



Foster Handbook

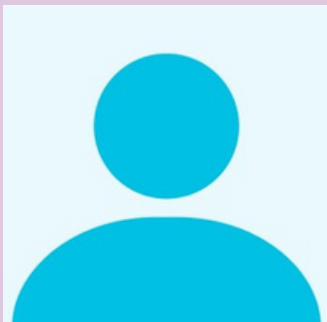
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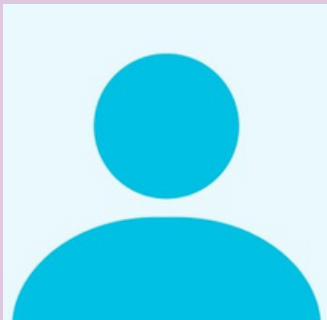
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Welcome to the PAW Dog Team!

Dear Foster,

Thank you for volunteering your time with Partnership for Animal Welfare, Inc. (PAW). We are so excited to have you join our team! PAW is a nonprofit solely operated by dedicated volunteers like yourself. Whether you're a new or veteran foster, we hope this welcome packet includes helpful information and resources for you.

By providing a safe and caring home to a PAW rescue dog, you are saving their life and the life of another dog entering the shelter system. Many shelters are forced to make difficult decisions every day due to limited space and resources. By fostering, you are making a big difference!

The volunteers in our network are here to offer you support, guidance, and encouragement as we partner together to rescue a countless number of homeless dogs and find them forever homes. Apart from the amazing network of PAW volunteers, the Dog Coordinator and Case Advisors are here to help you too. You can tap into our network by accepting PAW's Slack invite. There you'll have the vibrant network of dedicated volunteers at your fingertips.

Warmly,
The PAW Dog Team
www.paw-rescue.org.





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Foster FAQs

How long am I expected to foster?

We prefer that you commit to foster until your foster dog finds a forever home. Unfortunately, PAW cannot predict how long it will take to find a good home. Some dogs are adopted quickly, and others may take some time. The dog's breed, age, temperament, the time of the year, marketing, and the foster dog's presence at adoption events increase their chances of finding a forever home. We ask that fosters bring their dog to an adoption show at least once a month. You can also bring them to one of the kennels we use so a volunteer can take them to the show. You will need to drop them around 11am and pick them up around 3pm.

If you can only foster temporarily, it is totally okay! Just let us know because temporary fosters are needed too.

Keep in mind, there are several other volunteer duties that might fit your lifestyle and are less time-consuming, such as marketing dogs on social media sites, transporting, walking boarded dogs, serving as a dog handler at one of PAW's adoption events, and more!

Am I expected to buy supplies for my foster?

PAW will supply you with various supplies such as a dog tag, martingale collar, a harness, monthly heartworm & flea and tick preventatives, and a crate (if needed). If you need any additional supplies, please use PAW's Slack account and post a message on our *#pet-supplies-whatugot- whatuneed* channel. It is very likely that someone in our network has what you're looking for.

Any supplies you choose to purchase for your foster dog (e.g., food, treats, toys) are considered donations to PAW and are tax-deductible. Please remember to keep your receipts and we will be happy to send you a tax donation letter. Reimbursements will be considered on a case-by-case basis and will require prior approval from the Dog Coordinator before purchase.

What happens if I don't think the prospective adopter is a good fit for my foster dog?

As a valued foster volunteer, we believe that you should be involved in the adoption decision-making. We understand that you have likely formed a bond with your PAW foster dog, and you know the dog's quirks and temperament better than a prospective adopter. As such, we encourage you to share your thoughts with the Dog Coordinator and Adoption Committee if you don't think a prospective adopter is a good fit.

What if my foster dog isn't working out?

We try to ensure a good and safe foster match as much as possible. PAW never wants to jeopardize the safety of the foster parent, the foster dog, or any resident pets in the home. However, we recognize that there are times it doesn't work out. If this happens, contact the Dog Coordinator as soon as possible so we may find the foster dog a new home.

If you notice some behavioral issues (e.g., separation anxiety, resource guarding) with your foster dog, remember that you have an entire community of experienced PAW volunteers at your disposal via Slack who may have a solution to the present behavior. Feel free to post a message on the PAW Slack account on the *#all-dog-foster-parents* channel.

What if my foster dog has to go to the vet?

Veterinary care for your PAW foster dog must be authorized by PAW and provided by a PAW approved vet partner listed in this manual. Due to limited funds, PAW leans on its vet partnerships to receive quality, low cost, medical care for its rescues. Consequently, if you take your foster dog to another vet who is not an approved veterinary provider, you will be responsible for the cost.

If you believe your foster dog needs a vet visit, please contact the Dog Coordinator as soon as possible via Slack, email, text, or phone. Certain ailments may be easily addressed by certain medications that PAW keeps on hand.

If a vet visit is warranted, the Dog Coordinator will schedule an appointment for the foster dog. If possible, we ask that you please take the foster to their vet appointment, but if you cannot, please request a medical transport via Slack.

What if my foster dog experiences a health emergency?

If your foster has an obvious and clear emergency (e.g., hit by a car, attacked by an animal, ingesting a dangerous object), contact the Dog Coordinator immediately and let them know that you're taking your foster dog to the nearest emergency vet. When you arrive, please notify the staff that the dog is a PAW dog, not your personal dog. Certain Veterinary ERs will provide a rescue discount (e.g., Blue Pearl, Metropolitan Animal Emergency & Specialty Center [MEAC], Veterinary Referral Associates [VRA]).

What if I (or my family) have an emergency and can no longer foster?

Please contact the Dog Coordinator as soon as possible. We'll work to find another foster home or make arrangements to board your foster if you or your family have an emergency.

Can I take my foster dog to the dog park, on a long car ride, or hiking?

