

What is Positive Reinforcement Dog Training?

- Teaching dogs desirable behaviors using SCIENCE-based & REWARD-based methods.
- Helping dogs learn and succeed step by step.
- Motivating dogs with fun exercises and games. No force! No pain!
- Encouraging dogs to think more for themselves.
- Valuing dogs' voluntary behaviors.
- Understanding dogs' feelings from their body language.
- Understanding how dogs learn, their needs and wants.
- Using methods that work humanely with ANY dog. Big dogs, small dogs, puppies, senior dogs, disabled dogs, fearful dogs, reactive dogs... can all learn and have fun!



- 1. develop dog's self-control**
- 2. develop a trust relationship**
- 3. develop dog's self-confidence**



**Positive Reinforcement Training
= HAPPY RELATIONSHIP**



Concept by Miki Saito www.markandreward.com Drawings by Lili Chin www.doggiedrawings.net
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Using a Marker

- A marker is a word used to mark a moment in time when your dog does something you like.
- Pair a marker with a high value reward like food. Rewards need to come within 5 seconds of using the marker to be effective.
- Mark during the desired behaviour and before rewarding not after.
- Markers can be used when rewarding with food, praise, play, or access to certain areas.



1. Reward WANTED BEHAVIORS
2. Train ALTERNATE BEHAVIORS
3. Give your dog FEEDBACK
4. Build BEHAVIOR PATTERNS

doglatindogtraining.com illustration by Lili Chin



Puppy Toilet Training

- Puppies don't have complete bladder control. Different pups achieve this ability at different times. (4-6 month Average) **Be calm and patient.**
- **Set the puppies up for success early.** Create a designated toilet area. Set up a crate inside a play pen with a designated toilet area. Make it as real as possible (Grass).
- Do not allow your puppy the freedom of the entire house at the start, unless you're able to **supervise.**
- Take the puppy outside proactively. **Time it and look for the signs.** Try after food, after play, as soon as they wake up and/ or when they move away from you or their toy. If at first you don't succeed try and try again.
- Avoid distractions **use a lead** and praise after toilet, not during. **Poo time is not Play time.**
- Dogs can smell lingering toilet smell. **Clean** using detergent mixed with water or strong enzymatic cleaner, vinegar, tea tree oil.
- **Avoid punishment** they will become ninja poopers and learn to toilet in inconspicuous areas away from your sight. It also ruins your relationship.
- **Praise often.** This builds up your trust bank. Use the point system 1, 2, 3, Jackpot.
- You may need to **retrain your dog as above during winter and the rains**, as some dogs even when properly trained can have accidents indoors at this time.

More resources: <https://youtu.be/e5xoq6tbwCM> , <https://youtu.be/M-AU9mk7oDM> , <https://www.petcare.com.au/toilet-training-a-puppy/> , <https://youtu.be/xpzjtHPQpOk> , <https://youtu.be/hUq2q-ujM3k> , https://youtu.be/X6k0zkRUt_Q ,



For apartments and homes where there is no access to the outside or to natural grass you can use a product like the [Pet Loo](#). This can be placed in a bathroom or another area that is easy to clean like a balcony or courtyard. The steps for the training are exactly the same as the ones above.

Once your puppy has developed bladder control it is a good idea to walk them at

least 2 – 3 times a day to allow them to relieve themselves outside the house as well.

Always keep the toilet area far away from the eating areas. And clean it regularly with hot water. Avoid using strong detergents or chemicals with a strong smell as this may make your puppy not want to go toilet in the area.

You can even try to teach your dog to use an appropriate indoors toileting area, **some** dogs can even learn to use the toilet bowl.

(This video shows ho with a cat, the basic principles remain the same.) <https://youtu.be/vm9LF9eoNMg> , <https://youtu.be/pX40WwJuBTU> , <https://youtu.be/cf70AKdSBAo> , <https://youtu.be/uXBf5Ysx2gM> , https://youtu.be/kro_8Rr5C8Q , <https://youtu.be/HGzRNCgqncx> ,



TIPS TO **POTTY TRAIN** A PUPPY



Puppies need to go potty more often than adult dogs, follow this guideline



2 months



Every additional month



6 months and beyond

Always take your puppy out for potty time after the following events:



Right after a meal



Immediately after sleeping



After a playtime session

Never punish your puppy for a potty accident.



Never Punish your Puppy, they don't know what they did wrong.



If you see it is happening, calmly but firmly say "HaHA!" and take your pooch outside to finish his business.



Why are you upset?
I don't know what I did wrong.



<https://www.petcare.com.au/toilet-training-a-puppy/>



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Chewing vs. Biting / Mouthing

- Teach your dog that biting hurts and it is never ok. Clothes are a part of you, and should not be bitten. Fingers are not food. If teeth make contact during feeding let your dog know that it hurts and it is not OK.
- Perform a collar hold and reward your dog for not biting.
- Avoid opportunities to make bad choices. (NEVER CHEW THE LEAD)
- Avoid keeping the dog in submissive positions.
- Avoid excited greetings.
- Puppies often bite in frustration, if this is the case try a calm time out in a safe environment.
- If your dog is struggling, teach a displacement behaviour like holding a toy or a ball to get what they desire (the affection).
- Chewing is natural, as a puppy and an adult. Chewing is calming and helps promote positive brain waves and learning. BITING IS NOT.
- Chewing is one of the best rewards; use it to your advantage give your puppy chew toys as a reward. If your puppy is chewing an undesirable object use a positive interrupter and replace that object with something it is allowed to chew.
- If your dog is being destructive when it is left alone it is probably feeling anxious and is looking for something to chew to help it calm down. Do not punish this behaviour, instead leave your dog in a puppy proof area with plenty of permissible chew toys when your away to allow it to make good choices.



Figure Retrieved from <https://www.facebook.com/doctor.karen.becker/photos/more-about-why-its-so-important-for-dogs-to-chew>



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Vet Visits, Vaccinations & Worming


Age of Pet	Worming Schedule	
6-12weeks	Every Fortnight	
12weeks - 6months	Every Month	
6months - adult	Every 3 Months for the lifespan of pet	

Figure Retrieved from <https://www.greencrossvets.com.au/pet-library/articles-of-interest/hookworm-and-your-pet/>

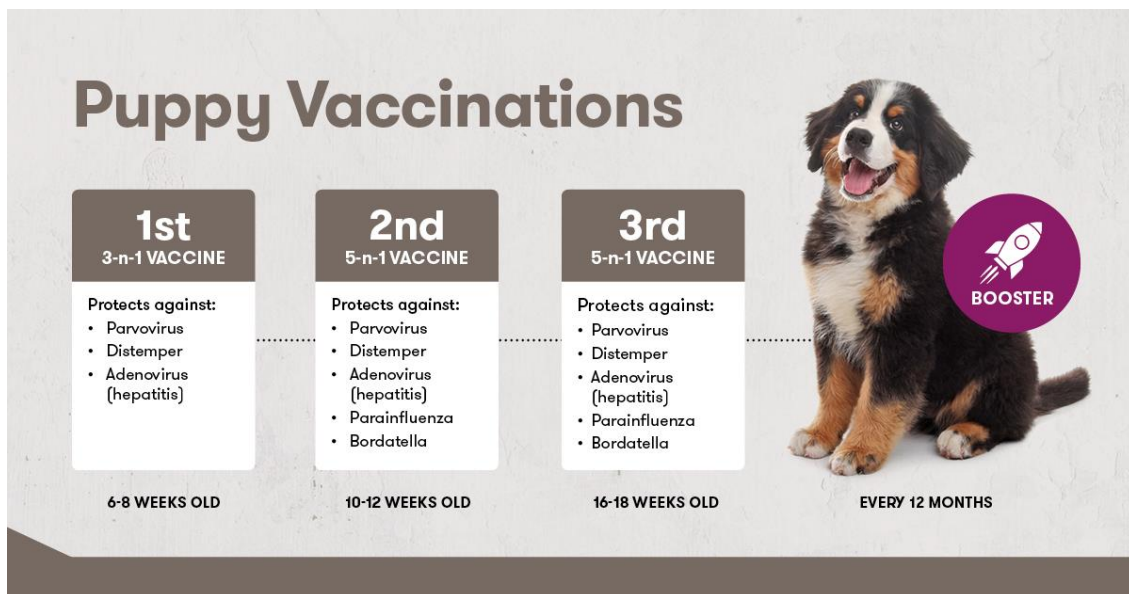


Figure retrieved from <https://blackhawkpetcare.com/au/tips-and-guides/articles/puppy-vaccination-schedule>

It is a great to take your puppy to your local vet for a fun visit. Most vets will encourage people bringing their dogs in to get used to the process and this allows your dog to develop fun experiences with the VET.

This way when it does come time for that needle or those painful examinations your dog won't be as nervous or anxious with the process and it will make the Vet's job a lot easier.

Notes:

<http://www.vetwest.com.au/twp>,

<https://foothillsanimalhospital.com.au/> Dr Rachel White,



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Food & Nutrition

- Dogs benefit most from a meat based carnivorous diet.
- “The Pet food is essentially self-regulated with voluntary industry standards applied through the Pet Food Industry Association of Australia [PFIAA](#)” ([RSPCA, 2019](#)).
- The first 3 ingredients on the packet reflect over 90% of the foods constituents.
- In order of best to worst **Meat Meal > Meat By products > Meat Meal** to find out more on what this means please [click here](#)
- While most dogs can tolerate grain in their diet it can causes allergies for some dogs.

ASPCA | (888) 426-4435
Animal Poison Control Center

Foods You Can Share with Your Pet!

The following foods are safe to share with pets when unseasoned, cut into small pieces and given sparingly in small portions! Be sure to remove any seeds, cores, stems or peels from fruits. Meat should be lean, cooked and free of bones.

