



# SEPARATION ANXIETY

PREVENTATIVE MEASURES & HOW TO GET PAST IT

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## WHAT DOES SEPARATION ANXIETY LOOK LIKE?



ANXIOUS OR DEPRESSED BEHAVIOR PRIOR TO YOUR DEPARTURE LIKE HEAVY PANTING, FOLLOWING CLOSELY, DROOLING AND PACING.



DESTRUCTIVE BEHAVIOR WHILE YOU'RE GONE LIKE CHEWING ON FURNITURE, DOORS, WALLS, RIPPING UP BOXES/PILLOWS/ETC., BARKING/WHINING AND DIGGING.



ATTEMPTS TO ESCAPE THE CRATE OR YOUR HOME BY CHEWING THROUGH DOORS, SCREENS OR JUMPING THROUGH WINDOWS.

## HOW DO WE CONTRIBUTE TO SEPARATION ANXIETY?

- Lack of Boundaries
- Lack of Routine
- Too much affection & Being available 24/7
- Spoiling our Dogs
- Expecting Dogs to Understand the Rules without Telling them What the Rules are.



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## SET BOUNDARIES WITH YOUR DOG

- Teach your dog the rules
- Follow the No Free Lunch Policy
- Limit your Dog's Territory
  - Are they not allowed in the kitchen?
  - Are they only allowed to exit your home with a release command?
  - Is the bathroom or kid's room off limits?
- Be a Leader.
- Understand Rights vs. Privileges
- Teach your Dog patience through the Leadership Rules





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## **ROUTINE**

How do we keep a routine when life is changing every day?

While it may seem impossible to start a routine during a pandemic and while our lives and responsibilities are changing daily, it can be as simple as following a few rules.

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## BE CONSISTENT

- Try to keep meals and walks on schedule everyday. It's a simple way to reassure your dog that he knows what to expect from each day.
- Have a family meeting! Sit down with your family and delegate daily dog tasks. Schedule play time, alone time and chew training.

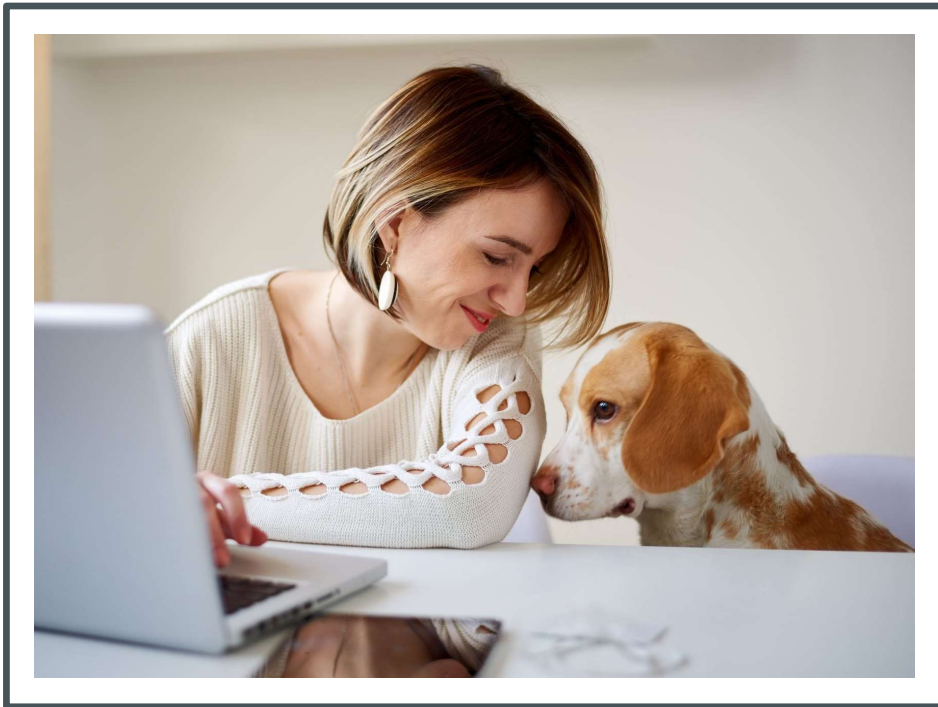


# LIMIT AFFECTION? WHY?



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## THIS IS PROBABLY ONE OF THE HARDEST RULES TO FOLLOW. WHY WOULD ANYONE WANT TO LIMIT AFFECTION WITH THEIR DOG?