Dog parks are on a case-by-case basis. Not all dog parks are created equally. Also, some dogs do not do well in an environment like a dog park so you need to make sure you're putting your foster dog in situations that allow him/her to thrive, not fail. The same goes for a long car ride or hiking. It always depends on the dog. An active dog will LOVE hiking. Some dogs don't do well in the car and others are just fine. You should discuss it with the Dog Coordinator before making a decision.

What if I need to leave town for vacation, business, etc.?

Please let us know in advance if you have a scheduled vacation, business trip, etc. so we may work on finding a temporary foster home for your foster dog. We appreciate sufficient notice in order to ensure safe placement, especially around the summer season and during holidays.

What if my pets get sick from my foster dog?

We strongly suggest that all resident pets be current on vaccinations, use heart worm and flea and tick preventatives, and be current on the bordetella vaccine. Pets that are current on their vaccines usually do not experience serious medical issues from foster dogs; however, if a problem arises, it is usually easily addressed.

If your pet is fully vaccinated and you took preventative measures (e.g., picking up a foster's stool to minimize contracting worms), but your pet still contracts an illness, please contact the Dog Coordinator. Depending on the illness, it is possible that PAW may have over-the-counter medication that can be provided to your pet free of charge.

Do I have to use a crate for my foster dog?

We highly recommend crating for certain dogs. PAW cannot guarantee your foster dog is fully housebroken, will not chew your personal items, and will hurt him/herself when unattended and uncrationed. The best and safest way to protect your home, any resident pet(s), and your foster dog is to use a crate.

PAW is not responsible for damage done by a foster dog left unattended and uncrationed. Additionally, we cannot be responsible for any injury or harm caused to your resident pet(s) if you choose to leave the foster uncrationed and unattended in your home. With time, you may discover that your foster dog doesn't require a crate, but please make that decision after a significant period of time and when you really get to know the foster dog and their behavior.

Adoption Process

Potential adopter completes an application



A member from the adoption/foster committee reviews the application



PAW member verifies information in the applicant's application

Contact applicant's current vet regarding the applicant's past and current pet(s)

Verify the quality of care for past & current pet(s), by verifying their vaccination record(s)

Contact the applicant's rental office, if applicable
•Verify dogs are allowed the premises
•Verify the PAW dog breed is allowed, and their weight isn't an issue



PAW volunteer conducts a home visit



Potential adopter's family members and resident pet(s) meet the PAW dog.



Adoption!





PAW approved vet partners

Routine Veterinarian Care

Please ensure you have the approval from a PAW's Dog Coordinator before taking in a foster dog in for treatment.



MUDDY BRANCH VETERINARIAN CENTER

880 Muddy Branch Road, Gaithersburg, MD 20878

301-963-0275

COLLEGE PARK ANIMAL HOSPITAL

9717 Baltimore Ave, College Park, MD

301-441-2547



Emergency Veterinarian Care

Please take the foster to your closest ER animal hospital and inform the PAW Dog Coordinator of the emergency when you arrive at the ER.

Please consider the ER hospitals below *ONLY* if you live near them.



METROPOLITAN EMERGENCY ANIMAL CLINIC

11503 Rockville Pike, Ste #A, Rockville, MD 20852

301-770-5226

BLUE PEARL PET HOSPITAL IN ROCKVILLE

1 Taft Court, Rockville, MD 20851

301-637-3228



VETERINARY REFERRAL ASSOCIATES

500 Perry Parkway, Gaithersburg, MD 20877

301-926-3300



TEN TIPS FOR HUMANS

- 1** Dogs "speak" through body language.
Watch for these stress signals, so you know when to intervene:
 - Tucking tail between legs
 - Turning head away
 - Backing away
 - Trying to hide
 - Licking lips
 - Excessive yawning
 - Excessive sniffing
 - Unwillingness to take treats
 - Whining or growling
 - Half-moon eye (a white arc around the pupil)
- 2** Mental stimulation is just as important as physical exercise.
Thinking helps build confidence and tires your dog out.
 - Purchase interactive toys that your dog can push, tug, drop, or roll to get treats out.
 - Play games like "find it", a treasure hunt created by you for your dog.
 - Teach your dog tricks such as "shake", "spin" or "crawl".
 - Take a positive training class! You will be amazed how exhausted your dog will be from class!
- 3** Being around young children can be stressful for dogs.
Kids have high-pitched voices, move quickly, and are unpredictable. They chase, fall on, dress, hug, corner, and pick up dogs.
 - Carefully monitor any interaction your dog has with your children and their friends.
 - Once a dog has had enough, even good dogs can bite! Help your dog get away to a safe place as soon as you see any signs of stress.
 - Don't let children crowd your dog – one at a time and only if your dog shows interest in them.
- 4** Management is your best friend.
This is every dog trainer's secret. Make your life easier by heading off problems, instead of getting angry at your dog when they happen.
 - Use baby gates and close doors to keep your dog out of areas where you don't want him to be.
 - Get the whole family involved in cleaning up; put away shoes and other items your dog may steal or chew.
 - If you have more than one dog, feed them in separate areas.
 - Keep a leash by your door, so if the UPS man shows up, you can put a leash on your dog.
 - Crate your dog or put him in a safe area if you know people are on their way to visit – especially important for timid, reactive or overly-excited dogs.
- 5** "Socialization" is not the same as exposure.
Socialization is an over-used term that has come to mean "throw your dog into any and all situations and hope for the best". Your #1 priority should be to help your rescue dog feel safe.
 - Your dog's experiences with other dogs, people and environments need to be good ones.
 - Dogs can develop anxieties from one bad incident.
 - Don't force your dog into situations that make him uncomfortable.
 - Give your dog time to adjust. This is not the time to see family or attend public events.