For more information, please visit [aspc.org/apcc](https://www.aspc.org/apcc)

 Apples	 Bananas	 Beef	 Blueberries	 Broccoli
 Cantaloupe	 Carrots	 Cauliflower	 Celery	 Cheese
 Chicken	 Cooked Pumpkin	 Green Beans	 Kiwi	 Peanut Butter <small>Make sure it has no xylitol!</small>
 Pineapple	 Popcorn	 Pork	 Strawberries	 Turkey

Figure Retrieved from <https://www.aspc.org/news/sharing-caring-foods-you-can-safely-share-your-pet>

Notes: What I feed my dogs - <https://www.mealsformutts.com.au/stockists/> ,
<https://prime100.com.au/products/spd-fresh-rolls/>

Online retailers:

<https://www.petpost.com.au/>
<https://www.petcircle.com.au/>
<https://www.vetsupply.com.au/>
<https://www.petstock.com.au/>
<https://www.budgetpetproducts.com.au/>
<https://ipetstore.com.au/>
<https://www.mypetwarehouse.com.au/>
<https://www.petshed.com/>



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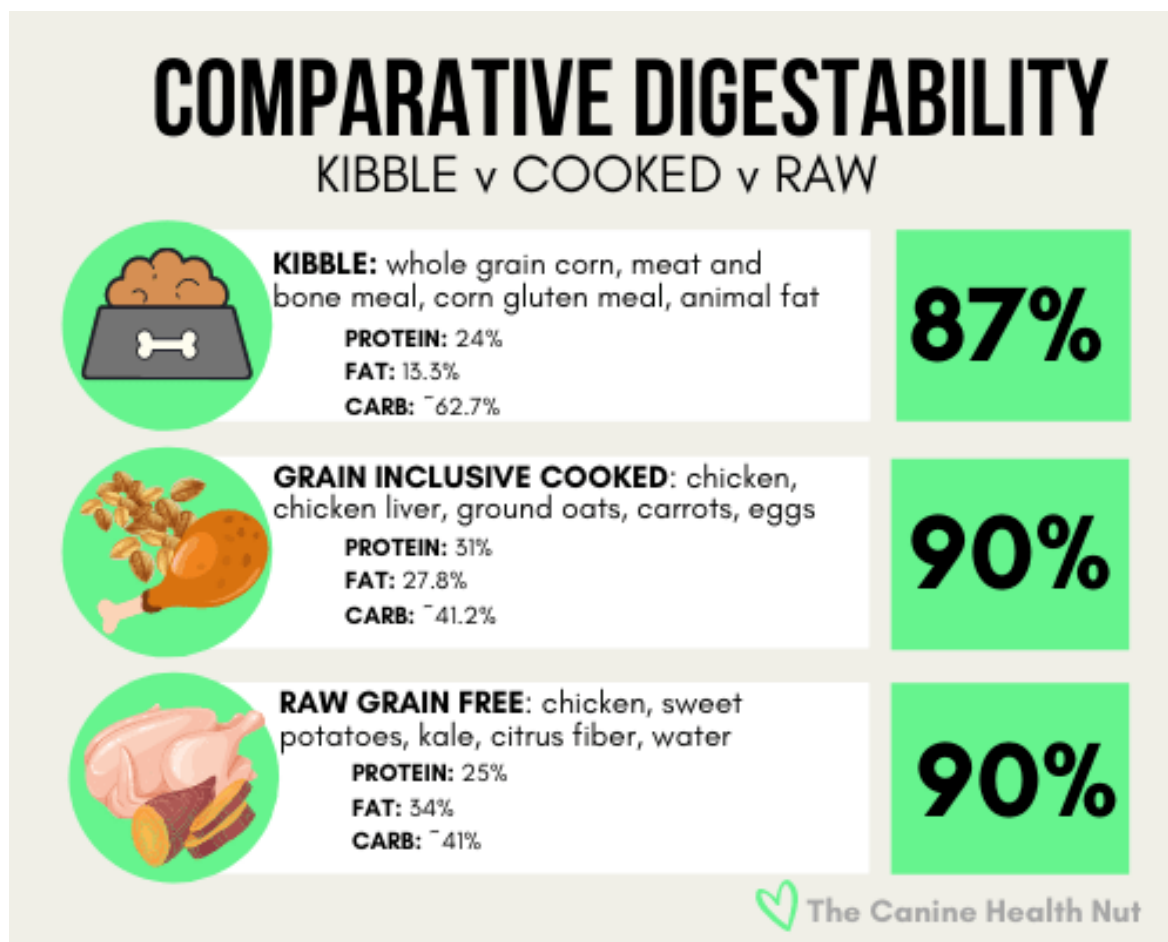


Figure Retrieved from <https://thecaninehealthnut.com/raw-vs-kibble-digestibility/>

A lot of reserch is now being done and the results are that a raw diet is healthier and better suited for dogs and cats when compared to processed pet food. Nutritional requirements can be met from both sources. The primary difference is in the imune system function and the rise of certain ailments from poor quality dry food. While good quality dry foods are now available these are extremely expensive. Feeding your dog a raw food diet however can be tricky. Not only is it hard for most owners to manage the complex nutritional requirements, raw food can increase the chance of zoonoses.

There are plenty of sources who provide free raw recipies for pet owners that have been designed to ensure your pet is getting the proper nutrition.

More information:

<https://thecaninehealthnut.com/>

<https://www.facebook.com/doctor.karen.becker/>

<https://www.yourpurebredpuppy.com/>

<https://petzyo.com.au/blogs/raw-food/3-simple-raw-dog-food-recipes-for-weight-loss>

<https://www.walkervillevet.com.au/blog/homemade-raw-dog-food-recipe/>



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Can Dogs Eat Human Foods?

The following list includes numerous human foods marked with the potential risk to induce gastrointestinal or toxicity problems in dogs.



0 Minimal Risk	1 Low Risk	2 Moderate Risk	3 High Risk
Alfalfa Apple Banana Basil Barley Beans Beef Beets Bell peppers Blackberries Broccoli Brown rice Cantaloupe Carrots Celery Cilantro Chamomile tea Chia seeds Chicken Chick peas Cranberries Coconut oil Cottage cheese Cucumbers Duck Edamame Cooked Fish Gelatin Green beans Kelp Kiwifruit Lamb Lentils Lettuce Liver Melon Oregano Papaya Pear Peppers Pineapple Plain croutons Pork Pumpkin Raspberries Salmon Sardines Seaweed Squash Strawberries Sweet potatoes Turkey Turmeric Watermelon Zucchini	Apple juice Asparagus Bagel Brussels Sprouts Cabbage Canola oil Cauliflower Cherries Clam Crab Crackers Eggs Flax seed Honey Honeydew Mango Oatmeal Octopus Olives Pancakes Parsley Pasta Peanut butter Peas Peppermint Pistachio nuts Popcorn Potatoes Rice Seafood Shrimp Squid Sunflower seeds Sushi Tuna Yogurt	Almonds Aloe vera Apricot Avocado Baby food Bacon Bread Butter Cashews Cheerios Cheese Cornmeal Eggplant Green tea Ginger Ham Ice cream Lactose free milk Milk Mushrooms Orange Orange juice Peaches Persimmons Quinoa Spinach Tangerines Tofu Tomatoes Tortillas	Acorns Alcohol Beer Bones Brownies Caramel Cat food Chips Chocolate Coffee Corn cobs Doritos Fat trimmings French fries Garlic Granola Grapefruit Grapes Ginger ale Human vitamins Jalapeno Ketchup Leftovers Lemons Macadamia nuts Marshmallows Milkshake Mints Nachos Nuts Nutmeg Onions Oreos Pecans Pepperoni Pickles Pizza Pomegranate Pretzels Raisins Rhubarb leaves Salami Salt Sausage Skittles Soda Sugar Tacos White chocolate Xylitol Yeast dough



Produced by DogFoodSelector.com

<https://www.pinterest.com.au/pin/208502657731638170/>



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Poison information

There are a number of things inside and outside the house that is toxic and can poison your pets.

The Animal Poisons Helpline number is **1300 869 738** (from Australia) and 0800 869 738 (from New Zealand) and is a **FREE** service for all Australian pet owners. They can provide first aid advice, help assess the risk to your animal and will provide a recommendation to seek veterinary attention when required. Don't forget to add their phone number to your contacts so that you can call them quickly if you ever need. All pet owners should have quick access to their emergency line if they ever require advice, it could be life saving.

What to do



1300 TOX PET (1300 869 738)



If you suspect your pet has eaten something : Wipe their mouth with a soft clean towel, call 1300 869 738 and your local vet immediately. **Do not make your animal vomit** unless told to do so.

If your pet has something on their skin or fur: Wipe off any bulk on the area with a cloth or paper towel, **DO NOT SMEAR**. Wash the area thoroughly with a mild soap and water. Call 1300 869 738 and your local vet immediately.

If your pet has something in their eye : Irrigate the eye with clean water. If need be use a second person to help keep the animal calm and restrained. Wash from the middle outwards to avoid contaminating the other eye. Call 1300 869 738 and your local vet immediately.

Pet first aid

Learning pet first aid can help save your pets life or can help you be a guardian angel and save the life of another animal in distress.

Australian Red Cross online course – [Click](#)

Murdoch University 4 day course – [Click](#)

Some great free apps and websites to help with pet first aid are ...



Free First Aid app for Pets – [Click](#)



Vet West First Aid Tips Free online – [Click](#)



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**IF YOUR SUSPECT
THAT YOUR PET HAS
BEEN POISONED,
PLEASE FREE CALL
THE ANIMAL
POISONS CENTRE
FOR ADVICE ON:**



1300 TOX PET(1300 869 738)



- MY PET HAS BEEN BITTEN BY A SNAKE

All snake bites or suspected snake bites in Australia should be treated as life-threatening. Keep your pet calm and as still as possible. If the bite is on a leg, apply a pressure immobilization bandage from the paw all the way up to the base of the limb. The pressure bandage should not be applied too tight as to restrict blood flow, but at a similar tightness to what would be applied for a sprained ankle. A pressure bandage will have limited or no benefit for bites that are not on a limb, and a pressure bandage should never be applied to the head, neck or chest. Try to limit movement (including walking) as much as possible, and transport then to your nearest veterinary practice immediately.

DO NOT try to catch or kill the snake for identification or for any other purposes

DO NOT apply a tourniquet

DO NOT wash the bite site

DO NOT cut, suck or apply any other treatments to the bite-site



CALLING THE ANIMAL POISONS CENTRE: WHEN YOU CALL THE ANIMAL POISONS CENTRE, WE MAY ASK FOR THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION:

- Your pet's name and weight
- Details about the poison(s) they have been exposed to such as the product name and the amount (try to have the bottle/package in front of you when you call)
- How they have been exposed (ingestion, skin exposure, eye exposure etc.)
- The time since exposure
- If the animal has any symptoms
- If the animal has any previous medical conditions
- Any treatment that has already been performed

**australian
animal
poisons
centre**



1300 869 738



info@animalpoisons.com.au



www.animalpoisons.com.au



1300 TOX PET(1300 869 738)



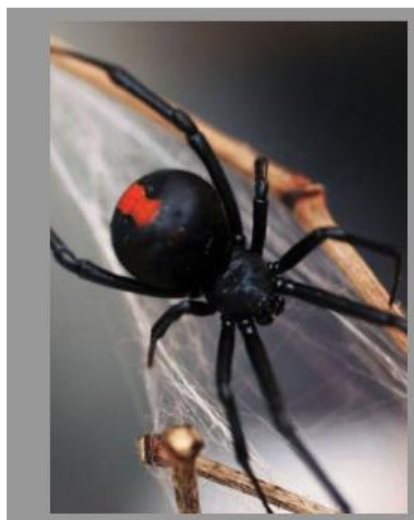
BITES AND STINGS IN PETS

AUSTRALIA IS FULL OF VENOMOUS CREATURES THAT CAN BITE OR STING YOUR PET. MANY BITES OR STINGS WILL RESULT IN LOCAL SYMPTOMS ONLY SUCH AS BITE/STING-SITE PAIN, ITCHING AND REDNESS. SOME BITES AND STINGS HOWEVER CAN POTENTIALLY BE LIFE-THREATENING.

