

# Fast And Easy Dog Training: Will A Quick Fix Get The Dog Behavior You Really Want?

### Speaker Key

SG Susan Garrett

### Transcript

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When I was a kid, there was a cartoon, and I honestly don't remember what it was called. And at the beginning of it, it was like a caveman kind of a cartoon. In the opening credits, there was a piece where the man is out looking for a wife and he clubs this woman over the head, and he drags her back to his cave by the hair.

And it was all very funny. But imagine if that was courting. How fast and easy it would be? "Well, what's this got to do with dog training, Susan?" You're about to find out.

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Hi, I'm Susan Garrett. Welcome to Shaped by Dog. And fast and easy, especially when we're talking about relationships, probably isn't the criteria you want to be following. So, when people talk to me about taking a balanced approach to dog training, saying it's faster and it's easier, is fast and easy really what we want?

Or is a deep relationship, trust, an understanding, a dog who wants to hang out with you because of the relationship you have. Now, personally, I think at the end of the day, the fast and easy really isn't long term fast and easy.

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Because I believe that the training that my dogs have, my puppy is now 20 months old, I would put that up against any kind of dog training done anywhere in the world. That maybe overcoming challenges with a reinforcement-based approach may appear on the onset to be a longer procedure.

But how do we get there in the first place? And, I've talked about on this podcast a little bit, [episode number 20](#), I talked about the dog training gap. There is a gap that all of us at one point who believed our mentors who told us that, "You know what, it's just like yes and no. You get more clarity when the dog gets told what the no is. It's easier for them to learn."

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And that's true if you don't have the understanding of how to [create clarity without creating overwhelming choices](#) for the dog. Choices should be easy. And it's not just dog training. If you follow any other species, there's a great horse trainer by the name of [Warwick Schiller](#).

He has a very similar approach to horses. And guess what? Horses are a lot bigger and stronger and can do a lot more damage than a lot of dogs can do to you. So, this works for all species of animals. And what I love best about this approach is how it helps each of us to help become the person we really were meant to be.

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To help become a person who thinks and looks for kindness first. You know, growing up, my father, I can't tell you the number of times he would tell us, "Love one another." Not in a preachy way. Sometimes it was in a funny way. Sometimes it was in a way meant to break up a squabble between two kids. But when I think of my dad now, I think of him saying that phrase to me.



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I can't tell you the number of times in my childhood that I heard him say, "Love one another." Imagine as an adult male, if that was your default mode. I got to tell you, this has not always been my default mode where dogs and especially where helping people with their dogs were, but that's a story for another day.

Today, I want you to understand, if you've been listening to my most recent episodes on 'Where reinforcement dog trainers find themselves in [the four quadrants of training](#).' Or if you listen to [podcast episode number 297](#), where I was sharing why sometimes people believe reinforcement training doesn't work.

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Well, let's get a little bit more into that. For those of you who say, "Yeah, my dog training isn't working, Susan." So, you and your current situation with your dog right now might be in one of two places. You might have like a new dog, [a new puppy](#) who is kind of a blank slate. Maybe there's some chewing and there's a lot of puppy type behaviors.

But you aren't dealing with any serious problems. And unfortunately, so many people get that puppy and think, "Well, I'm one of the lucky ones. This one's going to be good." And as my mentor, Bob Bailey always says, 'Reinforcement builds behavior.' And if you aren't very conscious of the reinforcement in your puppy's life, the environment's going to be building that behavior if it's not going to be you.

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And so, that puppy that seems to be so loving and really does everything you want, that stage is going to end very soon for you. Now I can tell you that for my own puppies, it just never ends because I intentionally build in the reinforcement I want to get the puppy of my dreams every single time.

So, for some of you, you might be coming here because you've got the new puppy. Thank you for being here now. Now for others of you, you are in a predicament. You haven't been as aware of what punishment or reinforcement that has been going on in your dog's life that has both created behaviors that you don't want to deal with and potentially fears and reactivities that you don't know how to deal with.

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And so, if that's where you are, let's make this super easy for you. The first thing we always deal with when we're dealing with a challenge is we decide, is this a behavior or is this an emotion? Because we do not train, 'sit', 'down', 'come', 'heel', if we have an emotional challenge.

As I mentioned in podcast episode number 297, we look at, what do we have to desensitize? Then how can we help counter condition? And then we look to, "Alright, now I'm ready. I'm ready. I want to bridge that gap, and I want to start using really strategic reinforcement-based dog training."

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Now, those of you with the puppy, you're both yes, going to continue to condition positive experiences for that puppy. Super important for a new puppy, but you're also going to intentionally use reinforcement to create a bond.

