



Muzzle Training

Seeing muzzles on dogs can create all sorts of mixed feelings and emotions for people. We have all seen, many a time, where a dog has been walking wearing a muzzle and heard all the negative comments that come with that image. People make all sorts of assumptions about your dog.

However, it is important that if your dog is the sort of dog that may get into trouble around strangers or indeed with other dogs, you, as the owner of that dog, have a responsibility to not only protect the people it may come into contact with but also to ensure that your dog doesn't get labelled 'the problem one'.

So with this in mind, we are advocates of muzzle training in cases that need it for the safety of people or other dogs in the community. You would equally be surprised that muzzle training a 'nervous' dog will also encourage people to stay away if you want to provide your dog with exercise in areas where people want to 'say hello'. We know not every dog wants strangers to come bowling up to be 'friendly' to them.

We only recommend basket style muzzles. Whilst they look more 'obvious' than other designs, they do ensure that your dog can pant properly, access water and also treats from their owner should they be going through some re-training. The smaller fabric ones inhibit a lot of this from taking place.

If your dog has to wear a muzzle, then let's make sure you have a happy dog wearing it who can continue to enjoy life without its welfare being at all compromised.



This is the style that we suggest but there are all sorts of makes out there. Ensure that when buying a muzzle for your dog, that it fits everywhere on the dogs face and isn't tight or likely to rub and cause any irritation.



Now to the Training Part

Training your dog to wear a muzzle should be a happy positive thing. Just putting it on your dog's face and expecting them to 'accept it' isn't realistic or fair on the dog. Here are some simple steps to help guide you but do not be tempted to rush the process. Take it at the dog's pace, be prepared to go back a step if the dog has forgotten the previous one and remember to keep it FUN.

Step 1.

Place the muzzle on the floor and encourage him to sniff or touch it. Every time he does this give him lots of praise and a super tasty treat. **DO NOT FORCE HIM TO TOUCH THE MUZZLE.** When he is happily touching the muzzle and looking at you for a treat you can progress to the next step.

Step 2.

Place a tasty treat, such as a piece of cheese, some cheese spread (you can wash the muzzle afterwards) or sausage, into the muzzle and allow the dog to put his nose in and take it straight back out. Do not attempt to close the muzzle at this point. Once he gets used to putting his nose into the muzzle you can give this action the name 'muzzle on' or mark with a 'yes'.

Step 3.

Place a few treats in the bottom of the muzzle. When he goes to put his nose in, say to him 'muzzle on', and then hold the straps behind his head for a few seconds, release and allow him to take his nose out. Repeat this action until your dog is relaxed with this.

Step 4.

Follow step 3 but this time, close the clasp of the muzzle behind his head. Undo the clasp straight away and allow him to take his nose out. Rushing at this point will undo the good work that you have done so far.

Step 5.

Slowly start to increase the length of time you leave the muzzle on. Remember to put your treats in the muzzle before he puts his nose in, keep talking to him to tell him he's doing well and you may want to try feeding him tasty treats once the muzzle is clipped up.

Hope this has helped!

Remember this is your dog and you have a responsibility to keep him safe from making mistakes. If you need to muzzle train your dog then please see this as a positive way of helping your dog and have fun!