- SNAKES

Australia has the most venomous snakes in the world, all bites or suspected snake bites should be treated as potentially life-threatening. Try to keep your pet calm, if the bite has occurred on a leg, apply a pressure immobilization bandage from the paw up to the base of the limb. Your pet should be kept still as venom travels through the lymphatic system and movement can encourage more venom to enter the bloodstream. Your pet should then be carried to a car and immediately transported to a veterinarian practice.

- SPIDERS



All spider bites can be associated with local pain, redness and swelling. Spider bites can also become infected if they are not adequately cleaned. Where possible, try to wash the bite site with soap and water and apply a pet friendly antiseptic to reduce the risks of this occurring. If there are signs of infection over the coming days, you will need to have your pet assessed by a veterinarian. There are two spiders in Australia that can result in systemic envenoming, these are the Redback and the Funnelweb spider.

**IF YOUR PET HAS HAD AN
UNFORTUNATE ENCOUNTER
WITH A DANGEROUS
AUSTRALIAN ANIMAL,
PLEASE FREE CALL THE
ANIMAL POISONS CENTRE
FOR ADVICE ON:**



1300 TOX PET(1300 869 738)



Redback spiders can cause severe regional and generalized pain, vomiting and elevations to the heart rate. Whilst they are not typically life-threatening, they can make your pet very sick for up to a few days. Funnelweb spider bites are potentially rapidly lethal. Initial first-aid is similar to a snake bite and involves the application of a pressure bandage if the bite occurs on a limb, and rapid transport to a vet.

- BEES & WASPS

These flying insects can cause a painful sting, which is associated with local redness and swelling. As most of our pets are covered in a thick layer of hair, the mouth is actually the most common sting site. This often occurs when our pets are trying to eat them. Bees only sting once, and typically leave a sting behind in the skin. Wasps may sting multiple times and do not leave a sting behind. Where possible, the sting site should be inspected closely and any sting left in the skin should be carefully removed without squeezing the 'sac' at the end. Tweezers are an effective way to do this otherwise across the sting-site with a rigid flat item such as a credit card or similar will work. Troublesome local symptoms can

be managed with an antihistamine. If your pet has been stung in or around the mouth or neck, they should be monitored closely as local swelling could result in difficulty breathing.

In some cases, bee and wasp stings can cause a severe and life-threatening allergic reaction known as anaphylaxis. Any animal stung by a bee or wasp should be closely monitored over the first hour to detect any signs of severe allergy which may include difficulty breathing, becoming unsteady on their feet or collapse.



Fear and Fear Periods

A puppy goes through 2 major fear periods in their early life. The first appears around 2-3 months of age. The second is usually between 6-15 months of age. These periods usually last between 2-4 weeks, and can be extremely challenging.

Both periods have significant evolutionary purposes and affect your dog's personality in different ways.

2-3 months – This is a critical socialisation period and also happens to coincide when lot of puppies are taken to their new homes. It's important to be gentle, kind and understanding with your puppy during this period. Do not start any form of dominance based training or scold or reprimand your puppy as this can have lifelong psychological effects on them. It is important to introduce your new puppy to their new home and family in a safe and controlled manner, creating barriers in your home and puppy proofing certain areas so that your puppy is not making poor choices and you are providing more positive reinforcement rather than constantly correcting them.

6-14 months – Usually by this time your puppy has had all their vaccinations and has been on a few walks with you. You may start to notice that the puppy that would turn over and cower away from other dogs or people may now start to react by growling, barking or lunging at them. During this fear period puppies usually learn how to respond to things that they are afraid of. Correcting your dog in these situations can not only amplify your dog's fear but also ruin the bond of trust between you and your dog as your dog may feel you don't understand it. Instead help your dog redirect using positive techniques into an opposite action such as sniffing, sitting or using non verbal subtle body signals like a head or body tilt to express how they feel.

It is important not to force your dog into any fearful situations not only during this period but throughout their early years. Instead simply allow your dog to observe triggers from afar to make them feel safe and confident, and use techniques like Desensitisation, Shaping and a lot of positive reinforcement to help your dog overcome triggers in the environment.

Recognising Fear

Not all dogs react in the same way when scared. When your dog is on leash they are often trapped and they know this as their movement is restricted especially on a tight leash.



Figure Image retrieved from <https://www.thesprucepets.com/symptoms-of-fear-in-dogs-1117890>



Fearful dogs will often learn that when they are trapped on the lead at times their humans don't recognise their fear or worse still try with good intention to get them to face their fear. These dogs may then bark or lunge to get the perceived threat away from them. At this stage most owners will move their dog away and you feeling embarrassed you may even be tempted to scold or punish or reprimand your dog. **Punishing fear will only increase it.** A dog that is forced to bark or lunge in fear will quickly learn that doing this brings results, and they are immediately removed from these triggers. They will then start to respond in this manner more often because it gets results where as the subtle signs and signals often get overlooked and ignored.

More resources

<https://youtu.be/T0vYICupP1M> , <https://youtu.be/XDt1GRUsl4> , <https://youtu.be/GJ1pXjG9uPU> , <https://youtu.be/rh7OzOvqpvE> , <https://sومuchpetential.com/understanding-puppy-fear-periods/> , <https://www.akc.org/expert-advice/training/dont-panic-training-through-and-around-puppy-fear-periods/> , https://youtu.be/uAE_qga-0hU , <https://youtu.be/0WQ7V7mORdQ>

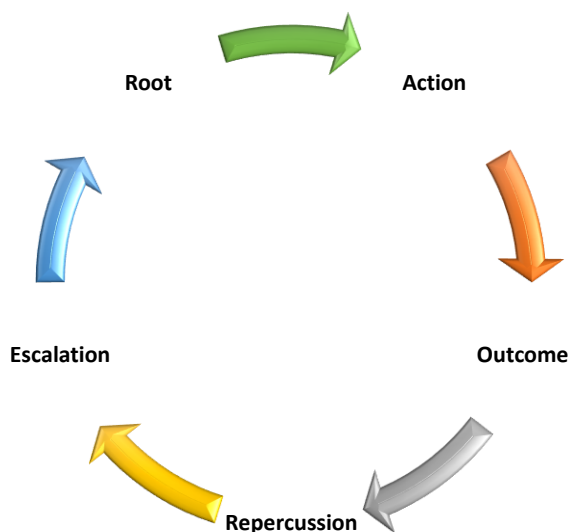
Understanding behavior



How behavior is learnt.

Behavior stems from a root emotion or desire. E.g. the **root** problem is the dog is anxious or unsure when it meets other dogs. The **action** is what the dog does E.g. The dog barks at the other dog. The **outcome** is what happens when action is taken. E.g. the other dog goes away or the dog is dragged in the other direction from that dog. (Dog learns barking at other dogs makes them go away. Phew, we should remember to do that the next time)

Behaviour Loop



Dogs that are constantly showing problem behaviors are sometimes stuck in a loop. E.g. the **root** problem is the dog is anxious or unsure when it meets other dogs. The **action** is what the dog does E.g. The dog barks at the other dog. The **outcome** is what happens when action is taken. E.g. the other dog barks and lunges towards your dog or shows them signs of uneasiness. **Repercussion** is an unintended consequence of an event or action the dog realizes they were right to bark at the other dog because they are not nice. **Escalation** is a rapid increase in the root of the problem, E.g. The dog now feels more anxious around other dogs, it learns that we need to start barking earlier and louder or reacting more severely.



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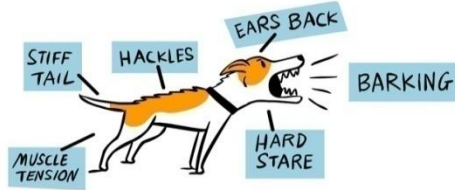


My dog is
"-----"

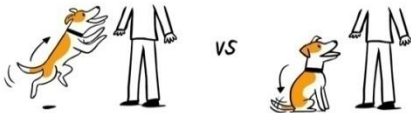
TOPOGRAPHY

A TOPOGRAPHICAL definition of behavior focuses on the physical characteristics that are observable and measurable.

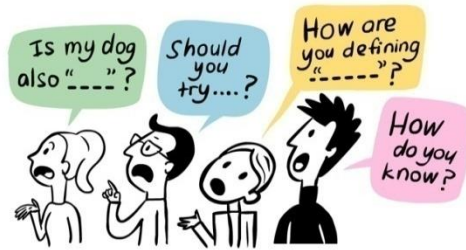
What does the behavior LOOK LIKE?



eg, "body language" or any movement with RATE, DURATION, and INTENSITY. Usually we think of behaviors as different when their topographies are different.



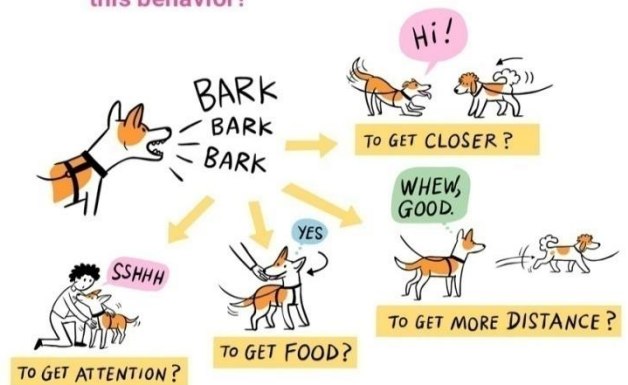
TOPOGRAPHICALLY DIFFERENT behaviors can have the **SAME FUNCTION**. Two behaviors may look different and be motivated by the same outcome. For example:



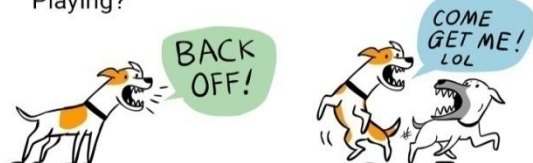
FUNCTION

A FUNCTIONAL definition of behavior focuses on the consequences, or outcomes of the behavior. To identify the consequences, we observe and test.

FOR WHAT OUTCOME does the animal do this behavior?



TOPOGRAPHICALLY SIMILAR behaviors can have **DIFFERENT FUNCTIONS** depending on the context. Behaviors that look the same may not mean the same thing. eg, Fighting or Playing?



We need both types of analyses in a scientific analysis of behavior.

A TOPOGRAPHICAL interpretation of behavior is important for setting concrete goals and monitoring progress during training.

Understanding the FUNCTION of the behavior we want to change is important for designing effective and ethical programs to meet the learner's needs.



My dog (does):

to GET or ESCAPE:

TOPOGRAPHY

FUNCTION

OK, Let's teach my dog **MORE WAYS** to get that need met!

Illustration by Lili Chin (2022)

Inspired by CAAWT Group Class & "The Blue Books: Goldiamond's and Thompson's Functional Analysis of Behavior"



POSITIVE METHODS for FEAR, REACTIVITY and AGGRESSION
<https://youtu.be/llCTsbOPTJQ>

Remember to offer a better solution and tackle the root cause of the behaviour.



