

# Fitting a Muzzle



## Disclaimer

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- Each booklet illustrates one way to perform a skill and it is acknowledged that there are often other approaches. Before using the booklets, students should check with their university or college whether the approach illustrated is acceptable in their context or whether an alternative method should be used.
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## Equipment list: Fitting a Muzzle

### Equipment for this station:

- Dog models (e.g. Labrador, Terrier, Bassett Hound)
- Baskerville muzzles – range of sizes and wide fit (used for certain breeds e.g. Boxer, Rottweiler)
- Mikki muzzles - range of sizes

### Considerations for this station:

- Applying a muzzle to a model before practising on a live dog will enable you to become familiar with the equipment and its correct use and application
- Practise selecting and fitting both types of muzzle
- Practise selecting and fitting the correct size muzzle to the different model dogs (breeds)
- There are useful videos on dog handling on Blackboard. These can be found in the Animal Management 1 section → eLearning, then navigate to relevant videos

Anyone working in the Clinical Skills Lab must read the 'CSL\_I01 Induction' and agree to abide by the 'CSL\_I00 House Rules' & 'CSL\_I02 Lab Area Rules'

Please inform a member of staff if equipment is damaged or about to run out.



# Clinical Skills:

## Fitting a Muzzle (Mikki)



1  
The Mikki muzzle is a material muzzle. The muzzle number (0 to 5) relates to the size of dog/breed (small to large).

Before applying the muzzle, adjust the position of the clip on the strap to an approximate fit for the dog's size.



2  
First, ensure that you and anyone handling the dog are safe. If necessary, ask for additional assistance.

In readiness for applying the muzzle, ensure that the dog is aware of your presence. Then, with the dog restrained, work from behind the head, hold the side straps and slip the muzzle over the nose.



3  
If the muzzle is the correct way up, the longer part of the material should be under the jaw; the straps run beneath the dog's ears.



4  
Keeping the muzzle securely on the nose, clip the buckle together and then adjust to the correct tightness by pulling the loose end of the strap.



5  
Check that the muzzle is correctly fitted i.e. is the right size, the dog cannot bite and the muzzle is not impinging on the dog's eyes. It should be possible to pass two fingers (but no more) flat against the skin under the muzzle strap behind the head (as indicated by the yellow arrow).



6  
To remove: pinch the buckle sides and remove the muzzle. If a dog is aggressive it may be advisable to unclip the buckle and let the muzzle fall off the dog.

# Clinical Skills:

## Fitting a Muzzle (Baskerville)



Before applying a Baskerville muzzle, select the appropriate size (see size guide on the next page) and adjust the position of the clip on the strap to an approximate fit for the dog. First, ensure that you and anyone handling the dog are safe. If necessary, ask for additional assistance.



In readiness for applying the muzzle, ensure that the dog is aware of your presence. Then, with the dog restrained, work from behind the dog's head, hold the straps and place the muzzle over the nose (the soft 'padded' part inside the muzzle should be over the bridge of the dog's nose).



If the muzzle is the correct way up, the longer part of the muzzle's plastic mesh should be under the jaw; the straps run beneath the dog's ears.



Keeping the muzzle securely over the nose, clip the buckle together and then adjust to the correct tightness by pulling the loose end of the strap.



Check that the muzzle is correctly fitted i.e. is the right size and is not impinging on the dog's eyes. It should be possible to pass two fingers (but no more) flat against the skin under the muzzle strap behind the head (as indicated by the yellow arrow).



To remove: pinch the buckle sides and remove the muzzle. If a dog is aggressive it may be advisable to unclip the buckle and let the muzzle fall off the dog.



# Clinical Skills:

## Fitting a Muzzle (Baskerville)

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Applying a **wide fit** Baskerville muzzle e.g. to a Boxer or Rottweiler. First proceed as for other muzzles with regard to handling and selection of muzzle size. Ensure that you and anyone handling the dog are safe. If necessary, ask for additional assistance.

Before applying the muzzle undo both buckles.

14



In readiness for applying the muzzle, ensure that the dog is aware of your presence. Then, with the dog restrained, work from behind the dog's head, hold the straps and place the muzzle over the nose (the soft 'padded' part inside the muzzle should be over the bridge of the dog's nose).

15



Secure the muzzle at the strap around the neck first, keeping the muzzle firmly over the nose whilst doing so.

*N.B. The muzzle in the photo is a little bit big for this model dog.*

16



Then secure the other strap and buckle over the dog's head.

Check that the muzzle is correctly fitted i.e. is the right size and is not impinging on the dog's eyes. It should be possible to pass two fingers (but no more) flat against the skin under the muzzle strap behind the head.