Now, how does that bond start? The biggest mistake some people will have you do with that puppy? It goes back to masking. Taking a cookie, putting it on the puppy's nose and getting them to do whatever you want by following a cookie.



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Eventually that cookie is not going to be very attractive. So, rather than taking that approach, let's use the cookie, whatever that is your dog currently likes, let's first grow other reinforcers. Maybe you've got dog kibble. Maybe you've got some homemade dog treats. Maybe you've got some chicken breast that you've roasted up.

You've got to have a selection of reinforcement with different values and shouldn't all be food. What about toys? If you've got a puppy, let's get a long toy that they can chase. Let's get them interacting with the toy. Let's get them bringing it to you every single time you ask.

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You never throw a toy for a puppy unless you're willing to bet the other person in the room, "I bet you a hundred dollars this puppy's going to bring it right back to me." Otherwise, if you throw a toy for a puppy, what's going to happen? Exactly. You don't know.

There's a chance the puppy will go, that was fun and bring it back. There's an unequal chance they will say, "This thing squeaks." and take off in the other direction. Or as my Terriers always did, the first day I brought them home, when they'd get a toy, they would just try to eviscerate it.

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So, there's so much reinforcement that can happen away from you. What we need for either, the dog that we're trying to rehabilitate, because there's a challenge in your household and the puppy that we want to create really intentional pathways, we need to [have a plan](#). And that plan is going to include manners, things like, yes, we don't want the puppy to bite.

Maybe you don't want that puppy to jump up on you, or you don't want the puppy to get on the furniture. Whatever the manners look like, you have to envision what does this look like two years from now? When guests come to my house, what do I want? We got to lay down the foundation that, 'that can happen now.'

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What does it look like when eventually you are walking your puppy or dog out on leash? What does that look like? Chaos of them pulling you from seeing a dog to person, to bush, to bicycle, or is it a dog that's engaging with you? That engagement comes through strategic reinforcing games that you can do while you're out on a walk.

You don't always have to have cookies because quite honestly, the cookies are not going to be able to compete with a bicycle or the bunny or the squirrel going up the tree. But the games will if you've created them in a way that the dog has focused for you in a way that we first are growing confidence.

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We're growing confidence in one specific room in your house. I asked my students to [set up a training den](#). We grow confidence with a few behaviors, interactive games, interactive behaviors, possibly a few tricks. While we're in this stage, guess what happens to the rest of the time when you don't have the time to focus on that puppy.

We manage the puppy's or the dog we're rehabilitating, we manage that behavior. If you trained your puppy intentionally, let's say three to five minutes a day, and you manage the behavior outside of that, probably within two weeks you would see a big difference in your puppy's behavior.



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If you could do two or three of those, three-to-five-minute sessions a day, you would see a massive difference in two weeks. But if you are like most people where you say, "Okay, we're going to do some of this training stuff that Susan talks about for two to three minutes a day." And then you get busy on the computer and your puppy gets to chew the furniture, bark at the people walking by on the window and the back of the couch maybe, play with the other dogs.

Go in and out of the dog door to dig holes in the backyard. All of that unmanaged time is building reinforcement where? Away from you. Three minutes with you and the other waking moments, all that reinforcement happens away from you. It's kind of like having a salad for lunch and then sitting on the couch playing video games, mainlining Coca Cola, eating chicken wings and french fries for the rest of the day and expecting the salad you had for lunch help you be healthy and fit.

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It's not going to happen. It's too small of an investment in your health and fitness plans. And the three minutes you did training your dog is too small of an investment of relationship building to compact with the reinforcement that that dog or puppy gets for building a relationship with everything that's magical and amazing away from you.

And so, what we need to do is we need to be very strategic. Management is the biggest part of getting success with reinforcement-based dog training. If you don't manage, then maybe you will have to go to saying, "ah no," "ah no," "ah you," get magical tools that stops the dog from doing what you don't want them to do.

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But that's never an option for me. I hope if you're listening to this podcast, it won't be an option for you either. So, we're going to follow this formula. We're going to manage by using what I call a gated community. We'll leave a link in the show notes to other [episodes where I've talked about this](#).

We're going to make sure that we set up moments of engagement with you and other members of the family because we want a relationship with all the members of the family. We're going to be intentional at growing confidence. We're not going to say grow confidence teaching our puppy a Hand Target. And then go out in the street or at the dog park and try to get hand touches at the dog park.

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That is going from a little bit of confidence to a massive challenge. You go confidence in your training den, and then you move from that training den to another location in your home. And then maybe the front porch where they might see cars going by.

