



Training your dog to use a muzzle does not mean that they are aggressive. Muzzles can be used for a multitude of different reasons, including - distraction, easier to administer Kennel Cough Vaccine, or for dogs who eat things they shouldn't.

It is important that all dogs, regardless to temperament, should be muzzle trained as if something were to happen to them and they are painful, just like humans, pain can stimulate aggression and this makes treatment safer for the people trying to help, whether this is in a veterinary setting or out and about.

The basket muzzle is the best type of muzzle for a dog. They are still able to pant, drink and take treats if needed and does not compromise their ability to do "dog things" such as sniff around or play. For finding the right size fit for your dog, please call the practice on 01934 624608 to arrange a 'muzzle fitting' consult with one of our nurses.

Step 1



Lay the muzzle on the floor and allow your dog to sniff around it. Place some treats near and around the muzzle to encourage your dog to interact with the muzzle. This may take time for your dog to get used to, but keep giving them praise when interacting with the muzzle.

Keep repeating this step 3 or 4 times over the course of a week for approximately 5 - 10 minutes until your dog is confident in interacting with the muzzle.

All dogs will complete each step at a different speed. Some dogs it can take weeks or even months to complete muzzle training. Don't be disheartened if other dogs complete their journey quicker than your dog. Each dog will learn at a different pace.

Step 2



Once your dog is feeling happier about interacting with a muzzle - its time to get messy! Spreadable cheese works wonders for dogs learning to use a muzzle because they have to use the muzzle as a puzzle and see this 'puzzle' as a treat factory and a reward. Dog friendly peanut butter is also a firm favourite.

Start by placing a small amount of spreadable treat into the end of the muzzle and show your dog. They may try and lick the treat from the outside of the muzzle and not stick their snout into the muzzle itself - this is still progress! Once more confident with this, aim and spreadable treat in the muzzle and encourage your dog to put their nose in. Praise them at this step, but do not force it. Try for a maximum for 5 minutes a time.

This process can take a long time, especially if your dog is sensitive to their snout being touched or handled. Just keep praising them and keep going with each step, one at a time, until confident to move onto the next step. You may find you need to take a step backwards at some point too, again, this can take time to get completely used to the steps.

Step 3



Once you have reached the point of your dog licking spreadable treats out of the muzzle (see picture above), you can start to lift the muzzle over their nose for a few seconds before removing. This will allow your dog to get used to the motion of a muzzle being placed on and off.

At this point, do not do the muzzle up, but do keep encouraging your dog to lick the spreadable treat at the end. Once your dog is comfortable with the muzzle over their nose, you can clip the muzzle together whilst they're eating their treat and leaving this done up for a few seconds before removing. You should repeat this for 4 or 5 times in one session, leaving the muzzle done up for a maximum for 30 seconds. If your dog needs a break in between, then repeat a few times a week until they're happy.

Step 4



Once your dog is happy with their muzzle clipped on, the final piece of the muzzle puzzle is to feed some treats through the size of the muzzle - this can be anything tasty they like! Keep this up over the following few weeks and try in different locations so that your dog is aware that they may need to wear a muzzle at any point. Keep treats around for this final step of muzzle training. When in a different location, it is also advisable that there is also some spreadable treats around in case you need to go back a step at any point.

When your dog is used to wearing a muzzle in different locations, it is still a good idea to place the muzzle on now and then so that your dog does not forget their muzzle training. Always keep treats with you and start to build up their confidence and take short walks along the road so they can get used to sniffing around with the muzzle on and not just place the muzzle on when they're going to be stationary.