

# Bone Sharing:

*A resource guarding prevention exercise*

---

By Jennifer Skiba, Namastay Training

Dog law states that if something is in my mouth then it is mine. And because it is mine I have the right to defend my ownership. The method with which they defend it depends on the dog. They certainly aren't going to enter into a verbal debate with you. They will communicate in the only language they have-DOG. Which is avoidance or growling, snapping and possibly biting. It is our job to teach them otherwise. Some dogs don't mind giving up an item, others mind quite a bit. If you punish your dog when they find something of high value they often form four responses: run and hide, consume it quickly by gulping, wait until you aren't around or defend it. None of those responses are what we want our dogs to do.



I believe that all puppies need to be taught bone sharing. It is a resource guarding prevention exercise and will make them safer around bones and food as an adult dog.

This exercise teaches them:

- It's "ok" to have something of high value in close proximity to my humans
- I don't have to run and hide when I get something of high value because I have been taught to have high value items around my human.
- The cue "give" to relinquish a high value item
- The cue "take" to put something in my mouth
  - Impulse control in a new context-high value chew item
  - Giving something up doesn't mean I don't get it again



## How to do it:

-Use a LONG chew treat. A 12" bully stick is a good choice because you have lots of space between their mouth and your hand. A pig's ear is NOT a good choice.

-Present the chewie to the dog and say, "take it".

-Let the dog chew on it for a little while and then say "give" and take the chewie away.

-The longer the dog chews on the item the more reluctant they will be to give it up so start in short sessions and work up to longer sessions of chewing.

-You may need to use a tasty treat wiggled at their nose to get them to let go. If this is the case try this with a toy first and when they give easily go back to a recreational chew.

-Do not give the dog the chewie and let them go off into the corner with it. **You MUST keep a hold of it.**

-This is an adult only exercise. NEVER allow your children to take something high value from a dog.



## Namastay Training

Teaching People to Listen, One Dog at a Time

Jennifer Skiba • Owner Trainer • [www.namastaytraining.com](http://www.namastaytraining.com)

