, they ignore you. When they get into environment A, they look for other things to do. They look for other ways to get their entertainment, possibly to get their reinforcement. Chasing is a great reinforcement. Finding things to eat on the ground, that's a great reinforcement.

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It's the environment educating your dog. That's not a good plan if you want your dog to live their best life ever and you want your dog to become the most amazing family companion that you ever dreamt of. So, dog training needs to be intentionally from you. Or it will be organically from the environment.

And the problem, like Tater Salad's owner, is the expectations are too high into what the dog will grow into without taking the responsibility to be the director of that growth. So, what happens when they get that puppy outside in this environment that maybe is so exciting and distracting, they'll grab for the biggest cookie that they can find, and they'll try to bribe the puppy for their attention.

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And now your relationship becomes a transaction. If I have something in my hand that's more interesting than what you can find on the floor, you're going to give me your attention. But if not, all bets are off and I'm going to be out there with my environment telling me how to live my life.

That's leaving dog training up to chance and it's turning dog training into a negotiation. It's turning dog training into a barter. If I've got something that's good, will you come and give me your attention? That is not a formula for a successful relationship with that puppy. It is not a formula that's going to lead you to the dog of your dreams.

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Okay so, maybe I have your attention now. So, maybe you're saying, "Yeah, Susan, you're right. I've got to get intentional about what I'm doing with my puppy." And the next logical thing that most people say is "I'm going to find a local dog training school."

And hey, local dog training schools are great. I love them for three reasons. Number one, it gets you and your dog out of the house once a week. It's awesome outing that you may not be taking if you're not signed up for a class.



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Number two, you get to meet new people. How cool is that? An opportunity for more social contact for you? Brilliant. Number three, if you're going to the right dog training school, it should be a lot of fun for both you and your dog.

So, you're going to look for a local dog training school. Now, when should you go? Because this is the most important point. When should you go to that local dog training school? You go when your dog or puppy can do all of the behaviors they're going to teach at that school. "What did you just say, Susan? I go when my dog knows everything they're teaching?"

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I know it sounds counterintuitive, right? But that's exactly what I said. You go to the local schools when you can show up and be a showoff with your puppy. You can go in there and your puppy goes, "Yeah, I know how to do that. I know how to do that. I know how to do that." That's the time you go to school.

But unfortunately, that's not how tradition has us working our dog training. But think about that puppy that's distracted in the environment. Like, would you take a puppy downtown into a city and say, "I'm going to teach you to sit and down and stay." in the middle of a downtown core area. There's things that could scare that puppy.

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There's things that are going to distract that puppy. Heck, there's probably things that are going to distract you as well. It's like saying, "Would you take a 15-year-old kid with a learner's permit to downtown New York City during rush hour to teach them to drive?" "Uh, no, that makes no sense at all, Susan."

Of course it doesn't. Why? Because the stress factor for you and potentially for the new driver is going to be sky high. Because you're taking a massive risk of something unpredictable happening that could scar that new driver for life. Because the chances of that new driver losing confidence in their ability to even drive is so high.

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And the likelihood of you being so overwhelming to them trying to learn because of the high stakes of the environment, the relationship you have with that new learner is probably going to be crushed. Where do we take that new learner permit driver to learn how to drive? We go to an empty parking lot.

We go where there's no distractions, where we can in a calm environment, let them know about the check your shoulder and where the brake and where the gas pedal is. That's a much less stressful environment to learn, right?

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And the same is true for your dog. We want our puppy or dogs to learn an environment that is free of stress, that is the most comfortable environment that they can be in, that is free of distractions, and is relaxing for both you and the dog, so you can be at your best selves.

That isn't a brand-new environment. So, where can you go where your puppy will be most engaged with you, will have more focus for you, that won't be distracted by the environment, that is more likely to grow their confidence and more likely to learn the skill that you're teaching? Hmm, if only there was a place.



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Ding, ding, Eureka! It's your home. It's a place in your home. It's a place we like to call a training den. An environment where you'll just ward off a little corner of no matter how big or small your living area is, a tiny little area where you will always go to train your dog so that they can grow confidence in this environment that this is the place where they learn.

Good things happen here. Games are played. Reinforcement is earned. That's where we teach our puppies. That's where you're going to have the most success. That's where uptake is going to be the highest. Okay now, you know the number one way you don't want to train your dog.

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And what about those three critical strategies I know you can implement today. *Strategy number one, you need to take daily action.* You need to do these training sessions every single day. Already, I can see some of you are checking out. "Oh, Susan, you don't know my life. My folks living with me. I've got kids that get off to school. I've got a full-time job."