6 Training is a process.
Dogs don't come home knowing our language and rules.

- Train your dog in a quiet environment first, then around mild distractions before expecting him to listen with that squirrel running by.
- Teach your dog what you want him to do, instead of just correcting him for what you don't want.
- You need to be more fun / interesting than the rest of the world – including that squirrel!
- Be consistent!

7 Dog parks and corporate day care can sometimes harm your dog.
It's up to you to keep your dog safe in any situation.

- Dogs that play non-stop are in a high state of arousal, making aggression more likely.
- Different breeds / dogs have different play styles – chasing, wrestling, body slamming, biting – that can cause tension between dogs.
- Dogs need to learn to be calm in the company of other dogs, but the opposite happens in these settings.
- Humans at dog parks may be busy talking to one another and generally ignore or don't understand their dogs' behavior and signals.
- At many corporate day cares, there are too many dogs in one room, the employees watching the dogs aren't well-trained, and there is high staff turnover.
- Being bitten, bullied, or even having a fight break out nearby can harm your dog's well-being and behavior for years to come.

8 We humans use body language that can be threatening to dogs.
We approach dogs head-on, bend over them, and reach over their heads to pet them.

- Approaching a dog straight on (especially quickly) is a threat. Approach at an angle.
- Don't lean over a dog. Bend at your knees, not at your waist.
- Pet dogs on their chest or under their chin, instead of reaching over to "pat" them on the head.
- If you don't know a dog, wait until the dog comes to you.
- NEVER punish your dog for growling! Your dog is telling you as clearly as he knows how that he is stressed. If you punish him for growling, your dog will go straight to biting without warning.

9 Most reactive/aggressive behavior is based on fear.
Punishing fear just creates more fear. Punishing aggression just creates more aggression.

- Barking and lunging is how a dog makes something he is afraid of go away.
- Asking a dog to sit/stay as the scary thing goes by is like asking you to sit/stay when you are near a live snake.
- Dogs can learn to dislike other dogs, strangers or children if that's what they see at the same time that they feel the pain or discomfort from a choke, prong or electronic collar.
- These collars can suppress a behavior through fear of punishment, but do nothing to address the cause of that behavior. They can seem to work in the short term, but many dogs either shut down or find another outlet for their anxiety.

10 You don't need to intimidate or punish your dog to get the behavior you want.
Your dog will respect you if you are consistent and kind.

- You don't need to prove that "you're the boss". You are already the source of everything your dog wants – food, toys, activities, attention, access to the outside, etc.
- Punishment adds stress, and stress interferes with learning.
- Your dog may not know why he is being punished ... And your behavior may seem unpredictable.
- Being positive with your dog builds trust. You and your dog will be a team.

Preventing Separation Anxiety in Dogs

Now that many of us are sheltering in place or working from home, our dogs are at risk for developing separation anxiety when our schedules return to normal. Dogs are highly social creatures and after enjoying having the family around all the time, some are going to have a hard time adjusting to being alone when schools and businesses reopen. Dogs suffering from separation anxiety might urinate, defecate, bark, howl, chew, dig or try to escape when left alone. Escape attempts by dogs with separation anxiety are often extreme and can result in self-injury and household destruction, especially around exit points like windows and doors.

Some dogs suffering from separation anxiety become agitated when their guardians prepare to leave. They may pace, pant, bark, cry or even attempt to block the person from leaving. Others seem depressed prior to their guardians' departure or when their guardians aren't present. Usually, right after a guardian leaves a dog with separation anxiety, the dog will begin barking and displaying other distress behaviors within a short time after being left alone—often within minutes. When the guardian returns home, the dog acts as though it's been years since he's seen his mom or dad!

To prevent your dog from developing separation anxiety, it's a good idea to maintain a routine schedule even during these unique times. Try to keep your pet's daily routine as intact as possible even while the family is home by scheduling walks and meals around the same time as you did before sheltering-in-place. It's always a good idea to provide plenty of physical exercise before the time you would normally head out for the day. Take your dog for a brisk walk, interspersed with plenty of sniffing opportunities, or engage him in a game of aerobic activity, such as fetching a toy, until he's worked off his excess energy.

Then establish periods of time alone even while you and your family are home:

- Create a comfortable, cozy place for your dog to spend time away from all the activity of remote work and school. This could be a favorite bed or a crate in another room. Close the door or use a baby gate to keep the dog in the room. Play the radio or turn on the TV to keep your dog company and mask the sounds of activities in other part of the house.
- When you leave your dog, say goodbye the same way you would if you were leaving the house. Offer him a tasty chew or a puzzle toy stuffed with food that's likely to keep him busy for 10-20 minutes. There are many safe, interactive puzzle toys available online, as well as all sorts of delicious and easily digestible chews, such as bully sticks, tendons, trachea, scapula and cheek rolls. Chewing and licking serve to soothe dogs and, after a snack, they tend to want to nap.
- At least once a day take a stroll or do some gardening without your dog so that you're practicing actual departures from your home. Before you leave, go through the same routine that you normally do when you leave the house.



These measures should suffice to prevent your dog from becoming anxious about being left alone once you and your family resumes a normal schedule. Be mindful that leaving your dog in another part of the house while you're home is different from leaving your dog home alone. Some dogs will be fine knowing that you're still somewhere in the house but will be anxious being left completely alone. Other dogs will be okay left home alone but will be agitated knowing that you're in the home but they can't get to you. Ideally, these recommendations will get your dog comfortable with both scenarios.

What to Do if Your Dog Becomes Distressed

If your dog barks, cries, whines or scratches at the door during alone time while you are in the house try to wait him out. Most dogs will give up after a few minutes and go to sleep. If he persists or escalates, you may need to do something to distract him (such as knocking on the door and saying "Quiet!") and then, after a few seconds of him being quiet, praise him and let him out. Next time, provide him with more enticing goodies and be sure to let your dog out of their alone space while they are still engaging in their puzzle toy or chew and before they begin vocalizing or scratching at the door. Just a few minutes per day is a good place to start. If your dog is happily engaged in activities or resting, you can allow him to practice being alone for gradually longer stretches of time.

