

## MannersMinder (Treat & Train) Helps Solve Resource Guarding with Other Dogs

When I created the MannersMinder, 2004, it was marketed as a product to train dogs to lie down calmly when visitors come to the door. However, my intention was the trainers would help owners use it for all kinds of situations where they could reward dogs for good behavior away from them. Luckily both trainers and owners are catching on and using it for issues ranging from separation anxiety, agility, impulse control issues, and more.

In this blog, one dog owner, Juanita Boutwell from Napa, California, recounts her success in using the MannersMinder (Treat & Train) to help create a peaceful and safe household where there had once been great strife.

“I used my MannersMinder to stop my dogs from fighting,” she says. “This spring, my adolescent Great Pyrenees, Luke, started challenging my 5 yr old Great Pyrenees, Larry. It was mostly resource guarding kind of stuff, but there were a total of 4 fights over the course of about 4 months, each getting progressively more violent. Three fights required visits to the vet.”



Luckily, Boutwell looked for help in the right place.

“In August, I got Jean Donaldson's book “Fight”, says Boutwell, “and liked what she had to say. I then found a behaviorist in my area who had been through the SFSPCA Academy with Jean Donaldson. The behaviorist came to my house and we worked with the dogs one day so she could come up with a protocol for us to practice. “

The behaviorist knew how to tailor a plan to the household's needs.

“Essentially she used the protocol in the “Fight” book,” says Boutwell, “but tailor made for us. It required two handlers though – one for each dog. One dog/handler would approach to a certain distance, then the “Treat Bar would open” and we would treat each dog, then move away again. The idea was to counter condition and desensitize the dogs to each other. At later stages, we would add resources to the picture, as things improved.”

Behavior modification plans requiring two handlers can be challenging since two people are not always available.

Boutwell elaborates, “I had a friend to help me with this, but she could only come over a few days a week and I needed someone who knew enough about dogs and dog body language to help, so didn't want to ask the neighbors or random people who came to the house.”

Luckily Boutwell had a MannersMinder (Treat & Train), a remote-controlled treat dispenser that can play the part of a second person.

“The behaviorist OK'd me using the MannersMinder as my “other” handler on days when I had to work alone, and it worked great,” states Boutwell. “My friend helped me in the beginning, until I got the coordination down of approaching with one dog and treating him. Then, I could put the stationary dog in an x-pen or tie out with the Manners Minder, and approach with the second dog on a leash. When we get to the appropriate location (we started at a distance of 20 feet), if neither dog was showing any stress, I clicked the Manners Minder button and hand fed the dog I had with me. This allowed me to handle both dogs at once and practice daily instead of whenever I could get a helper.

Boutwell’s results were great. “The protocol has worked so well, it’s almost like a miracle to me. I went from two dogs who were best buddies, to two dogs that couldn't be in the same room and I was afraid would kill each other, back to two dogs who are best buddies. And I never really did have to add “guardable” resources to the picture, because the Manners Minder fit that criteria.”

Boutwell has other uses for the MannersMinder (Treat & Train) too. “We use it for other things as well,” she says, “as Luke is in training to do some assistance dog skills for me so we do a lot of shaping play. But we have totally gotten our money's worth out of it working through our protocol.”

Resource: <https://drsophiayin.com/blog/entry/mannersminder-treat-train-helps-solve-resource-guarding/>