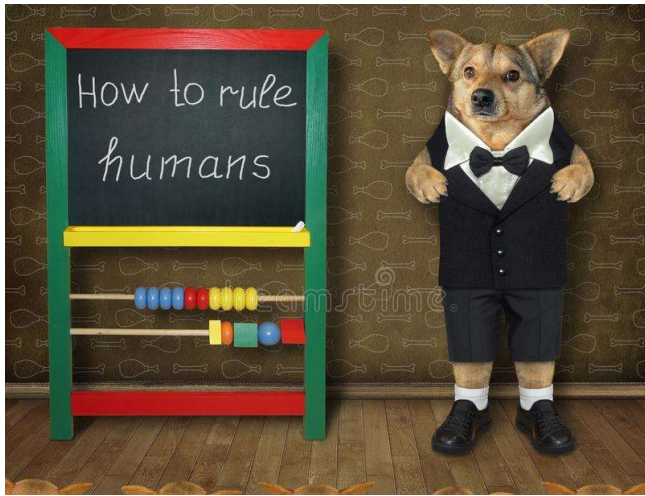
- Too much affection creates a needy dog who relies on you to tell them they are ok.
- Always giving in to your dog's request for affection tells them in a roundabout way that they don't need to learn to console themselves or learn how to keep themselves busy.
- How do you resist the constant muzzle nudge for a pat or a treat? When you learn that this is a demanding behavior, it becomes a little bit easier to ignore. A demanding dog becomes pushier and pushier over time. First, it's a nudge for a pat and then it's a scratch at your leg. Eventually, you will have your dog barking commands at you and jumping on you when you don't give in to their demands quickly enough.



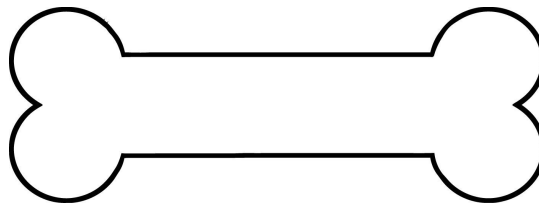


## IS YOUR DOG SPOILED?

Just like a spoiled child, a spoiled dog doesn't understand that some things are privileges and privileges are earned.



## GET RID OF CONFUSING OR INCONSISTENT RULES.....



- Stick to your guns. Don't modify the rules until your dog has earned the right for new or different privileges.
- Don't punish your dog until they know the rules.
- Reward your dog for the things you want to continue. If your dog is lying calmly on his bed why not reward that?
- As humans we tend to harp on the negative and ignore the positive. Try telling your dog when you like what they're doing with a simple pet and a Good Dog or by dropping a treat as you pass.





**BE THE PACK LEADER**

Your Dog Wants You To Be!

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## **LEADERSHIP RULES**



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## ■ Manners in the House

- **If your dog doesn't have any house manners, you should always give them a calm tour of the house on leash. Rewarding them for walking calmly in the house.**
- **If your dog starts to pull through the house, stop and wait for him to come back to you or make eye contact.**
- **If your dog puts his nose somewhere it doesn't belong make a loud sound or clap your hands. Do not use your voice. This way the dog will respond to everyone (some adults and children have a hard time sounding firm) and not only to you.**

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## NO FREE LUNCH POLICY

- **How to use it.**
- **Step 1. Make a list of all the things your dog wants and enjoys.**
- **Step 2. Vow to yourself never to give those things away for free again. See them all as training opportunities and ask your dog for an obedience behavior or trick you want strengthened.**
- **Step 3. Give him what he wants as a reward for that behavior.**
- **Step 4. Repeat, every day, everywhere.**
- **When to use it.**
  - **Before throwing a ball, Frisbee, rope-toy, etc.**
  - **Before giving him a toy.**
  - **Before putting the food bowl down.**
  - **Before handing over a treat or chewie.**
  - **Before opening a door.**
  - **Before putting on a leash to go for a walk.**
  - **Before taking off a leash at the park or on a hike**
  - **Before giving him a belly rub or good ear scratch.**
  - **Before hopping into or out of the car.**
  - **Before allowing your dog onto the couch with you.**



- **Waiting at Doorways**

- Dogs should always allow humans to go through the doorways first.
- They should not bump or push past you to get in the house.
- Ask your dog to sit and wait to be released before entering/exiting the house.