If your dog is only distressed when you're in another part of the house, you may opt not to worry about it and simply maintain a routine of leaving your dog home alone while you leave the house for a short period of time each day.

The important take away is that your dog routinely spends time away from the family while you shelter-in-place and that your dog is not distressed during those periods of alone time.

If you are unsure if your dog is distressed when you leave him alone while you are out of the house you should set up a camera or audio recorder and leave your dog home alone to determine whether he gets distressed when you leave the house. If he's distressed when you leave as well, refer to our handout on Treating Separation Anxiety.

What NOT to Do

Do not scold or punish your dog. Anxious behaviors are not the result of disobedience or spite. They are distress responses! Your dog displays anxious behaviors when left alone because he's upset and trying to cope with a great deal of stress. If you punish him, he may become even more upset and the problem could get much worse.

Treating Separation Anxiety in Dogs

Now that many of us are sheltering in place or working from home, our dogs are at risk for developing separation anxiety when our schedules return to normal. Dogs are highly social creatures and after enjoying having the family around all the time, some are going to have a hard time adjusting to being alone when schools and businesses reopen. Dogs suffering from separation anxiety might urinate, defecate, bark, howl, chew, dig or try to escape when left alone. Escape attempts by dogs with separation anxiety are often extreme and can result in self-injury and household destruction, especially around exit points like windows and doors.

Some dogs suffering from separation anxiety become agitated when their guardians prepare to leave. Others seem anxious or depressed prior to their guardians' departure or when their guardians aren't present. Some try to prevent their guardians from leaving. Usually, right after a guardian leaves a dog with separation anxiety, the dog will begin barking and displaying other distress behaviors within a short time after being left alone—often within minutes. When the guardian returns home, the dog acts as though it's been years since he's seen his mom or dad!

When treating a dog with separation anxiety, the goal is to resolve the dog's underlying anxiety by teaching him to enjoy, or at least tolerate, being left alone. This is accomplished by setting things up so that the dog experiences the situation that provokes his anxiety, namely being alone, without experiencing fear or anxiety.

Common Symptoms of Separation Anxiety

The following is a list of symptoms that may indicate separation anxiety:

Urinating and Defecating

Some dogs urinate or defecate when left alone or separated from their guardians. If a dog urinates or defecates in the presence of his guardian, his house soiling probably isn't caused by separation anxiety.

Barking and Howling

A dog who has separation anxiety might bark or howl when left alone or when separated from his guardian. This kind of barking or howling is persistent and doesn't seem to be triggered by anything except being left alone.

Chewing, Digging and Destruction

Some dogs with separation anxiety chew on objects, door frames or window sills, dig at doors and doorways, or destroy household objects when left alone or separated from their guardians. These behaviors can result in self-injury, such as broken teeth, cut and scraped paws and damaged nails. If a dog's chewing, digging and destruction are caused by separation anxiety, they don't usually occur in his guardian's presence.

Escaping

A dog with separation anxiety might try to escape from an area where he's confined when he's left alone or separated from his guardian. The dog might attempt to dig and chew through doors or windows, which could result in self-injury, such as broken teeth, cut and scraped front paws and damaged nails. If the dog's escape behavior is caused by separation anxiety, it doesn't occur when his guardian is present.

Pacing

Some dogs walk or trot along a specific path in a fixed pattern when left alone or separated from their guardians. Some pacing dogs move around in circular patterns, while others walk back and forth in straight lines. If a dog's pacing behavior is caused by separation anxiety, it usually doesn't occur when his guardian is present.

Coprophagia

When left alone or separated from their guardians, some dogs defecate and then consume all or some of their excrement. If a dog eats excrement because of separation anxiety, he probably doesn't perform that behavior in the presence of his guardian.

What to Do If Your Dog Has Separation Anxiety

Treatment for Mild Separation Anxiety

If your dog has a mild case of separation anxiety, counterconditioning might reduce or resolve the problem. Counterconditioning is a treatment process that changes an animal's fearful, anxious or aggressive reaction to a pleasant, relaxed one instead. It's done by associating the sight or presence of a feared or disliked person, animal, place, object or situation with something really good, something the dog loves. Over time, the dog learns that whatever he fears actually predicts good things for him. For dogs with separation anxiety, counterconditioning focuses on developing an association between being alone and good things, like delicious food. To develop this kind of association, every time you leave the house, you can offer your dog a puzzle toy stuffed with food that will take him at least 20 to 30 minutes to finish. For example, try giving your dog a KONG® stuffed with something really tasty, like low-fat cream cheese, Cheez Whiz® or low-fat peanut butter, frozen banana and cottage cheese, or canned dog food and kibble. A KONG can even be frozen so that getting all the food out takes even more of your dog's time. Your dog might also love a Buster® Cube, a Kibble Nibble™ or a TreatStik® filled with kibble. Be sure to remove these special toys as soon as you return home so that your dog only has access to them and the high-value foods inside when he's by himself. You can feed your dog all of his daily meals in special toys. For example, you can give your dog a KONG or two stuffed with his breakfast and some tasty treats every morning before going to work. Keep in mind, though, that this approach will only work for mild cases of separation anxiety because highly anxious dogs usually won't eat when their guardians aren't home.

Treatment for Moderate to Severe Separation Anxiety

Moderate or severe cases of separation anxiety require a more complex desensitization and counterconditioning program. In these cases, it's crucial to gradually accustom a dog to being alone by starting with many short separations that do not produce anxiety and then gradually increasing the duration of the separations over many weeks of daily sessions.