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FIDDLE: Early Stress Signals in Dogs



LIP LICKING



VELCRO DOG



PAW LIFT



SCRATCHING



YAWNING



MOUNTING



SHAKE OFF



HYPERVIGILANCE



CONSTANTLY LICKING
SELF OR OTHER



SNIFFING
OR SNEEZING

Vet Behaviour Team
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www.goodboyolly.com.au

Facial Expressions of STRESS



LOOKING AWAY



WHALE EYE



CLOWN MOUTH



BROW FURROWED



EARS ALERT



EARS BACK/FLATTENED



EARS SIDEWAYS



GRINNING



CHEEK PUFFING,
TEETH CHATTERING



SQUINTING,
BLINKING

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Physiological Signs of STRESS



PANTING



PUPILS DILATED



SHEDDING



**URINATION/
DEFECATION**



HYPERSALIVATION



**NOT TAKING
TREATS**



TENSE MUSCLES



LIPSTICK SHOWING



GRIMACE



SWEATY PAWS



VOMITING



RED SCLERA

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Severe Stress Signs in Dogs

FIGHT



BARKING



BARE TEETH



HACKLES



LIP LIFT

FREEZE



MOVING IN SLOW MOTION



FROZEN

FLIGHT



RUNNING AWAY



HIDING



DUCKING BEHIND LEGS



STARTLES EASILY

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A dog's emotional cup

A Dog's Emotional Cup

Every dog has a cup that needs to be filled—with social connection, security, access to reinforcers, and enrichment.



Some dogs seem to have a full cup most of the time, either because of a genetic pre-disposition, or because they have learned good ways to get a refill.

Most things that dogs do are completely normal — including the annoying stuff, like DIGGING up the garden, CHASING cats, or BARKING at the mailman. But all dogs show signs of stress when their cups get near empty.

Signs your dog may be coping with an empty cup

- * hoarding resources, over-protective
- * over-reacting, or shutting down when exposed to new things
- * restlessness
- * slow to recover from exciting events
- * changes in appetite
- * escalating behaviors to get something or to get away from something
- * increased grumpiness, or flare-ups
- * intense social appeasement

what refills a dog's cup:



- ♥ Doing Dog Things: SNIFFING, CHEWING, FORAGING, BARKING, DIGGING, PLAYING
- ♥ Being included in the family (dogs/humans)
- ♥ Freedom to move
- ♥ Freedom to make choices
- ♥ Ability to control outcomes and get reinforcers
- ♥ Unconditional love and attention
- ♥ Good health: nourishing food, no parasites, etc.
- ♥ Having a safe, quiet place to rest
- ♥ Predictable routines and interactions
- ♥ Getting to do things a dog loves to do

what empties a dog's cup:



- ♣ Social isolation
- ♣ Long periods of confinement with no enrichment
- ♣ Poor nutrition, untreated illness, or pain
- ♣ Denied access to reinforcers
- ♣ Scary or unpredictable reactions from important humans
- ♣ Over-stimulation (over-exercised) or not enough
- ♣ Set up to fail, and then punished for it
- ♣ No preparation for challenging situations
- ♣ Unclear training: not knowing how to get reinforcement
- ♣ No one responding when expressing a need
- ♣ Too much "impulse control" (i.e. no sniffing, no eating, no exploring, no barking, no doing Dog Things) for too much of the day

Words by Sarah Owings

Art by Lili Chin

Inspired by THE EMOTIONAL CUP by Upbilly

doggiedrawings.net/freeposters



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Trigger Stacking.

Every dog has different levels of anxiety produced from different stimulus, and a threshold above which they struggle to deal appropriately. Trigger stacking is the process by which multiple triggers present themselves within a short period of time; within which the dog hasn't been able to calm down from any one of those triggers and is pushed over their threshold.

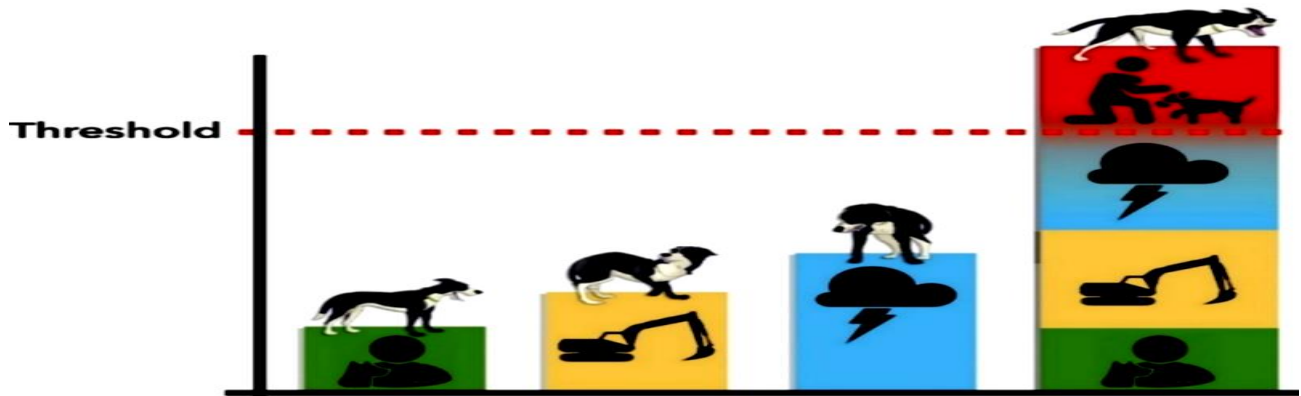


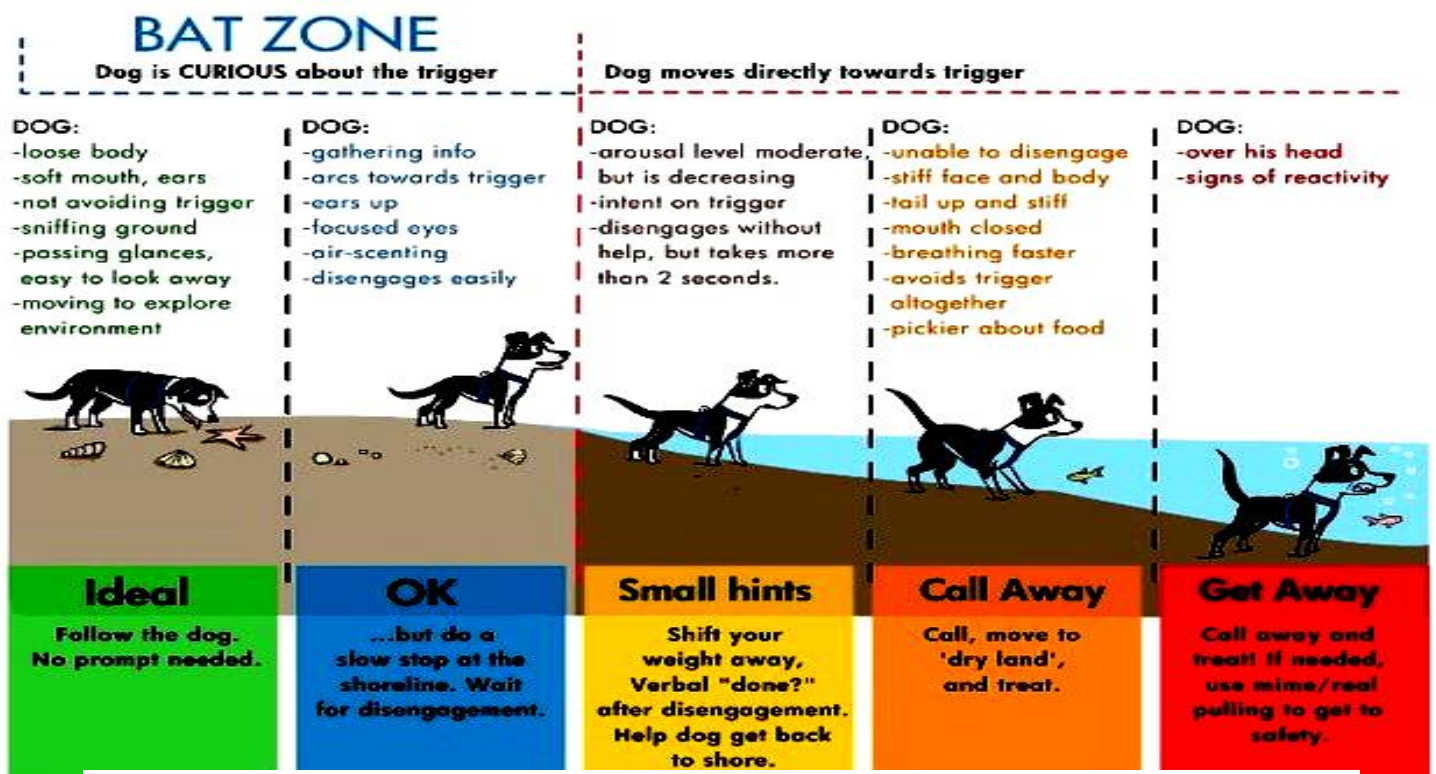
Figure Retrieved from <https://www.k9-massageguild.co.uk>

[Stay on the beach. BAT \(Behavioural adjustment training\)](#)

STRESS & SUPPORT SCALE

Stay On The Beach!

Dog's stress level is analogous to rising water level



<https://school.grishastewart.com/>



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Teaching Your Dog to be Calm

If your dog is constantly in a hyper aroused state it is first important to rule out biological causes, such as is your dog getting enough sleep? Are they receiving proper nutrition and fresh water? Do they get adequate amounts of enriching exercise? And proper veterinary care? If the answer to any of these is no or I'm unsure it is important to look into them first.

In most dogs the state of hyper arousal or over excitement is a by product of our engagements with them, trigger stacking and their ability to self regulate their emotions.

Dogs will often come up to you in an excited state and when this happens they get rewarded with affection, play and even attention (Both positive and negative). A dog then quickly learns that in order to get any interaction from humans they need to be in an excited state. If this behaviour carries on, pretty soon dogs get overly excited simply seeing a human and often when people come over into their homes this excitement results in them jumping up, scratching, nipping, mounting and even urinating.

In order to change this behaviour you first need to change the dog's state of mind. To start off you first need to teach your dog that they get attention or rewards when they are in a calm state. To do this, simply wait till your dog is calm and relaxed (not sleepy). At this stage, go up to your dog and reward them with pats praise and even treats. When your dog gets up or gets excited simply turn away until they are settled again, or if they don't settle get up, go away and return when they are calm.

Capture the behaviour as often as possible. If your aim is good throw some treats next to your dog while they are lying down and calm. (Note if you throw the treat far away and your dog has to get up to get them you are teaching your dog the opposite lesson).

When you leave or enter the house **avoid excited greetings**. If your pup is waiting for you at the door and jumps up simply ignore them. Pretend like you can't see them until they are calm. **Once your dog is calm only then do you reward them**. Invite some well trained humans over and ask them to do the same with your dog. If you're having guests over it may even be a good idea to block your dog off from the door and only let them greet the visitors on a leash once they are seated. If the dog is calm allow them to get affection. If they are over aroused remove them from the situation and put them in a calm place with some sort of enrichment to help them calm down.

When outside, if your dog is showing signs of hyper arousal or over excitement, you may need to help your dog calm down by creating some distance between their triggers and re introduce them to those triggers in a calmer more positive way. Reward your dog for showing calming signals and looking away from their triggers.

