

How to Select a Muzzle



By Ed Frawley



Leerburg Kennels

Foreword

When you view this eBook in PDF format. Click on **BOOKMARKS** on the top left side of your PDF reader, these bookmarks are eBook chapters.

[Leerburg Kennel](#) and Video is owned by Ed Frawley.

Ed has owned German Shepherds (GSD) for over 45 years. Since 1978 he has bred over 350 litters of German working bloodline GSD's. His dogs work in law enforcement, as S&R dogs, as competition Schutzhund dogs, and as family companions and protectors.

Since 1980 Ed has produced over 120 dog training videos and DVD's. He was a police K-9 handler for 10 years, competed in several dog sports, including AKC obedience and Schutzhund. In addition he has built one of the top dog training supply businesses in the world.

If you go to the web site **Leerburg.com** you will see that it has over 10,000 printed pages. The Leerburg Web Discussion board has over 10,000 registered members_ and over 120,000 posts in the archives. Learn to use our site search function.

How to Select a Muzzle for Your Dog

By Ed Frawley



I have used Muzzles to train dogs since 1974 and sold them for 20 years. This article is an overview of the different kinds of muzzles and how they work.

I need to start this article with a warning. If you think you need a muzzle you obviously are concerned about aggression problems with your dog. Novice trainers need to work under the supervision of a professional if they have aggression problems.

Most people are only familiar with the cloth fabric muzzles used at most vets' offices. The fact is there are many different types and uses for muzzles.

In Europe there are cities where certain breeds of dogs (Pitbulls, Rotts etc) are required by law to wear a muzzle when they go out in public.

Ed Frawley's Philosophy of Dog Training



Article

Types of Muzzles

- Police Training Muzzles
- Wire Basket Muzzles
- Plastic Basket Muzzles
- Fabric muzzles
- Head Halters

Muzzle Fighting For Police Service Dogs

\$65.00 +s&h



1 Hour 20 Minutes Long

Police Training Muzzles

There are a number of companies that make muzzles sold to police departments to be used in bite development. Because of the nature of the work (putting a dog on a man with no protective clothing) I only recommend one or two of these muzzles.

Police Style Police Muzzle

The Police style muzzle is the most expensive muzzle on the market. When properly fit it's also one of the safest muzzles on the market. This is the muzzle to use for muzzle fighting with dogs. If you want to learn how to do this get my DVD Called Muzzle Fighting with Police Service Dogs.



Fabro Style Leather Muzzle

Wire Basket Muzzles

I like the wire basket muzzles for pet owners. The air flow is excellent and the dogs can drink with the muzzle on. These muzzles are secure and the dogs seem to have fewer problems with these muzzles than the enclosed muzzle.

If I have a dog that has to breed (where he breaths hard) or when he has to wear the muzzle for a long period of time I would choose this muzzle. They come in a variety of different styles and sizes to fit different dogs' muzzles.

I don't use or recommend these muzzles for protection training. For one thing they are going to hurt you if you are hit hard with them.

Wire basket muzzle with neck strap (no strap between the ears)



Wire Muzzles



Pitt Bull wire basket muzzle - with strap between the ears

Plastic Basket Muzzles

The plastic Jafco muzzles that we sell are a good inexpensive option for people who only need to use a muzzle every now and then. If a dog has to go to a groomer or the vet or a walk in the park, this is a good choice.

We sell a lot of these muzzles and they hold up well and we don't get complaints on their construction or their quality.



Our plastic one strap muzzles (come in black and white)



Our plastic two strap models (come in black and white)

Jafco Muzzles

Copyright Leerburg® Enterprises Inc.

Fabric Muzzles

Fabric muzzles are good for a vet's office or to carry in a vehicle, backpack or emergency medical kit. They should not be used for training.

Cloth muzzles restrict a dog's ability to pant and it's not recommended to leave them on while the animal is unattended. If it's hot out or the dog is stressed in a warm environment that dog could over heat and possibly die. So these fabric muzzles should only be used while the dog is being supervised by the owner.

Cloth muzzles are inexpensive and can be used while grooming or nail clipping. I tell people not to think that a dog cannot bite you through these fabric muzzles – they can pinch you and it will hurt.



Cloth Fabric Muzzle

Head Halters

Misguided behaviorists and inexperienced dog trainers push head halters with clients. I am not a fan of a head halter and I won't sell them. The only possible use that I can think of would be to have it be a middle step between a muzzle and no muzzle. Frankly if there is a question about needing a muzzle – the dog should have a muzzle on.

So, the trainer that tells a novice dog owner that a head halter will keep the dog's mouth closed when pressure is applied has not worked with enough dominant and aggressive dogs. My guess is they will eventually get dog bit and change what they tell their students – which will not be to use them.

Muzzles



Muzzles for every dog.

Muzzles we don't Recommend or Sell:

There are several kinds of muzzles on the market that for one reason or another we don't sell or recommend.

There are two styles of leather basket muzzles in which both consist of a flat piece of leather with holes punched through the part that goes around the dog's snout. One style has thin leather and is pliable. The other style has very thick leather and is very stiff.

I don't like either type. I don't like the airflow in these muzzles and the dog can still bite you through the thin leather muzzle. You may not get puncture wounds but the risk is there that you could really get pinched and believe me when I say that this is going to hurt.