The following steps briefly describe a desensitization and counterconditioning program. Desensitization and counterconditioning are complex and can be tricky to carry out. Fear must be avoided or the procedure will backfire and the dog will get more frightened. Because treatment must progress and change according to the pet's reactions, and because these reactions can be difficult to read and interpret, desensitization and counterconditioning require the guidance of a trained and experienced professional. For help designing and carrying out a desensitization and counterconditioning plan, consult a Certified Applied Animal Behaviorist (CAAB or ACAAB) or a board-certified veterinary behaviorist (Dip ACVB). If you can't find a behaviorist, you can seek help from a Certified Pet Dog Trainer (CPDT), but be sure that the trainer is qualified to help you. Determine whether she or he has education and experience in treating fear with desensitization and counterconditioning, since this kind of expertise isn't required for CPDT certification.

Step One: Predeparture Cues

As mentioned above, some dogs begin to feel anxious while their guardians get ready to leave. For example, a dog might start to pace, pant and whine when he notices his guardian applying makeup, putting on shoes and a coat, and then picking up a bag or car keys. (If your dog doesn't show signs of anxiety when you're preparing to leave him alone, you can just skip to step two below.) Guardians of dogs who become upset during predeparture rituals are unable to leave—even for just few seconds—without triggering their dogs' extreme anxiety. Your dog may see telltale cues that you're leaving (like your putting on your coat or picking up your keys) and get so anxious about being left alone that he can't control himself and forgets that you'll come back.

One treatment approach to this "predeparture anxiety" is to teach your dog that when you pick up your keys or put on your coat, it doesn't always mean that you're leaving. You can do this by exposing your dog to these cues in various orders several times a day—without leaving. For example, put on your boots and coat, and then just watch TV instead of leaving. Or pick up your keys, and then sit down at the kitchen table for a while. This will reduce your dog's anxiety because these cues won't always lead to your departure, and so your dog won't get so anxious when he sees them. Please be aware, though, that your dog has many years of learning the significance of your departure cues, so in order to learn that the cues no longer predict your long absences, your dog must experience the fake cues many, many times a day for many weeks. After your dog doesn't become anxious when he sees you getting ready to leave, you can move on to the next step below.

Step Two: Graduated Departures/Absences

If your dog is less anxious before you leave, you can probably skip the predeparture treatment above and start with very short departures. The main rule is to plan your absences to be shorter than the time it takes for your dog to become upset. To get started, train your dog to perform out-of-sight stays by an inside door in the home, such as the bathroom. You can teach your dog to sit or down and stay while you go to the other side of the bathroom door. Gradually increase the length of time you wait on the other side of the door, out of your dog's sight. You can also work on getting your dog used to predeparture cues as you practice the stay. For example, ask your dog to stay. Then put on your coat, pick up your purse and go into the bathroom while your dog continues to stay.

- Progress to doing out-of-sight stay exercises at a bedroom door, and then later at an exit door. If you always leave through the front door, do the exercises at the back door first. By the time you start working with your dog at exit doors, he shouldn't behave anxiously because he has a history of playing the "stay game."
- At this point, you can start to incorporate very short absences into your training. Start with absences that last only one to two seconds, and then slowly increase the time you're out of your dog's sight. When you've trained up to separations of five to ten seconds long, build in

counterconditioning by giving your dog a stuffed food toy just before you step out the door. The food-stuffed toy also works as a safety cue that tells the dog that this is a “safe” separation.

- During your sessions, be sure to wait a few minutes between absences. After each short separation, it's important to make sure that your dog is completely relaxed before you leave again. If you leave again right away, while your dog is still excited about your return from the previous separation, he'll already feel aroused when he experiences the next absence. This arousal might make him less able to tolerate the next separation, which could make the problem worse rather than better.
- Remember to behave in a very calm and quiet manner when going out and coming in. This will lower the contrast between times when you're there and times when you're gone.
- You must judge when your dog is able to tolerate an increase in the length of separation. Each dog reacts differently, so there are no standard timelines. Deciding when to increase the time that your dog is alone can be very difficult, and many pet parents make errors. They want treatment to progress quickly, so they expose their dogs to durations that are too long, which provokes anxiety and worsens the problem. To prevent this kind of mistake, watch for signs of stress in your dog. These signs might include dilated pupils, panting, yawning, salivating, trembling, pacing and exuberant greeting. If you detect stress, you should back up and shorten the length of your departures to a point where your dog can relax again. Then start again at that level and progress more slowly.
- You will need to spend a significant amount of time building up to 40-minute absences because most of your dog's anxious responses will occur within the first 40 minutes that he's alone. This means that over weeks of conditioning, you'll increase the duration of your departures by only a few seconds each session, or every couple of sessions, depending on your dog's tolerance at each level. Once your dog can tolerate 40 minutes of separation from you, you can increase absences by larger chunks of time (5-minute increments at first, then later 15-minute increments). Once your dog can be alone for 90 minutes without getting upset or anxious, he can probably handle four to eight hours. (Just to be safe, try leaving him alone for four hours at first, and then work up to eight full hours over a few days.)
- This treatment process can be accomplished within a few weeks if you can conduct several daily sessions on the weekends and twice-daily sessions during the work week, usually before leaving for work and in the evenings.