When a dog is excited they are not thinking, when they aren't thinking they make poor decisions, when they make poor decisions there are consequences.

Set you and your dog up for success, if you know your dogs triggers avoid them until you and your dog are ready to desensitise or overcome those triggers in a calm and safe manner.

Make sure you are calm first before you try to calm your dog down. If you are struggling to calm yourself move yourself or both of you out of the situation until you both are more relaxed.



Hyperarousal

HYPERAROUSAL



HYPERACTIVE



DESTRUCTIVE



PANTING



FACIAL GRIMACE



UNABLE TO FOCUS



SNATCHING TREATS



MOUNTING



LIPSTICK SHOWING



**CONSTANTLY JUMPING
AND MOUTHING**



EXCESSIVE FRIENDLINESS

Vet Behaviour Team
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Figure Retrieved from <https://www.facebook.com/dogdecoder/photos/a.1489942111230262/2399363506954780/?type=3>



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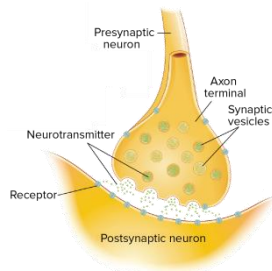


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To help a dog that is prone to hyperarousal it is important to teach them how to calm down.



<https://www.khanacademy.org/science/biology/human-biology/neuron-nervous-system/a/neurotransmitters-their-receptors>

- We all get into a heightened state of arousal; it is natural.
- We all teach our brain how to calm down; your dog can as well.
- Some people and dogs are unable to self regulate their nervous system, they may need more help.
- Medications may help with regulating moods; however, they need to be used as a training supplement not as a crutch.
- Different people and dogs calm down in different ways, find out what your dog does that helps them calm down then remind them to do it when they are over aroused or stressed.

Tips to help your dog learn to calm themselves down

- **REMAIN CALM YOURSELF**
- Create breaks while playing high intensity games. This helps your dog learn how to calm down when they are in heightened states of arousal.
- Avoid flooding your dog with too much too fast. Allow your dog to properly process each trigger in the environment before adding more.
- Avoid constantly telling your dog what to do, allow them to make the right choices themselves and reward them when they do. [\(Don't be a homer Simpson\)](#)
- Incorporate mind games in the exercise session to teach your dog to think about what they are doing.
- Take your dog to high trigger areas. Stay at a safe distance and sit and relax in those areas with your dog. Allow your dog to do things that you know helps them calm down.
- Remember dog walks are not about simply tiring your dog out. On some days simply have a calm relaxed walk away from all the triggers.
- Progress slowly, add layers one at a time to build your dogs confidence and set them up for success.
- Learn from mistakes and understand their limitations. If your dog is constantly making bad choices think instead about how you can set them up to succeed rather than waiting for them to fail.
- Trust your dog, and show them they can trust you. Often times when there is an incident our trust and our confidence in our dog is broken, we then don't allow our dogs to earn this trust again. Remember your dog has to learn to trust you as well. Punishing a dog after an incident is like hitting a child for falling off their bike, not only does it destroy their confidence but they loose trust in your ability to help them in hard times.

More resources to help with hyper arousal

<https://youtu.be/06CyHsE-bEY>

<https://youtu.be/f0kpcj5sZmQ>

<https://youtu.be/ig6zWz-hZA0>

How neurons work - <https://www.khanacademy.org/science/biology/human-biology/neuron-nervous-system/a/neurotransmitters-their-receptors>



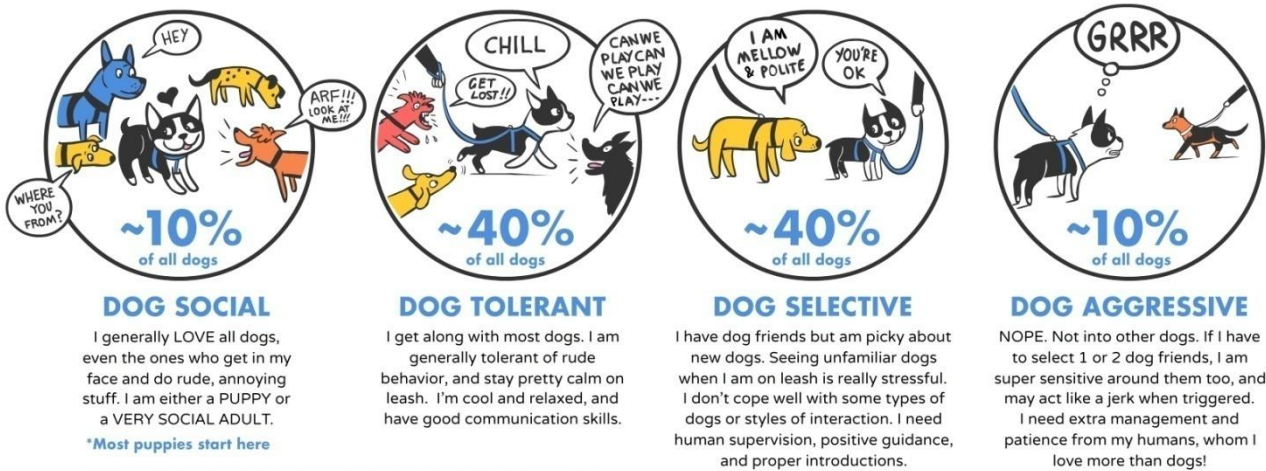
Meeting other dogs

It is not always a good idea to let your dog run up and meet every dog they see. This teaches your dog a bad habit to simply run up to any dogs. Sometimes the other dogs are anxious or reactive and this could trigger a fight or an uncomfortable standoff resulting in a negative experience for both dogs. If this happens often enough your dog may even learn that other dogs are scary and start to develop reactivity to certain dogs.

Does My Dog Love Other Dogs?

Just like people, dogs have different levels of tolerance for other dogs.

As a dog matures, he or she will often quite naturally become less social and tolerant. There are many developmental changes that happen between sexual and social maturity, and most dogs will continue to display these changes until two to three years of age. Proper facilitation of dog-dog introductions and friendships can change your dog's sociability for the better over time, and bad experiences can quickly make things worse. Good leadership and direction is important to set your dog up for success with their species.



DISCLAIMER: the percentages are very rough and fluid estimates

A dog's social tolerance changes over time and is flexible and manageable!

#adoptdontshop #respectfordogs

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Source: paws4udogs.wordpress.com/2017/02/16/understanding-dog-dog-sociability

DIY Booklet: Space Etiquette for Dogs

If you have an anxious dog please see this Booklet created by the very talented Lili Chin. It measures 2.75" x 4.5" if you struggle with off or on lead dogs constantly coming up to you and upsetting your dog, it's a nice way to prevent this from recurring, simply hand this out to other dog owners and make the world a safer and happier place one dog at a time.

Please find the instructions here [CLICK](#)

[LINK TO DOWNLOAD - A4 Size paper \(Rest of the World\)](#)



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When do I let my dogs meet other dogs? (For the first time)

Situation	Yes, No, Maybe	Why
On lead during walks	Maybe (depending on the body language & owner). Avoid whenever possible.	I first look at the body language of the owner, the other dog, and the body language of my dog. If they seem fine I ask for permission from the owner of the other dog. I try to approach in an arc since this is more polite, and allow a quick 3 second meeting with the other dog on a loose lead . As the dogs circle to sniff each other it is important to move with them to avoid tangling the lead.
Off leash in dog exercise areas	Yes (under supervision)	When in a dog exercise area I would let my dog approach the other dogs in a calm friendly manner . And I would be mindful of the way other dogs were approaching my dog. If I see any warning signs I immediately call my dog back and put them on lead, and if necessary quietly leave the area. If I see play getting too intense (too much time between play pauses) I break it up using a positive interrupter and give the dogs time to calm down, or I change the game. Keep play fun and controlled .
On the street	No	There are too many uncontrolled variables when mixing dogs and traffic which is not safe can be dangerous and potentially fatal. In traffic most dogs are already dealing with some triggers and meeting another dog will simply add another one to the mix. Interactions need to be in a safe area for all humans, dogs and bystanders.
At the vets office	No	Vet visits are stressful for many dogs; an interaction in there simply adds another trigger in an already stressful environment. Also either dog may be infectious. If my dog sees another dog at the vet I simply redirect their attention to me and get them to sit with their back towards the other dog to avoid confrontation and show calming signals. It is also a great idea to take your dog to the vet for fun visits not just when they are unwell.
At another dog's house	Maybe (If the environment is properly managed)	If my dog is going to another dog's house I always make sure there is a safe barrier like a baby gate that can be put up between the 2 dogs. I observe both dogs for any signs of stress, and I make sure there is no food or toys around to prevent resource guarding. If possible, I allow the dogs to meet for the first time outside the house, or in a safe neutral space.
Indoors or in small spaces	No	When indoors or in confined spaces dogs often don't have an escape route so when slightly anxious or unsure they may be forced to lash out creating an incident. If in doubt take them out .
Approaching a service dog or a dog in training	No	Approaching a working dog disrupts their focus and can cause the other dogs to lose focus of their job. Dogs in training are in a heightened state of arousal due to the training they are undergoing; approaching them may set their training back as well as result in the dog getting frustrated or snappy.
Approaching a dog playing with a ball	No	Dogs playing with their owners do not want to be interrupted. Also some dogs struggle with resource guarding issues around balls, food and other toys. Interactions best to be avoided.

Additional resources

<https://www.darlodogs.com.au/blog/how-to-let-your-dog-meet-other-dogs-safely/>,

<https://longhaultrekkers.com/on-leash-greetings/>,

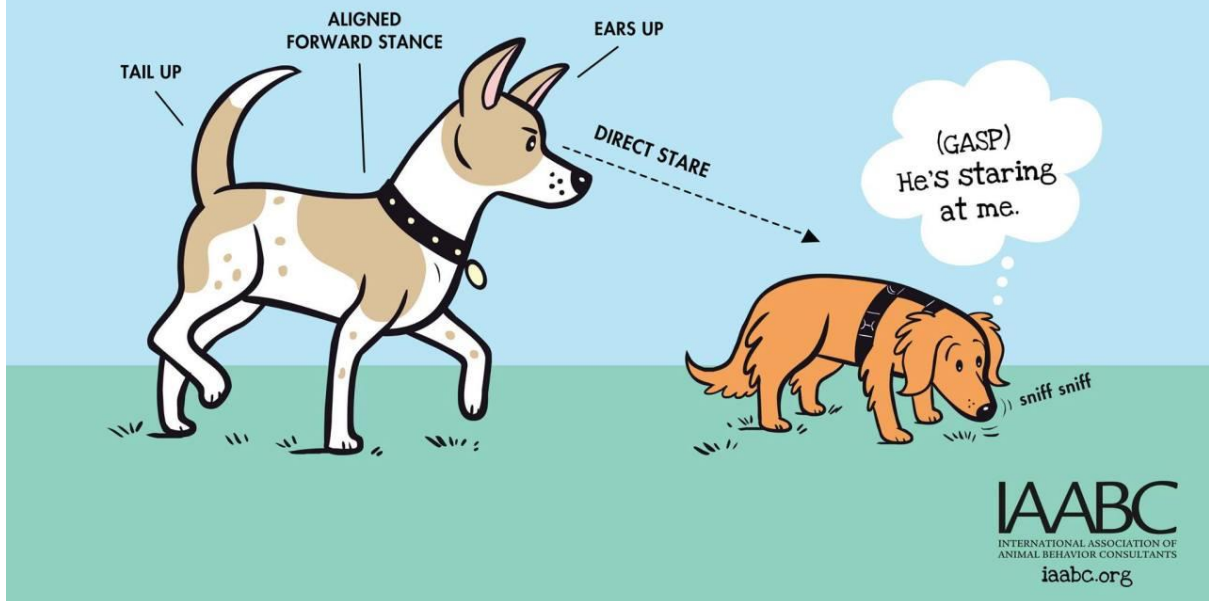




If you see your dog struggling to cope step in and help them out. They will learn to trust you and look to you for guidance in the future instead of learning to bark, lunge, and bite to assert themselves or to try and feel safe.



