

GETTING YOUR DOG TO LIKE HIS MUZZLE

Why a muzzle?

Muzzles are for everyone's safety, including your dog's. In situations where you can't control everything that happens around you, it is best to protect him. The good news is that your dog can learn to downright love his muzzle—and getting him out and about is much more important than what headgear he wears.

Introducing the muzzle.

To make your dog associate the muzzle with good things, get out the yummiest treats you can think of, and follow the steps below. The steps can be done in one session or over several, depending on your dog's comfort level.

Step 1: Reach through and treat.

- Hold the muzzle up with one hand so your dog notices it.
- Reach through the muzzle with your other hand to give your dog a treat.
- Repeat 3-6 times.
- From now on, every time your dog sees the muzzle, treat him. When the muzzle goes away, stop treating.

Step 2: Nose in the muzzle for treat.

- Cup the muzzle with one hand. Hold the treat so your dog has to put his nose into or through the muzzle to get the treat.
- As soon as the treat is gone, remove the muzzle.
- Repeat until your dog voluntarily sticks his nose into the muzzle to get the treat.
- Now treat several times really quickly so your dog keeps his face in the muzzle for 2-3 seconds.
- Repeat until he can keep the muzzle on for 10 seconds with you delivering a treat every few seconds.

Step 3: Nose in the muzzle and buckle for treat.

- Load the muzzle up with treats. While your dog eats, hold the neck straps behind his neck and apply light pressure. As soon as he finishes the treats, take off the muzzle.
- Next, have your dog put his nose in the muzzle, hold the neck straps, then start feeding the treats through the muzzle. Repeat this exercise until your dog will keep his head in the muzzle for 3-5 seconds before you start treating.
- Have your dog put his nose in the muzzle, but now close the buckle and unleash a bunch of treats, preferably something extra delicious. When the treats are gone, take off the muzzle.

Step 4: Wearing the muzzle for treat and walk.

- Put the muzzle on and immediately take your dog for a fun walk. Take some treats with you and dish them out along the way.