



## Get Behaviors!

### Lesson Instructions & Troubleshooting

**Goal:** The goal of this module is to ask your dog to begin moving around the house while wearing the muzzle.

Thus far the dog has been sitting or standing while we were building up duration for wearing the muzzle, then we fastened the muzzle to her head. Now she needs to begin moving.

It's always a bit surprising to me that most dogs won't easily get up and walk around. Some freeze in place, others might start pawing at the muzzle as soon as you ask them to move.

Most dogs need to experience some training games while wearing the muzzle so they learn they can move and just do some normal doggie stuff with the muzzle on. The behaviors we ask, need to be simple and very familiar to your dog (i.e. walk one step, sit, stand, walk 2 steps) whatever behaviors your dog knows well and LOVES to do.

Be sure the muzzle is fastened securely at this point so it's not banging around on your dog's face which may elicit the fussing and pawing at it that we are working to avoid.

#### What You Will Need:

- Your basket muzzle
- A hungry dog
- Delicious, high-value food that is cut in cubes that are large enough that they are easy for you to handle. Examples include:
  - Chicken, hot dogs, cheese, steak, pork chops, homemade liver or fish treats. Store purchased MEAT BALLS are awesome.
  - A release word to indicate the end of the game. (not required)

## Summary of the Game:

- Start these games indoors.
- Set a timer for 3 minutes.
- Offer your dog the muzzle and ask her to place her snout in.
- Fasten the straps as we practiced in the previous module.
- Feed her once you have the straps fastened
- NOW ask for a simple behavior (i.e. sit or walk one step)
- Once your dog completes the behavior – FEED GENEROUSLY **no less than 5 pieces.**
- Repeat – ask for a simple behavior and FEED GENEROUSLY, **no less than 5 pieces.**
- Repeat the above and be sure to ask for different behaviors .
- WORK AT YOUR DOGS PACE. Don't push if the dog is pawing at the muzzle.
- As your dog becomes more comfortable moving around and “doing stuff” with the muzzle on, you can increase the difficulty of the game **SLOWLY** by asking the dog to walk more steps or perform 2 behaviors before reinforcing her.
- Once she is happily performing behaviors indoors with the muzzle on, move outdoors and continue to play these around your home.
  - Start with a deck or porch
  - Move to driveway, garage and grass

## Game Guidelines:

- Train in a quiet, familiar environment with minimal distractions.
- Separate from other dogs.
- Keep each training session short, 3-5 minutes is plenty – use a timer!
- Play the game each day.
- Use high value food - \$100 bills, not quarters.
- Be generous with treats. You'll get better results, FASTER.
- When not playing Muzzle Games, keep the muzzle out of sight and out of reach.
- Try not to use food that crumbles or easily drops on the floor. You want all the value to happen when your dog has her snout in the muzzle and not to start “shopping” on the floor for food that has dropped

## Game Troubleshooting:

- If your dog starts pawing at or otherwise fussing with the muzzle once you start asking for behaviors:
  - You can interrupt the fussing by gently picking your dog's head up (Denise shows an example of this in the video lesson the first time

she asks Gio to “get on the bed” and he fusses with the muzzle just a bit).

- Be sure to NOT feed until the dog has at least 5 seconds of NO fussing.
  - Ask for easier/shorter behaviors (i.e. walk less steps)
  - Use higher value food.
  - Be MORE GENEROUS. This is not a time to be stingy and think she should just “get it.”
- If the fussing continues each time you ask for a behavior (3 x in a row), you may consider going back to just fastening the straps and building more duration before continuing to try asking for behaviors. Remember that this should be fun for your dog and we want to set her up for success! Be careful about moving between modules too quickly!

### **When to Move On:**

- Play this game for 3-5 days and slowly increase the amount of time your dog is wearing the muzzle and “doing stuff” with you. Work towards 5-10 minutes of muzzle wearing around your home and yard.