IS YOUR DOG PUSHY?



This behaviour often makes other dogs feel uncomfortable and may result in them lashing out resulting in a fight or running away and possibly getting hurt. Both these outcomes can have severe consequences for you and your dog. Male dogs often do this during their teenage years and sometimes it even becomes a learnt behaviour. Dogs that exhibit these behaviours often get stuck in a behaviour loop. If you see your dog exhibiting such behaviours remove them from the situation, help them calm down or even try some games designed to help your dog focus on you at the park.

**Pushy dogs aren't listening to other dogs' signals!
Give him a time-out ON A LEASH or OUTSIDE THE PARK
until he has calmed down and can show good manners.**



Socialising checklist

0 – 8 weeks old usually with mother and siblings

While the first 8-16 weeks are critical socialising should continue throughout your dog's life to ensure that the objects listed below remain a positive experience.

This list is simply a guide. You should always exercise caution to ensure you / your dogs and the public are safe during any of the exercises. It is advised to have your dog properly restrained and in control during socialising. To properly socialise a dog simply expose them to a trigger like the ones listed below. Reward curiosity and calm behaviour towards the objects and reward and praise your dog throughout to build a positive association. If your dog shows fear or fight **DO NOT SHOUT OR PUNISH THEM**, this will make it worse. Simply recondition using a strong reward. **YOU CANNOT INCREASE FEAR BY REWARDING IT**. Move far enough away from the stimulus till the dog shows signs of being comfortable and reward slowly increasing the stimulus at your dogs pace. Please see shaping and desensitisation for more details.

Patience is the key. 5 minutes extra in the start will save you hours of coaxing in the future.

People

- All genders
- All ages (babies, toddlers, kids, teenagers, adults, elderly)
- Wearing fluoro / uniforms / police / fire fighters / large overcoats
- Walking, running, sitting, sleeping
- Dressed in hats and costumes, with sunnies, walking canes and umbrellas
- Different ethnicities
- Beards / bald
- Loudly talking, laughing, shouting
- Playing

Animals

- Dogs of all ages (Puppy, adolescents, adults, elderly)
- Dogs of all sizes (Toy dogs, medium, large, giant breeds)
- Males, Females
- Birds
- Rabbits
- Rodents / guinea pigs
- Poultry
- Horses / cows / deer / kangaroos / sheep / goats/ pigs

Noises

- Door bell / knocking / door slams / door clicks
- Musical instruments
- Other dogs barking
- Squeaking toys
- Paper crinkle



- Metal gate clicks and slams
- Sirens
- Fireworks / thunder / loud bangs
- Car horns
- Rain / storm / strong wind
- Whistles, wind chimes
- TV / radio / music
- Car back fire / loud exhausts / screeching tires / revving engines
- Trucks / trains / airplanes
- Bicycle bells
- Motorcycles
- Household items such as vacuum cleaner / lawn mower / microwave / dishwasher / fridge compressor / fans / AC / Hair dryers
- Garbage truck
- Courier deliveries
- Parties / at home and next door
- People and animals / noises on the other side of the fence.
- Road crossing noises
- Mobile phones

Toys

- Hard
- Soft
- Stringy
- Chewy
- Plastic
- Rubber
- Fabric

Environments

- Water
- Sand
- Beach / river / lakes / hills
- Grass fake and real
- Tile / concrete / bitumen / carpet / laminate / wood / gravel / mud / puddles
- Parks / playgrounds
- Vets
- Shops (Bunnings + [More](#))
- Dog cafes / coffee shops / indoor and outdoor venues
- Schools
- Pet shops
- Cars
- Stairs / lifts (Not Escalators)
- Tunnels
- Foot bridges
- Busy roads



- Boats / unsteady surfaces

Handling

- Being touched all over (ears, feet, tail, genitals, anus, muzzle, gums, thigh, leg pits, paws)
- Collar grabs / lead clicks
- Being tied up
- Being groomed (different brushes)
- Bath time
- Clipping nails / checking paws / cleaning eyes & ears
- Being dried with a towel and hair dryer
- Being bandaged
- Being restrained
- Lying down with a human examining them
- Teeth brushing / checking
- Being restrained in a collar / harness / slip lead

Objects

- Shoes / socks
- Umbrellas / rain coats / jackets
- Balloons / bubbles
- Bicycles / skateboards / scooters / segways
- Drones / RC cars
- Flags / sprinklers / garden hoses
- Prams / walkers / mobility scooters / wheelchairs / walking canes
- Basketballs / footballs / footy balls / tennis balls* / cricket balls* / ping pong balls* / small bouncy balls. (*do not allow mouthing or swallowing can cause choking)
- Garage doors
- Shopping trolleys

Other useful links

<https://www.walkervillevet.com.au/blog/puppy-checklist-social-distancing/>

<https://www.louisianaspca.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/Puppy-Socialization-Checklist.pdf>

<https://www.whole-dog-journal.com/puppies/the-puppy-socialization-exposure-checklist/>

<https://puppytales.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/Puppy-Socialisation-Checklist.pdf>

<https://pupford.com/puppy-socialization/>

Growing confidence - <https://youtu.be/NzqJgT4dYB0>

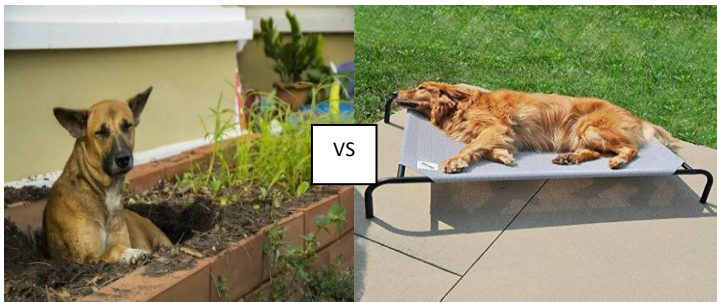
<https://youtu.be/IICTSbOPTJ0>



Digging

Digging is natural. This behaviour dates back all the way to their wild ancestors. In fact some dogs were actually bred for their ability to dig holes and flush out prey. Domestic dogs dig for a multitude of reasons; the most common one is because **it feels good**. Digging helps your dog overcome stress, anxiety and boredom. Sometimes dogs will dig their beds, the carpet or the couch simply because this behaviour helps them relax and makes the area they are going to sleep on more familiar. Dogs have scent glands on their paws. And sometimes they will dig a particular object to add their scent to it making it more personal. It is for this reason you may often find after you wash your dog's bed they dig in it, this is because your dog prefers their own natural odour to the floral scents that we find appealing.

Digging in the garden is a good way to let your dog relax and simply be a dog. However, there may be times when the digging can become problematic especially if your dog is digging close to relic pipes, in your vegetable patch or under the fence. **Punishing a dog for digging makes the problem worse.** Before you tackle your dogs digging problem it is important to understand the drive behind their digging.



www.patchpuppy.com

<https://www.ebay.com.au/itm/253063076046>

Digging a bed – Often time's dogs will dig themselves a shallow hole in a particular spot they find appealing to lie in. These holes are often nice and cool. Dogs that are digging for this purpose can be often convinced not to dig that area using a raised mesh bed on that area that will allow airflow from underneath and is put over or near the spot.

Digging out of boredom or anxiety –

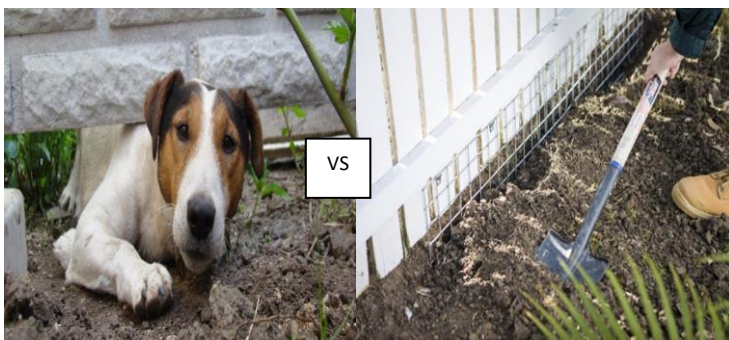
Since digging can help dogs calm down it may be a behavior they chose to do when they are bored or anxious. Typically this will look like multiple holes in the garden in random places and will often happen more when you're out of the house. The best solution in the long term is to help your dog with their anxiety or separation issues. You can also provide more enrichment for your dog in the

back yard when your away to help them cope better and make more positive choices. It is also important to make sure your dog is getting adequate amounts of physical and mental exercise every day.



<https://buyturfonline.com.au/how-to-stop-dog-digging-up-lawn/>

<https://www.bindisbucketlist.com/post/the-sensory-yard-making-our-backyard-into-a-sensory-heaven-for-our-dogs>



<https://outwardhound.com/furtropolis/dogs/white-spots-on-how-to-stop-a-dog-from-digging-under-a-fence>

<https://yardandgardenguru.com/white-spots-on-squash-leaves/>

Digging to escape- Some dogs dig because they have learnt that this is a way out of the back yard. The root causes for this vary from anxiety and boredom to excessive stimulus over the fence. The safe way to deal with this behavior is to first create an escape proof fence. It is then important to identify the drive behind the dog trying to escape and then tackle the root of the problem. Please contact me if you have this issue.



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<https://www.southernliving.com/culture/pets/why-do-dogs-bury-bones>



<https://blog.petmeds.com/giveaways-contests/giveaway-put-an-end-to-overfeeding-with-the-eatwell-pet-feeder/>

Digging to Bury bones or toys – The cartoons of dogs burying bones are quite a cliché however the reality is this behavior goes way back to their wild ancestors. When hunting dogs would go through periods where there was surplus food and other times when there was none. They would often bury food to protect it from scavengers and then dig it up later. Our dog's tendency to do this is the same as us stocking the refrigerator. To tackle this behavior adjusts the frequency and amounts of food and bones your dog is receiving. Take away that big bone after a while and

give it back to your dog the next day. (Do this properly in a positive way using praise and rewards to avoid resource guarding)

If your dog was neglected as a puppy or has developed a sense of food insecurity due to the presence of other animals it may exhibit this behavior as well. If this is the case provide your dogs meals in a calm safe space. Do not withhold food or do things like making your dog wait for its food as this would make this behavior worse.