A Necessary Component of Separation Anxiety Treatment

During desensitization to any type of fear, it is essential to ensure that your dog never experiences the full-blown version of whatever provokes his anxiety or fear. He must experience only a low-intensity version that doesn't frighten him. Otherwise, he won't learn to feel calm and comfortable in situations that upset him. This means that during treatment for separation anxiety, your dog cannot be left alone except during your desensitization sessions. Fortunately, there are plenty of alternative arrangements:

- If possible, take your dog to work with you.
- Arrange for a family member, friend or dog sitter to come to your home and stay with your dog when you're not there. (Most dogs suffering from separation anxiety are fine as long as someone is with them. That someone doesn't necessarily need to be you.)
- Take your dog to a sitter's house or to a doggy daycare.
- Many dogs suffering from separation anxiety are okay when left in a car. You can try leaving your dog in a car—but only if the weather is moderate. Be warned: dogs can suffer from heatstroke and die if left in cars in warm weather (70 degrees Fahrenheit and up)—even for just a few minutes. DO NOT leave your dog in a car unless you're sure that the interior of your car won't heat up.

In addition to your graduated absences exercises, all greetings (hellos and goodbyes) should be conducted in a very calm manner. When saying goodbye, just give your dog a pat on the head, say

goodbye and leave. Similarly, when arriving home, say hello to your dog and then don't pay any more attention to him until he's calm and relaxed. The amount of time it takes for your dog to relax once you've returned home will depend on his level of anxiety and individual temperament. To decrease your dog's excitement level when you come home, it might help to distract him by asking him to perform some simple behaviors that he's already learned, such as sit, down or shake.

To Crate or Not to Crate?

Crate training can be helpful for some dogs if they learn that the crate is their safe place to go when left alone. However, for other dogs, the crate can cause added stress and anxiety. In order to determine whether or not you should try using a crate, monitor your dog's behavior during crate training and when he's left in the crate while you're home. If he shows signs of distress (heavy panting, excessive salivation, frantic escape attempts, persistent howling or barking), crate confinement isn't the best option for him. Instead of using a crate, you can try confining your dog to one room behind a baby gate.

Provide Plenty of "Jobs" for Your Dog to Do

Providing lots of physical and mental stimulation is a vital part of treating many behavior problems, especially those involving anxiety. Exercising your dog's mind and body can greatly enrich his life, decrease stress and provide appropriate outlets for normal dog behaviors. Additionally, a physically and mentally tired dog doesn't have much excess energy to expend when he's left alone. To keep your dog busy and happy, try the following suggestions:

- Give your dog at least 30 minutes of aerobic activity (for example, running and swimming) every day. Try to exercise your dog right before you have to leave him by himself. This might help him relax and rest while you're gone.
- Play fun, interactive games with your dog, such as fetch and tug-of-war.
- Take your dog on daily walks and outings. Take different routes and visit new places as often as possible so that he can experience novel smells and sights.
- If your dog likes other dogs, let him play off-leash with his canine buddies.
- Frequently provide food puzzle toys, like the KONG, the Buster Cube, the Tricky Treat Ball™ and the Tug-a-Jug™. You can feed your dog his meals in these toys or stuff them with a little peanut butter, cheese or yogurt. Also give your dog a variety of attractive edible and inedible chew things. Puzzle toys and chew items encourage chewing and licking, which have been shown to have a calming effect on dogs. Be sure to provide them whenever you leave your dog alone.
- Make your dog "hunt" his meals by hiding small piles of his kibble around your house or yard when you leave. Most dogs love this game!
- Enroll in a reward-based training class to increase your dog's mental activity and enhance the bond between you and your dog. Contact a Certified Pet Dog Trainer for group or private classes that can give you and your dog lots of great skills to learn and games to play together. After you and your dog have learned a few new skills, you can mentally tire your dog out by practicing them right before you leave your dog home alone.
- Get involved in dog sports, such as agility, freestyle (dancing with your dog) or flyball.

Medications Might Help

Always consult with your veterinarian or a veterinary behaviorist before giving your dog any type of medication for a behavior problem.

The use of medications can be very helpful, especially for severe cases of separation anxiety. Some dogs are so distraught by any separation from their pet parents that treatment can't be implemented

without the help of medication. Anti-anxiety medication can help a dog tolerate some level of isolation without experiencing anxiety. It can also make treatment progress more quickly.

On rare occasions, a dog with mild separation anxiety might benefit from drug therapy alone, without accompanying behavior modification. The dog becomes accustomed to being left alone with the help of the drug and retains this new conditioning after he's gradually weaned off the medication. However, most dogs need a combination of medication and behavior modification.

If you'd like to explore this option, speak with your veterinarian, a veterinary behaviorist or a Certified Applied Animal Behaviorist who can work closely with your vet.

What NOT to Do

Do not scold or punish your dog. Anxious behaviors are not the result of disobedience or spite. They are distress responses! Your dog displays anxious behaviors when left alone because he's upset and trying to cope with a great deal of stress. If you punish him, he may become even more upset and the problem could get much worse.

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"



Ladder Of Communication

Dogs communicate their discomfort to situations by using visual cues. When you start to see the lower rungs of the ladder, remove your dog from the situation or help to make them more comfortable. These behaviours may happen at other times. To assess how the dog is feeling always look at the individual in front of you, the context and the whole body.

Let's start listening and helping so our dogs aren't forced to speak up for themselves and climb the ladder.

A revised version of Kendal Shepherds Ladder of Aggression by @cooperandkids and @sohelpmedog



Source:

A revised version of Kendal Shepherds Ladder of Aggression by @cooperandkids and @sohelpmedog

The 6 Types of Growling

- **Play growling:** this can happen when your pet gets really excited and is just bursting to play. New dog owners often misinterpret this for aggression, but sometimes your dog just has a *lot* of energy to burn.
- **Pleasure growling:** This growl is as adorable as a growl can be, since it's often low and "talking-like". Dogs save this for when they're looking for some love and affection.
- **Threat growling:** This one is used when dogs are feeling fearful, territorial, or possessive. They're asking the person or canine to leave them (or their bone, dog bed, etc.) alone. Since it can be a low, low growl, sometimes it's hard to detect – but your dog's stiff, uncomfortable body language should also give you a clue.
- **Aggressive growling:** This is the most dangerous kind of growl, because this dog is ready to fight. They're not looking to scare their target off so much as they want to establish dominance and attack. If you think your dog is in this category, get help from a professional trainer as soon as possible.
- **Frustration growling:** This is different than aggression because these pets don't generally want to do harm to anyone – they're just looking for some attention or they're curious about something. It's important to maintain control of these dogs when they're frustrated, though (often by being on a leash or behind a fence), because if they're overstimulated, they can get nippy.
- **Fight growling:** You'll hear this kind of growl when a play session turns into a fight. It can sometimes be hard to pinpoint, but it's important to be aware of this so things don't get ugly.