Can they rehearse that? That's where we are introducing little micro challenges. And what that does is it gets the puppy to say, "Oh, I don't know. I don't think I can do a Hand Target when I'm on the front porch. Let's get back in the front door."

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And then we're back in the house, like in a blink of an eye. "Can you do it, here?" "Yeah! I can do it here." Get some reinforcement there, then go back outside. If you've done the game, whatever the first game is, in many rooms of the house, when you try it for the first time outside, they might fail and that's okay. Because one step on the other side of the threshold, you're back in the house where you can remind them of the great reinforcing game that you played.



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And then try it again outside. I bet you the second time you'll have more success. Then back in the house, maybe a couple of different rooms. The third time outside, it'll be magic. Does this make sense? That's how we bridge the gap between "My puppy isn't listening. My dog is blowing me off." It's nothing to do with your dog.

It has all to do with the attempts you made at growing that relationship with the dog. And I'm here to help you change that relationship. And it's not going to be about dragging anyone by the hair and insisting that they be with you. It's not going to be anything that is going to be off putting to you.

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And it's definitely not going to be anything that's off putting to your dog. It's all about how reinforcement-based training works best all through games. Now, you will find lots of suggestions on my YouTube page if you want to jump over to YouTube or because you're listening to this right now, I would like to offer you a bundle.

We have a program and it's really not very well known. It's a membership where every single month we teach you one trick to play with your dog and one dog training skill, every single month. The program's called Wag Nation. Wag as in 'wag' the tail. The membership is sold on a monthly or an annual basis.

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But for you, we're going to bundle it with our Home School the Dog program, which normally is 300 dollars. We're going to put Home School the Dog and the monthly membership together. And because you're listening to this right now, we are going to offer you the opportunity to have 70% discount.

All you have to do is contact my team at [wag@dogsthat.com](mailto:wag@dogsthat.com). I want you to write in the subject line, "I'm in the gap." And we're going to help get you out of the gap. There's so many different gurus out here in dog training land. It's because it's an unregulated industry, how do you know who to trust? I think there's two ways for you to decide. Number one, listen to your heart.

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What resonates with the kind of person you want to be and the kind of relationship you want with your dog. And if you need a little extra confidence, let me just say, I've not only been a world champion of dog agility many times over, I've also been a world champion of flyball in my past life, as well as being a champion in the sport of dog obedience, both in Canada and in the United States.

And not only that, I've been training dogs in a reinforcement-based way for more than 30 years. My book *Shaping Success* was named Dog Training Book of the Year in 2005. I'm not just another pretty face on social media telling you that I have all the answers because I stay curious, and I stay humble, and I will never pretend I have all the answers.

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Because I think one of the greatest gifts you give yourself, no matter who you are, no matter how many people look up to you in what you do, one of the greatest gifts you give yourself is to make sure you find people that you can have great discussions.

I love talking about dog training. It doesn't matter if it's about hunting or bite work. I love being in a room where I don't feel I'm the smartest person in the room. That's when we all get enlightened. When we bounce ideas off of each other, where we're open to possibilities.





## Episode: #299

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As long as those possibilities and those ideas are aligned with the kind of person you want to be and the direction your moral compass is pointing. I hope this makes sense to you. I hope this isn't too much at one time.

There is now 300 podcast episodes here on Shaped by Dog, and they're all available on YouTube free with demonstrations.

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So please, if you're unsure, go back and follow a playlist. Listen to the playlist, and then decide, "Is this my person? And is this the direction I want my relationship with my new puppy or dog to go?" I'll see you next time right here on Shaped by Dog.

### **Wag Nation and Home School the Dog Bundle:**

Write to use at [wag@dogsthat.com](mailto:wag@dogsthat.com) the subject line "I'm in the gap" for a very special opportunity to join us in Home School the Dog and Wag Nation.

### **Resources:**

[Podcast Episode 20: Bridging the Gap Between Blame and Kindness in Dog Training](#)

[Podcast Episode 97: Overwhelm in Dog Training: How to Take Action on Challenges](#)

[Warwick Schiller Attuned Horsemanship](#)

[Podcast Episode 298: The Dog Training Quadrants We Don't Talk About: Are We Using Them More Than We Know?](#)

[Podcast Episode 297: Why In 2025 We Still Have Dog Trainers Who Believe "Reinforcement Dog Training Doesn't Work"](#)

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

[Podcast Episode 131: How Would Susan Garrett Plan Your Dog Training Sessions?](#)

[Podcast Episode 267: How To Use A Training Den To Fast Track Your Dog's Success: No Space? No Problem!](#)

[Podcast Episode 30: Why Dog Crates Are Not Dog Cages](#)



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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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