Digging for prey – Some dogs instinctively do this more than other. Dogs can hear and smell insects, rodents and other animals under the ground and sometimes they dig the yard looking for them. Often times they will eat the roots of the plants underground since they have insects and bugs living in them. While humanely eliminating mammals from the back yard is possible it is impossible to do so for a dog hunting insects. It is therefore a good idea to teach impulse control using things like flirt pole training and other fun techniques to help curb the behavior.



<https://www.reddit.com/r/pics/>

<https://barkleyandpips.com/collections/squishy-face-br-flirt-poles>

Stop Digging

Before you decide to stop your dog from digging it is important to address the root cause of digging otherwise **you may be swapping one problem for an even bigger one**. If you stop an anxious dog from digging to relieve stress it may look for other ways to do so such as chewing the couch or the TV wires.

A good solution is to provide an alternative place to dig. First you need to create such a spot in your garden or use a kiddie pool filled with garden sand buried near the surface. Next you **redirect** the dogs digging by making the old spot uncomfortable to dig in and the new spot more attractive.

Old spot	New spot
Bury dog poop or lemon peel close to the surface	½ Bury bones or treats and toys for your dog to find.
Fill in old holes with rocks and bricks	Fill new place with soft wet sand
Cover the old spot with a mesh	Fill the new spot with grass and a few dog safe plants
Cover in the old holes with dirt	Provide enrichment and entertainment options
Close all escape routes	Present triggers then desensitize & counter condition

More resources:

<https://patchpuppy.com/dog-training/why-do-dogs-dig-holes-and-lay-in-them/>

<https://outwardhound.com/furtropolis/dogs/how-to-stop-a-dog-from-digging-under-a-fence>

<https://www.treehugger.com/why-do-dogs-dig-holes-4863826>

<https://www.bindisbucketlist.com/post/the-sensory-yard-making-our-backyard-into-a-sensory-heaven-for-our-dogs>



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Separation anxiety

Setting Your New Dog or Puppy Up for **Successful ALONE Time**

Getting used to a new home and family is a big transition for any dog and it may take your furry friend some time to acclimate to a new environment. Part of this new routine will probably include you leaving your pup at home alone from time to time. Many dogs experience some degree of stress when left alone and it's not always easy to determine if this is the case when a dog first joins the family.

DOs

DO Start with Short absences and build up gradually as long as your dog is not showing signs of stress.



DO Exercise with your dog and provide daily enrichment. Providing affection and attention does not cause separation anxiety.



DO Utilize an expert daycare or pet sitter until your dog is comfortable alone at home.



DO Contact your veterinarian and a professional trainer.



DO NOTs

DO NOT Scold or punish your dog. They are not misbehaving or acting out of spite.



DO NOT Use Equipment that might be painful or scary. These will only mask symptoms of anxiety and can actually increase your dog's fear of being alone.



DO NOT leave your dog in a crate if they haven't learned to relax while left alone in confinement.



DO NOT Leave your dog alone for any longer than they are comfortable. They will not just "get over it".



If your dog appears stressed when left alone and is not able to tolerate the short absences you are practicing, there are experts who can help! Contact your veterinarian and a professional dog trainer who is certified to work with separation anxiety cases for more information.

By Tina Flores Illustrated by Lili Chin


DOGGY EINSTEIN'S TRAINING
 YOUR DOG'S HOME ALONE HELPLINE
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What is separation anxiety?

Imagine you have a favourite person, not only is this person the one responsible for keeping you alive, they bring you incredible amounts of joy and unconditional love. This person is your sole purpose in life, you follow them everywhere anticipate and observe their every move, it is your job to keep them safe, and you love them with every fibre of your being. **Now imagine that person left you for no fault of your own. They may never return. The entire world is silent, what if they never come back? Who can you go to now to help you feel better, feel safe. How can you protect them from all the bad things out there? What can you do? You are trapped. Humans experience separation anxiety as well when away from their dogs.**

This is just a small part of the anxiety a dog goes through when you leave them alone. Dogs are pack animals and as such are not used to being on their own. Your dog will never be happy to see you leave the house. You can teach your dog how to positively channel their loneliness and anxiety, and even reduce the level of the anxiety by teaching them you're always coming back.

DON'T PANIC!

Helping Dogs With Separation Anxiety

- 

1

UNDERSTAND:
Separation Anxiety is like a panic attack.
- 

2

REMEMBER:
An anxious dog is not giving you a hard time. He is having a hard time.
- 

3

RECOGNIZE:
Dogs communicate stress via body language.
- 

4

IDENTIFY:
Learning history (cargo shipment, schedule change, singleton pup, etc) and genetic factors which contribute to separation anxiety.
- 

5

USE:
More than single factor solutions like a crate and a Kong.
- 

6

RESOLVE:
Use a desensitization protocol.
- 

7

SUPPORT:
Work only with positive reinforcement.
- 

9

KEEP TRACK:
Data helps see the non-linear progress.
- 

10

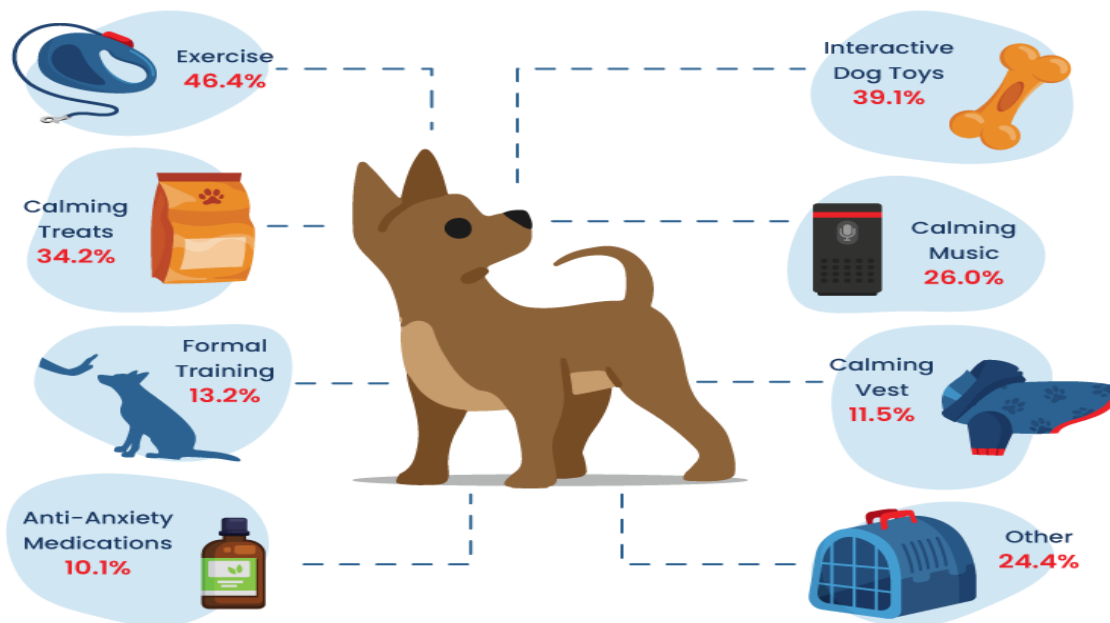
IMAGINE:
Relaxation is possible!
- 



Signs of separation anxiety

The Most Common Remedies for Separation Anxiety in Dogs

According to Survey Responses of 2,651 American Dog Owners



The Most Common Separation Anxiety Behaviors in Dogs

According to Survey Responses of 2,651 American Dog Owners



<https://www.certapet.com/separation-anxiety-in-dogs-survey/>



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Overcoming separation anxiety

Start training early – Waiting till the time you have to go away for 9 hours is setting your dog up to fail. Start early, train in small increments always setting your dog up to succeed.

Quick fix

These solutions may help short term, however, it is strongly recommended to do them in conjunction with long term solutions to stop your dog from being very anxious every time you're away.

1. Exercise your dog before leaving the house.
2. Play calming dog music (put on doggy friendly videos on TV).
3. Don't make a fuss (avoid saying long winded goodbyes to your dog or making a big deal of leaving and returning home).
4. Provide your dog with enrichment before leaving the house.
5. Create interactive games in your back yard.
6. Doggy proof the house and allow access to certain safe spaces when you are away.
7. Use products like [ADAPTIL Calm Home Diffuser](#).
8. Use tools like the [Furbo 360° Dog Camera](#) to help monitor and understand your dog's behaviour when you're away.
9. Switch it up. Dogs recognise the patterns when we are about to leave the house. (Putting on shoes, grabbing the keys, locking the doors etc). Identifying your patterns and how it triggers your dog can help you change, and modify it so that your dog isn't building up for the moment you're going to leave.

Long term solutions

1. Start by leaving your dog alone in a room for a minute. As your dog settles and shows calm relaxed behaviour, return (**only return when your dog is calm**). Slowly increase the time.
2. If your dog does not settle when you're away it may be important to pair you leaving with a positive reward like a full Kong, something safe to lick or chew or puzzle toy. At first return before the enrichment is over, and slowly increase the time, leaving your dog alone for longer and longer.
3. Identify the triggers in your leaving patterns and desensitise them. For example, if you can see your dog getting stressed when you pick up your keys or put on your socks, perform these actions randomly through the day and reward your dog with calm praise or pats when you do to change the association from a negative to a neutral or positive / calm one. If the reaction is severe you can use a food reward in the beginning, however, it is good to gradually phase this out to avoid your dog replacing an anxious state for an excited one.
4. Create a safe space for your dog in the house that is theirs. This could be a crate, their bed or even their favourite spot on the couch. Ask your dog to stay in their spot when you leave and if appropriate provide them with some sort of enrichment there, as you leave.
5. Once your dog is more relaxed with you leaving introduce a positive command (mine is I'll be back) when leaving. This is to help the dog differentiate between when you need to go out alone and when you can both go out together.

More resources

<https://youtu.be/r9AFDe56-9g> , <https://youtu.be/8yNTG7r6yaQ> , <https://youtu.be/oyAMPJ4tdNU>
<https://www.finder.com.au/dogs-separation-anxiety> , <https://www.certapet.com/separation-anxiety-in-dogs-survey/> ,
<https://www.bluecross.org.uk/advice/dog/home-alone-separation-anxiety-in-dogs> ,
<https://positiveanimalwellness.com/separation-anxiety-in-dogs-dont-panic/> , https://youtu.be/hxgkLA6_iM



Communication

Humans' primary mode of communication is verbal, while our dogs' primary language is body language. We have evolved to understand complex words that can sometimes even mean different things, complex sentences and double / hidden meanings. Dogs on the other hand evolved to understand each other using a simple language that is exactly the same all over the world.

While humans think and talk about abstract things dogs' communication reflects how they feel at that exact moment.

We communicate in past present and future tense. Dogs only communicate in the present tense. E.g. we can say I was hungry at 9am I will be hungry again at 1pm, a dog always says I'm hungry now.