Adopting a new dog is all about changes for both of you. Use this guide to make the first few weeks fun and stress-free. You will build a foundation for a lasting relationship if you follow these steps to ...



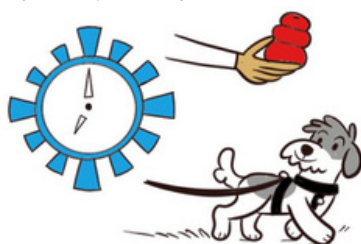
Decompress for SUCCESS

By DOG LATIN DOG TRAINING & BEHAVIOR CONSULTING™



ROUTINE

Dogs crave predictability. Stick to the same times when feeding, walking, training, and departing from your home.



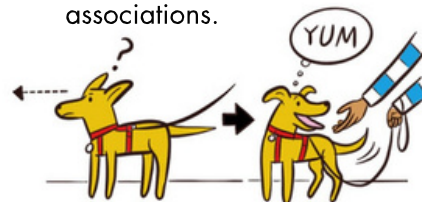
PRIVACY

Dogs, like people, need time to themselves. Create a spot with a crate or mat. Call your dog to leave their space, rather than invading their space.



POSITIVE SOCIALIZATION

Limit interactions with new people, places, and things. Let your dog explore gradually in short sessions. Build positive associations.



TRAIN AT HOME FIRST

Start positive reinforcement training at home for a distraction-free setting. This is the fastest, clearest way to establish communication.



TRAIN WITH FOOD

Shift calories out of the food bowl and use in short (5 minute) training sessions. Spread training sessions throughout the day, including reinforcing loose leash walking.



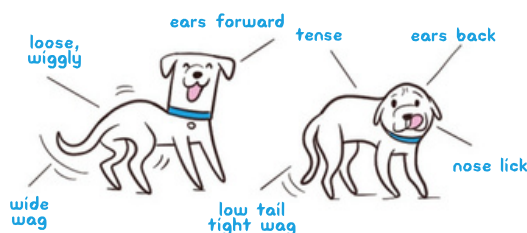
AVOID LEASH GREETINGS

Meeting other dogs can be stressful. Dogs don't always like each other. Limit or avoid greetings until you learn more about how your dog shows unease.



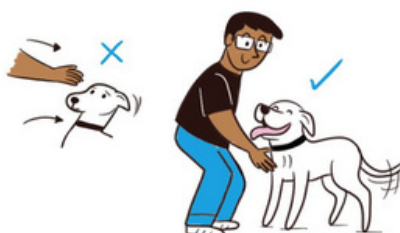
OBSERVE YOUR DOG

When your dog is relaxed, what do their ears, mouth, tail position, and entire body look like? Learn your dog's body language to know when your dog is concerned and to identify triggers.



LET YOUR DOG INITIATE CONTACT

Let your dog initiate contact with people. Never force an interaction. If your dog solicits attention, pet on the chest, not on top of the head.



HAVE FUN WITH YOUR DOG!

Playing, feeding, walking, and interacting with your new dog builds a lasting bond. Take it easy the first month and get to know each other before widening the circle. After all, you have a lifetime together!



ALCOHOL



COMA
DEATH
INTOXICATION

AVOCADO



CONTAINS PERSIN:
VOMITING
DIARRHEA

RAISINS CURRANTS



KIDNEY
FAILURE

COOKED BONES



STOMACH
LACERATIONS

WALNUTS MACADAMIAS



NERVOUS SYSTEM
AND MUSCLE
DAMAGE

ONIONS GARLIC



BLOOD CELL
DAMAGE
ANEMIA

DAIRY



TOO MUCH:
DIARRHEA

the world's MOST DANGEROUS FOODS

FOR DOGS

©LILI CHIN & THE LABS & CO.

GRAPES



KIDNEY FAILURE

MUSHROOMS



SOME VARIETIES:
SHOCK
DEATH

FATTY FOODS



TOO MUCH:
PANCREATITIS

CAFFEINE



VOMITING
DIARRHEA

TOXIC TO HEART & NERVOUS SYSTEM

XYLITOL



(GUM, CANDY ETC.)

LIVER FAILURE
HYPOGLYCEMIA
DEATH

CHOCOLATE



TOXIC TO HEART
& NERVOUS
SYSTEM
DEATH

MEDICATIONS

(TYLENOL, ADVIL ETC.)



KIDNEY
FAILURE
GI ULCERS

If you think your dog ate something dangerous,
CALL YOUR VET or:

ASPCA POISON CONTROL HOTLINE (888) 426-4435

NATIONAL PET POISON HELPLINE (800) 213-6680

illustration by LILI CHIN | layout by THE LABS & CO.

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National Pet Poison Helpline's Poison List: <https://www.petpoisonhelpline.com/poisons/>
ASPCA Poison Control Hotline: <https://www.asPCA.org/pet-care/animal-poison-control>



NEWBORN AND HOMECOMING PHASE

Welcome home! Time to bond and get to know your baby. This is a period for your dog to adjust to your baby by observing from a distance. Be sure to have yummy treat dispensing toys or other activities readily available to give your dog something to do.