I've got you. Stick with me. I'm going to share with you how this will work daily for you. *Strategy number two is you've got to work from a proven plan.* "Oh yeah, yeah, yeah. I go on YouTube, and I just put in like how to get my dog to come when called. Then I just work from that plan." Random videos will bring you random results.

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You want a strategic approach that starts from the ground up of creating focus for you or even creating focus for your reinforcement, food or toys. That's where we want to start. More on that in a second. *Proven strategy number three is you need some form of journaling that you can take notes of what happened today and look at, compare that to what happened last week.*

And those notes will give you a strategy to know where you're going to go in your next training session. *Daily action, proven plan, and journaling.* Those are the three strategies that everybody can implement immediately and I'm going to share with you how.

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Number one, daily action. If your dog training is exactly the same as every dog I've ever trained, for the last 25 years, in that I use games. Games of reinforcement, games that build excitement, games that the dog or puppy loves to play because the games innately create focus for you, and we then transfer that focus to work.

If you played these games for 10 consecutive days in a row, I know that you could take your puppy into a different environment, and they would have focus for you. How do I know that for sure? Because just last week I picked up a friend's puppy, a puppy I had never met before.

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I took that puppy outside, I tried to interact with the puppy, got zero interaction, took the puppy inside to a training den in my house, played games with that puppy for 10 minutes, and then took that puppy back outside. And guess what? I had nothing but laser focus from a puppy that wasn't even three months old.

I'd never met the puppy before. The total time she was with me was less than one hour, 45 minutes to be exact. Instantly, I got more focus for me. I didn't have to bribe. I didn't have to lure her with a cookie. She just had a transfer of value because of the games we played, and it will happen for you as well.



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So, when you're playing these games, you can do them in less than 10 seconds, some of them as much as maybe three minutes, which means you can brush your teeth in the morning, then play a little game.

You can play one more little game before you go off to work. Then you can play another game when you get home from work, one more after supper, and one more quick one before bed. These little sessions are going to take you literally possibly 10 seconds, possibly three minutes.

And if you did that consistently taking daily action, your mind will be blown at the difference you'll see in your puppy or your dog.

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Number two is you're going to have a proven plan and I've got you. Because I'm going to share with you at the end of this video a way how you can get a [training plan](#) from me that I've written for my own students that is going to give you a game that you can see what I'm talking about. You can see the results that you can get just by playing one game.

And number three, journaling. Now, I know a lot of people are saying, "Oh, journaling. No, this is awful. This is like homework as a kid and all of the trauma that's coming back. No, no, no, no, no, no."

Journaling should be succinct. You write the date. You write the time, and you write a happy face or a neutral smile or a frown after each session.

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And that tells you. How you feel about that training session. That's data point number one. Next, you're going to put in out of a score of 10, or you can go back to smiley or neutral or frowny faces, what you felt emotionally about that session.

How engaged was your puppy? And did you progress a skill or a game. Just three questions. The final thing you're going to do is you're going to add a plan for your next session. 'I want to revisit this.' 'I want to move on and make this more complex. My dog was amazing. We can move forward.'

And to make sure that you do take action and make sure that you are engaged, I've got for you a [template of stickers](#) that you can print out in your own home.

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And I'm going to give you a link that you can go to a next video where I show you exactly how to do this, how to print them out, how to cut them out, and then you can stick those stickers anywhere. [No, this is, this isn't what I was referring to with the use of stickers.]

I mean, you could stick them on the front of your training journal. Something that motivates you when you look at it to go, "Yes, my dog's worth me training." "Yes. I'm going to play a game today."

Now we're taking daily action and we're more engaged as an owner. We've got a plan because I'm giving you mine and you will journal because it's fun and it's reinforcing for you.

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Before you know it, I've helped you create a daily habit. Now, if you would like that sticker template for your journal, the video tutorial plus the PDF lesson plan, just write in the comments on this video "New Start", then check the link in the description.





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Click that link and it will take you to a page where you'll get both the template for those stickers that you can print out and the video on how to print out those stickers. Plus, you'll have a download to the lesson plan I spoke about.

Daily action, work from a proven plan, and journal your results. Three strategies I know will bring you massive success with your dog training. It works for me. It works for the tens of thousands of students that I've helped in our online programs.

And I know without a shadow of doubt it will work for you. Are you ready for a new start? Comment below and let's begin. I'll see you next time, right here on Shaped by Dog.

Resource:

Get your free Stickers Template, Hand Target Training Video and PDF eBook Lesson Plan - <https://dogsthat.com/sbd-new-start-bundle/>



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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 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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