

Muzzles can help dogs with aggression issues by increasing their safety and the safety of others. They can also help owner/handler to be less anxious therefore decreasing the dog's stress.

Two types of muzzles that can be very helpful are basket muzzles and nylon muzzles. Basket muzzles are made to enclose your dog's muzzle without restricting your dog's ability to open his/her mouth. This is important to note. If your dog is going to wear a muzzle for long periods of time or during exercise they need to use a basket muzzle so that they can pant and drink. Dogs can also receive and eat treats with this type of muzzle on.



The nylon muzzle wraps around your dog's muzzle and restricts your dog's ability to open his/her mouth. This muzzle is only good for selective use for short periods of time. When properly fit, a dog cannot pant when they have a nylon muzzle on. Therefore, it should not be used when a dog is being exercised. For a proper fit and choice of a muzzle, consult with your veterinarian or a professional dog trainer.

Muzzles can be purchased at most pet supply stores and should be properly fitted for each dog. It is very important that your dog feel as comfortable as possible, wearing his/her muzzle. For the first week you should play the On/Off game. With some really tasty, small, soft treats you are going to put the muzzle on, give a treat and take the muzzle off and give a treat. On / treat / off / treat... The idea is to reward the dog BEFORE he starts to fuss or worry about the muzzle. Do this several times a day for 5-10 repetitions each time.

On day 4 you will also be putting the muzzle on your dog EVERY TIME you start out on a walk. We want him/her to associate the muzzle with positive life rewards (food, going for a walk).

With basket muzzles, you can smear peanut butter or cream cheese on the bottom/nose end of the muzzle to help the dog adjust to it. The dog will associate tasty food with the muzzle. A good thing!

****NEVER LEAVE A MUZZLE ON AN UNSUPERVISED DOG****

If a muzzle is part of your dog's life you will want to treat your dog at least once per day for having his/her muzzle on. It is worthwhile to have a dog comfortable wearing a muzzle as you never know when you are going to need one. Even Lassie might think about biting if she is very afraid or injured. A muzzle keeps everyone safe, including the dog wearing it.

If you are having serious behaviour issues please call a professional dog trainer.