ROLLING OVER

Wow! Your baby is growing quickly. Time to end the use of indoor tethers and implement other management options. Your dog may be curious or a bit unsure of this new skill. Continue to reinforce your dog for desired behaviors throughout daily routines.



GRASPING, REACHING, AND PULLING TO MOUTH

Babies love exploring the world with their hands and mouths. Have a plan for your dog's food, toys, and body. Consider your baby's access to your dog when in various pieces of equipment such as swings, bouncers, and exersaucers. These may increase unintended contact between curious dogs and exploring hands.



SITTING

Your baby is getting strong! Your dog may be confused or try to engage your baby in play. Be sure to use active or proactive supervision at all times. Remember: dog and baby on the scene, a parent in-between.



CRAWLING

Your baby is on the move! This is a stressful adjustment for many dogs. Make sure your dog's food, water, and toys are out of your baby's reach and your dog has a kid-free, safe place to relax. This is a time when grumble zones and growl zones become particularly relevant. Crowded spaces equal grumpy faces!



STANDING

Ensure your baby isn't using your dog to stand. Gates, ex-pens, and crates can help dogs feel more comfortable and increase safety as your baby works on this exciting gross motor skill. The increased mobility and frequent falls require a new, heightened level of management.



WALKING AND TODDLERHOOD

In the early stages of walking, babies are prone to unpredictable movement, which may startle or frighten your dog. Use success stations and remember, invites decrease bites! Continued modifications to management may be required as your baby grows. Babies grow, dogs age...adjust at every stage!

1


ABSENT

Adult not in room with dog and baby/toddler


2


PASSIVE

Adult in same location but distracted and not watching


3


REACTIVE

Responding after dog or child is too close


4


PROACTIVE

Planning and preparing safe separation.


5


ACTIVE

Full awake adult supervision





DO invite dog over for a sniff



DON'T force interaction



DO include dog in a comfortable and safe way



DON'T isolate dog from family



DO close the door to the nursery



DON'T allow unsupervised access to nursery



DO remind your dog what you want them to do



DON'T scold your dog when being curious



DO secure dog and use awake adult supervision



DON'T ever leave baby unsupervised



SUCCESS STATIONS

A **SUCCESS STATION** is any designated spot that a dog is limited to so that they have an increased **chance to succeed**. Success stations are introduced gradually in a positive way and are used for **limited periods of time**. This handout will cover 4 types of success stations new and expecting families find helpful as they include their family dogs. We strongly encourage practicing several success stations long before a baby's arrival. Success stations will need to be evaluated regularly for safety and will likely need to be adjusted as your baby reaches new milestones.

TETHERING



CRATE



GATES



COMBO



Tethering can be a great way to include dogs in the daily routines with newborn babies. Many caregivers feel more comfortable with their dog in their success station especially during the Homecoming phase (the first 3 months). Caretakers are able to move around and toss treats while the dog is able to observe the baby without any type of physical barrier. ***Once a baby is able to roll, crawl, or move, a tether is no longer a safe option and should be discontinued.***

Crates can be wonderful, safe, cozy condos for dogs. There are many types of crates and we encourage you to find the right fit for your dog. It's important to consider your dog's emotional state while in the crate. Often a crate does not allow us to observe how our dog is handling situations. Carefully consider the location of the crate and keep in mind this may need to change as your baby becomes mobile.

Gates can really come in handy at times to set up a boundary between babies and dogs. Please consider the type of gate that you get. Many dogs can easily push the pedal or push gates open with their nose. Choose carefully which gate will meet your needs. Play yards may be a helpful option as well. Be creative and proactive. Proactively practice and prepare ahead with your dog by providing positive experiences with gates or play yards prior to bringing your baby home.

Sometimes using 2 types of success stations together can lead to the safest option. This is especially true as babies become mobile and curious. Preventing a child from approaching a dog in their success station is important and a combined option may be most helpful. For example, you may find it helpful to put up a gate in a doorway so your mobile baby cannot directly approach your dog resting in their crate. Combinations can help create "buffers" so your dog and baby are not coming into direct access with one another through a barrier.

This handout briefly describes four possible options we recommend. Always consider the individual needs of your dog. We suggest introducing success stations slowly to allow your dog to build a positive association and comfort with their special space. If you need other choices, please do not hesitate to contact a Family Paws Educator for individual guidance. Babies grow, dogs age and management must adjust at every stage.

YOUR GO TO

RESOURCE LIST

WWW.DOGINGTONPOST.COM

SIX BENEFITS OF FOSTERING A DOG IN NEED

THE DOGINGTON POST



WWW.ROVER.COM

*THE 20 BEST DOG PUZZLE TOYS FOR BEATING
DOGGY BOREDOM*

THE DOG PEOPLE POWERED BY ROVER



WWW.NEWSWEEK.COM

*WHAT IS THE 3-3-3 RULE? DOG ADOPTION
ADJUSTMENT PERIOD EXPLAINED*

Newsweek

WWW.YOURDOGSFRIEND.ORG

A WEALTH OF INFORMATION FOR NEW OR
EXISTING DOG OWNERS, SUCH AS FORCE-
FREE AND POSITIVE DOG TRAINING.



YOUR GO TO

RESOURCE LIST

CONTINUED...

WWW.TIME.COM

THE NEW SCIENCE OF DOG TRAINING

TIME

WWW.PETMD.COM

*HOW TO READ A DOG'S
BODY LANGUAGE*

petMD
by chewy

WWW.TIME.COM

*HOW SCIENCE IS REVOLUTIONIZING
THE WORLD OF DOG TRAINING*

TIME

WWW.ROVER.COM

*WHY DOG GROWLING IS A
GOOD THING*

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WEBSITE: THE OTHER END OF THE LEASH, PATRICIA MCCONNELL, PH.D.,
KEEPING KIDS AND DOGS SAFE FROM EACH OTHER