Leather soft sided muzzle (I don't like these).



This photo demonstrates how flimsy the soft sided muzzles are - in my opinion they are dangerous.



The thicker muzzles not only restrict air flow too much they are also way too heavy.

There are KNPV style leather muzzles that are made in Europe and sold in this country. These are leather muzzles like you see here with a strap behind the ears. These muzzles are designed to be worn during a dog competition that requires the dog to wear a muzzle. In my opinion they serve one purpose and that is to satisfy the requirement of the dog having a muzzle on. These muzzles come off too easily.

Dealing With Dominant and Aggressive Dogs

\$49.00 +s&h



3 Hours 30 Minutes Long

Training the Dog to Wear the Muzzle

Dogs must learn to accept and wear a muzzle. No dog likes a muzzle the first few times it's put on. They all try and get it off. But through training they can learn to accept the muzzle and in some case even come to like putting them on.

The way we get dogs who have food drive to accept muzzles is to put a treat in the muzzle and then let the dog take it out without even trying to fasten the straps. When the dog takes the food we “mark” the moment with a “YES”. If you are unfamiliar with markers you can read the article I wrote titled [Training with Markers](#).

This should be done 4 or 5 times a day for a week. Our goal is to desensitize the dog to putting its nose in the muzzle. When we see that it is eagerly looking to stick his head in the muzzle we will fasten the straps. This is always done on leash.

When the dog has the muzzle on and tries to fight to get it back off it’s given a voice correction accompanied by a leash correction. The level of correction must be strong enough to refocus the dog’s attention back onto the handler and off the muzzle. Handlers who say that their dogs go crazy and will not listen are not correcting hard enough.

The muzzle is never taken off until the dog settles down and accepts it. When we take the muzzle off we “mark” the moment it comes off. This takes the dog’s attention off the muzzle.

No matter what the reason for muzzle training the dog always has to wear the muzzle in its normal life before you introduce it into training. In other words, if you want to use the muzzle to see if you can control the dog in the presence of other dogs you don’t introduce the dog in

muzzle to other dogs until the dog will wear the muzzle on walks and in the house without trying to get it off. This can take a week or more.

How to Test the Muzzles Fit

A muzzle is only going to accomplish its task (which is protection) if it stays on. So every time you put your muzzle on you need to test the fit to make sure it's not going come off when you most need it to stay on. Which is when the dog is trying to bite something.

I do this by lifting the dogs from feet an inch or two off the ground when I have a hold of the muzzle. If it's too loose it's going to come off.

There are a number of uses for muzzles

- 1- To test our training.
- 2- To protect helpers who train police service dogs or personal protection dogs.
- 3- Obviously to protect people and other dogs from overly aggressive dogs.
- 4- To use in training where there is a risk of the owner being attacked when he dog corrects his dog.
- 5- To stop dogs from chewing when the owner is gone and a crate is not used.
- 6- They can be effective to test the training when a dog is added to a home with other dogs or cats.

7- To use at the vet or groomer.

8- To wear when there is a risk of aggression towards visitors or when the dog has growled near children.

9- To stop a dog from chewing things up.

In my opinion the primary use of a muzzle is safety and testing training.

By that I mean if a dog has gone through re-training for dog aggression and we need to see if the dog will take direction from us while in the presence of another dog we do it with a muzzle on.

If we have a dog that is handler aggressive and it needs to go through training we need to do it with a muzzle on.

When Muzzles are not the Answer

I get a lot of emails asking what muzzles to buy for dogs that live together that are constantly fighting. I am not a fan of muzzles being used in this type of scenario. Dog crates and serious obedience training are the solution to this problem.

Muzzles only mask dog aggression problems they don't cure them. So while a muzzle is going to protect one dog from biting another dog it

is not going to solve the aggression issue and unless control is not addressed the problem will remain.

When it comes to dogs that have aggression problems with children a muzzle is only part of the solution. No aggressive dog should ever be left with a child even if the dog has a muzzle on. One only needs to be hit by a dog wearing a muzzle to realize how much damage can be done with the dog slamming you with its head. Police helpers can testify to this. A dog with a muzzle can still knock your teeth out or give you a black eye or worse. So do not for one minute think that a muzzle is the only solution to aggression. Supervision, training, control of the environment and a leash are the only sure ways to control aggression.

Where To Go From Here



**Your Puppy
8 Weeks to 8 Months**

\$35.00 +s&h

3 Hours 18 Minutes Long

LEERBURG
VIDEO PRODUCTIONS

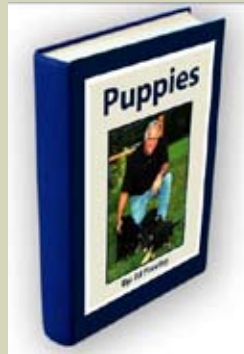
Copyright Leerburg® Enterprises Inc.

The Theory of Corrections in Dog Training

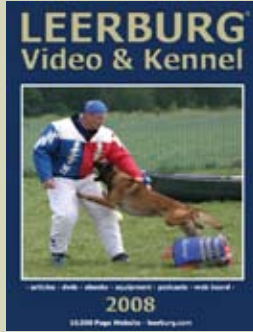


Article

Leerburg eBooks



Download our New Catalog



With Active Links!



**LEERBURG
Dog Training Podcasts**