Figure Retrieved from <https://owlcation.com/stem/The-difference-between-animal-and-human-communication>

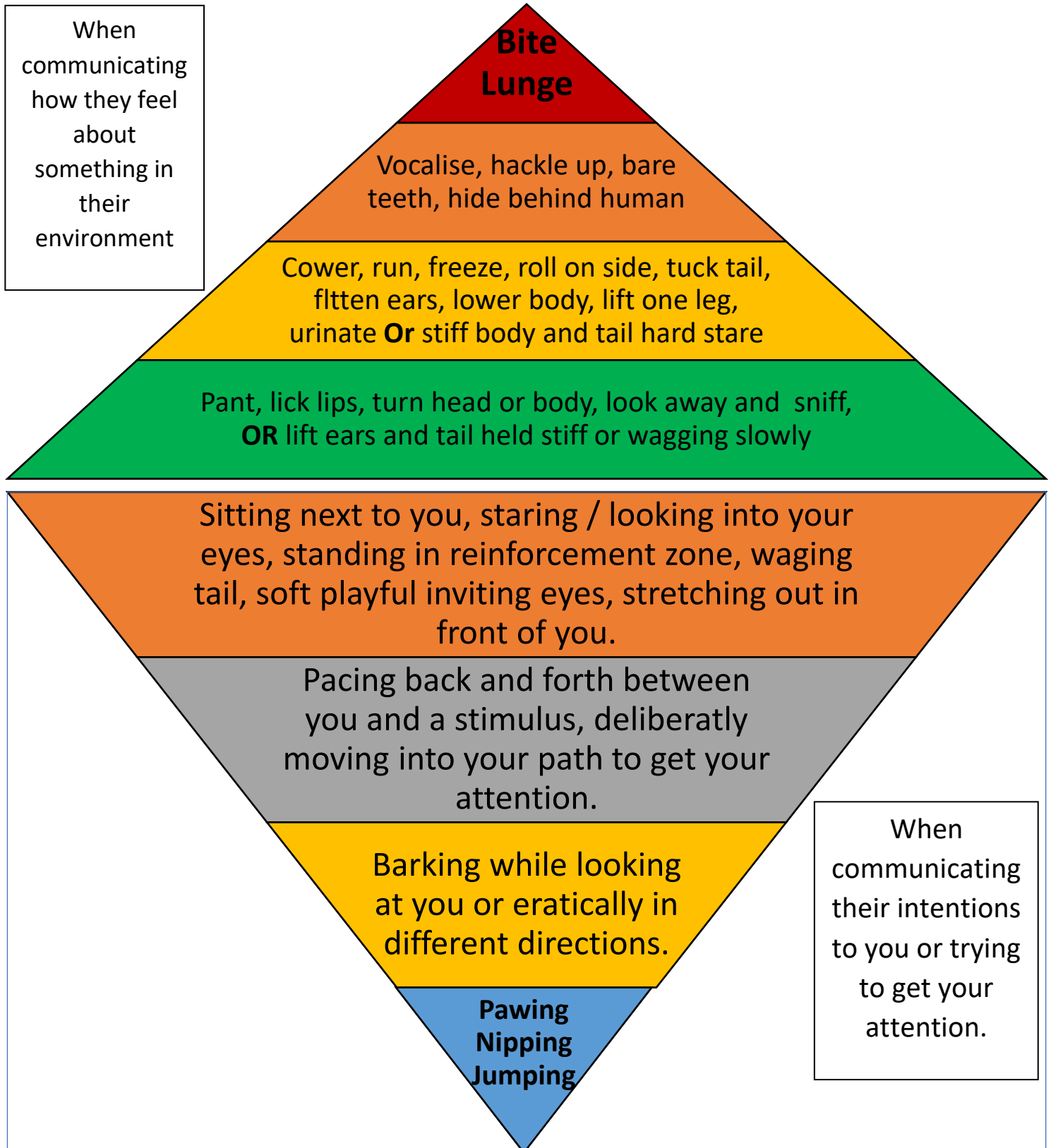
While we struggle to read dogs, there are experts at reading our emotions and intentions by reading our faces, observing our movements and even smelling our pheromones. This is why we often think dogs are acting guilty when they do something bad when in reality they are cowering, running away or turning their head to try and calm down a clearly upset human. This is also why your dog may react poorly to people who are injured or walk / move in an unusual way. It's because they can't understand the movement and this scares them.

Like us, dogs will first try polite body language. If this is not heard or reciprocated they then raise the volume and display stronger signals to communicate what they are feeling. If this is still going unheard they then resort to yelling or in their case barking. If this is still not heard or worse still if they get punished for communicating in this way they resort to violence (biting, lunging, pawing and jumping).

If a dog is compelled to shout or act out to be heard more than once they quickly learn to stop wasting time with other subtle signals and only use what works (barking, biting, lunging and jumping).



Pyramid of communication



LEARNING IS BETTER IN A CALM STATE

Teach at the base.



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Dog Body Language

DOGGIE LANGUAGE

starring Boogie the Boston Terrier



ALERT



SUSPICIOUS



ANXIOUS



THREATENED



ANGRY



"PEACE!"
look away/head turn



STRESSED
yawn



STRESSED
nose lick



"PEACE!"
sniff ground



"RESPECT!"
turn & walk away



"NEED SPACE"
whale eye



STALKING



STRESSED
scratching



STRESS RELEASE
shake off



RELAXED
soft ears, blinky eyes



"RESPECT!"
offer his back



FRIENDLY & POLITE
curved body



FRIENDLY



"PRETTY PLEASE"
round puppy face



"I'M YOUR LOVEBUG"
belly-rub pose



"HELLO I LOVE YOU!"
greeting stretch



"I'M FRIENDLY!"
play bow



"READY!"
prey bow



"YOU WILL FEED ME"



CURIOUS
head tilt



HAPPY
(or hot)



OVERJOYED
wiggly



"MMMM...."



"I LOVE YOU,
DON'T STOP"

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lili

Figure Retrieved from <https://www.fromadogsview.com.au/blog/body-language-and-calming-signals/>



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Calming Signals

Calming signals are a phrase coined by author and dog trainer Truid Rugaas. The book is an excellent read and is recommended for amateur and seasoned dog owners alike. Calming signals are your dog's way of communicating when they are in an uncomfortable situation. As with all communication it works best flowing both ways. You can also learn to use certain calming signals when communicating with your dogs to help them understand your intentions.

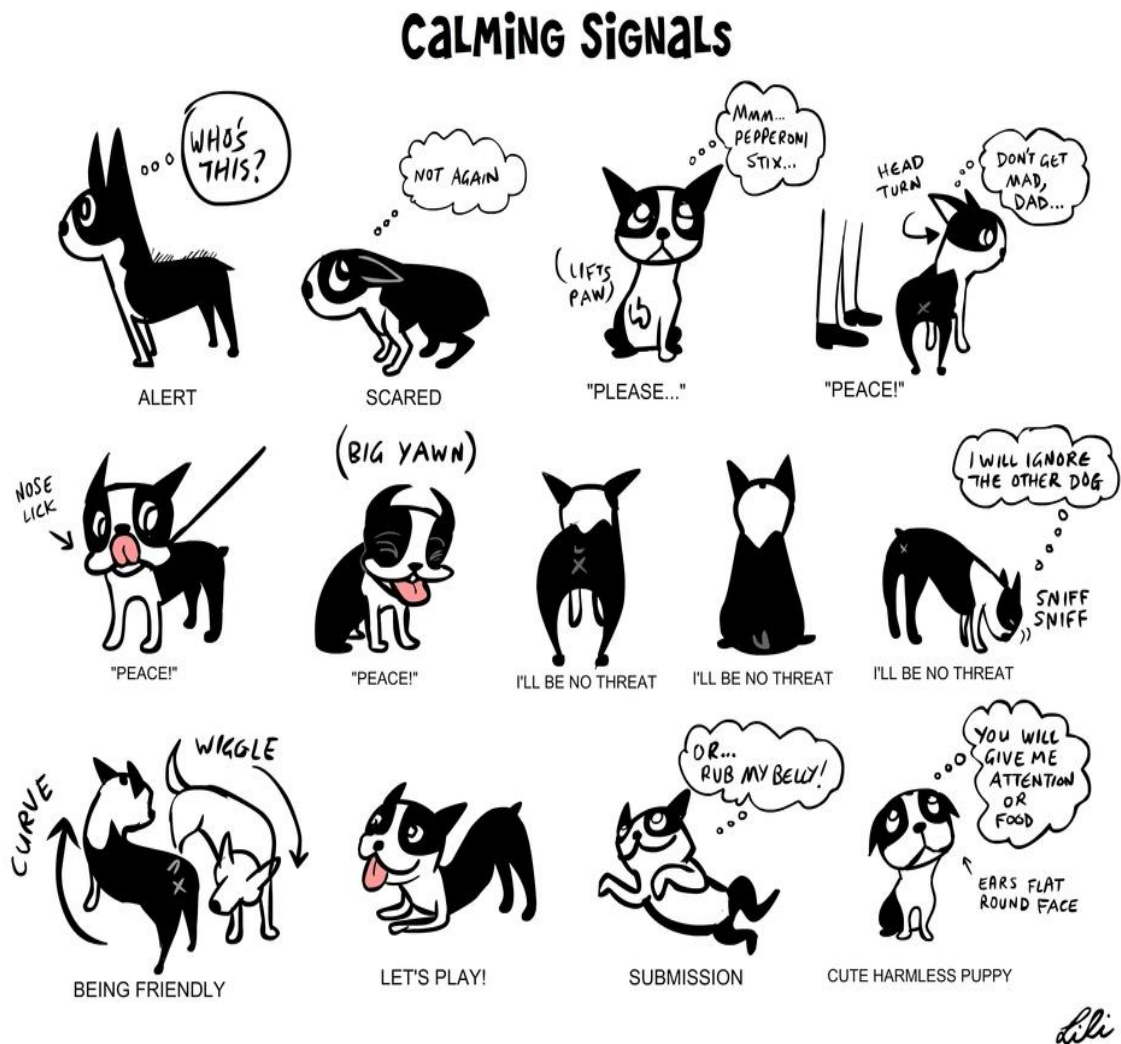


Figure retrieved from <https://tullystraining.com/blog/2013/5/17/reading-your-dogs-body-language>

Additional resources

<https://www.dogdecoder.com/> , <https://youtu.be/vqP453qscMg> , <https://youtu.be/nvQjSKvuENw> ,
<https://www.companionanimalpsychology.com/p/all-about-dogs.html> ,
<https://youtu.be/nB4JmAskNI4> , <https://youtu.be/-hsOIjwMwps> , <https://youtu.be/siy0eog48ys> ,
<https://www.doggielanguagebook.com/> , <https://www.dogwise.com/on-talking-terms-with-dogs-calming-signals-2nd-edition/> , <https://www.patriciamcconnell.com/store/product/the-other-end-of-the-leash-why-we-do-what-we-do-around-dogs> ,
<https://www.patriciamcconnell.com/store/product/lost-in-translation-dvd> ,
<https://www.boffinsbooks.com.au/books/9781742375410/secret-language-of-dogs>