17



To remove: undo both buckles and remove muzzle. If a dog is aggressive it may be advisable to undo the buckles and let the muzzle fall off the dog.

18

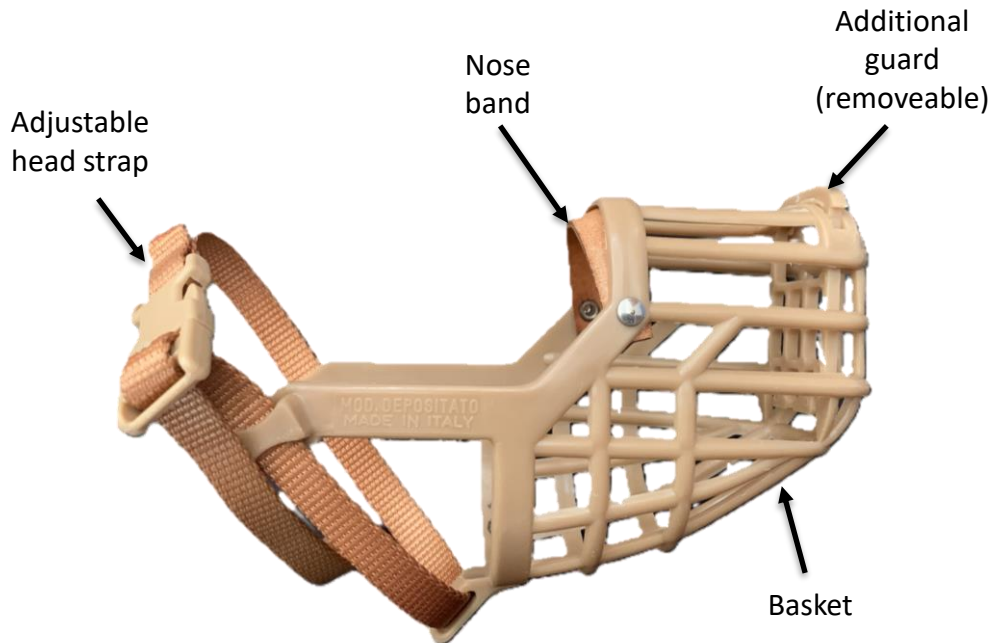
- |                                     |                                   |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1: Miniature                        | 9: German Shepherd Dog, Dobermann |
| 2: Small                            | 10: Great Dane, Irish Wolfhound   |
| 3: Bichon Frise, Standard Dachshund |                                   |
| 4: Westie, Jack Russell             |                                   |
| 5: Corgi, Cocker Spaniel            |                                   |
| 6: Beagle, Border Collie            | <b>Wide fit</b>                   |
| 7: Springer Spaniel, Dalmatian,     | 12: Boxer, Pitbull                |
| 8: Labrador, Airedale               | 13: Mastiff                       |
|                                     | 15: Rottweiler,                   |
|                                     | 16: Bull Mastiff                  |

The Baskerville muzzle comes in sizes from 1-16 with 12-16 being the wide fit option for e.g. Boxer or Rottweiler.

*N.B. This is intended as a guide. There are size differences within each breed.*

# I wish I'd known:

## Muzzle Anatomy (Baskerville)



*Where can I touch the muzzle once fitted on the patient?*



When checking the muzzle, use the head strap from behind the patient. It is considered **unsafe** to use the basket of the muzzle to check its security and fit.

# Resetting the station: Fitting a Muzzle

1. Remove muzzle from dog and put back into the box ready for the next person.

*Station ready for the next person:*



Please inform a member of staff if equipment is damaged or about to run out.

# I wish I'd known:

## Fitting a Muzzle

- It is helpful to practise using the equipment on the model before applying a muzzle to a live dog i.e. selecting an appropriate size, fitting it and adjusting the straps.
- It is important to learn to recognise behavioural signs i.e. what is normal as well as representing fear or aggression.
- Ensure the muzzle doesn't impinge upon the eyes.
- The Baskerville muzzle should have a gap at the end of the nose so the dog can still pant and drink.
- If the situation allows or if introducing a muzzle for frequent wear, use praise and treats so the dog associates wearing a muzzle as a positive experience.
- Do not leave a dog muzzled without supervision.
- In the veterinary setting, putting a muzzle on a nervous or aggressive dog will ensure safety for you, the client and the dog. It is better to use a muzzle preventatively than to end up in a dangerous situation.
- N.B. When handling a dog, never kneel or sit on the floor, instead squat so that you can move quickly if required.



- There are muzzles designed for use with fractious cats. These are fitted in a similar way to dog muzzles, but usually cover the eyes as well. Muzzling cats is uncommon as other methods of restraint are typically more appropriate.