- **Interactions with Humans**

- Dogs should be given attention only when they approach and sit.
- If the dog is jumping do not engage. Wait for a sit.
- Dogs should be taught that no matter what the circumstances are, sitting is a must to get human attention.



## FURNITURE

- Allowing access to furniture is a privilege.
- What are some of the prerequisites for furniture access?
  - Immediately getting off the couch when asked.
  - Dog has not challenged their human.
  - Dog doesn't guard human or couch when on furniture from other humans or animals.
  - Access to couch doesn't cause friction between the pets.
- If you are having trouble setting boundaries this is one of the first simple boundaries you can set.



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## YOUR LEADERSHIP DUTIES

01

SET THE TONE BY  
ESTABLISHING  
RULES

02

BE CONSISTENT  
WITH THE  
ENFORCEMENT OF  
YOUR RULES

03

ALWAYS MAINTAIN  
CALM ORDER IN  
YOUR HOUSE.





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## **CALM ORDER?**

Remember this when  
interacting with your dog....

Confidence is quiet, insecurity  
is loud.



- **These rules are meant to establish strong leadership in the house.**
- **Eventually when the dog shows comprehension and compliance with all of the rules set you can start to give back these privileges.**
- **If you start to see disobedience in the house, slowly take away privileges to see what caused the change in behavior. If the behavior stops it may be too soon to allow that privilege or it may mean that this particular dog cannot ever have that privilege. Feel free to try again in the future.**

A wide-angle, low-perspective shot of a large, circular tunnel under construction. The tunnel walls are lined with concrete segments, some of which have technical markings like 'MFTA-57' and 'CX-017B'. Several large pipes run along the right side of the tunnel. A worker wearing a white hard hat and dark clothing stands in the distance on the left side of the tunnel, looking towards the right. The lighting is dramatic, with a bright light source in the distance creating a strong perspective and casting long shadows.

# YOU'RE GOING BACK TO WORK.

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WHAT YOU CAN DO NOW TO PREVENT SEPARATION ANXIETY

## START SMALL

- There is no doubt that at some point very soon everyone will be returning to work and normal everyday life. How do we start preparing our dogs for the inevitable 8-hour workday?
  - Start crating or separating your dog in a safe space while you are home for short periods.
  - Make being alone enjoyable
    - Time alone should always include something fun that stimulates/exercises the brain. Here are some examples:
      - Food puzzles
      - Kongs
      - Raw Bone Marrow Bones
      - Avoid anything that is small enough for your dog to choke on or that breaks into small pieces like pig ears or raw hide.

# Baby Steps

Small Steps  
Equal Sure  
Success





**THE IMMEDIATE GOAL IS TO TEACH YOUR DOG HOW TO CONSOLE THEMSELVES WHILE YOU ARE HOME, AND THE LONG-TERM GOAL IS TO BE ABLE TO LEAVE YOUR DOG WITHOUT HAVING TO WORRY ABOUT THEM.**

**When your dog is successful for short periods of time, you can start to leave the house for a few minutes at a time.**





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## **DON'T RUSH THE PROCESS**

- **Don't push too quickly.**
- **Add time slowly**
- **Don't let your dog get too stressed**



HELLO!



GOODBYE!

**MAKE IT UNEVENTFUL**



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**WHAT DOES  
UNEVENTFUL  
LOOK LIKE?**

WHEN YOU LEAVE, JUST LEAVE.  
DON'T SAY GOODBYE.

WHEN YOU RETURN DON'T  
MAKE A BIG DEAL.

WAIT FOR YOUR DOG TO CALM  
DOWN BEFORE SAYING HELLO.

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**LEAVE THE TV  
ON, ADD SOME  
WHITE NOISE OR  
PLAY CALMING  
MUSIC TO  
DROWN OUT THE  
SCARY NOISES  
OUTSIDE.**



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# DESENSITIZE YOUR DOG TO CUES THAT YOU ARE LEAVING

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Picking up your keys, jiggling the doorknob or putting on your shoes periodically throughout the day will mean nothing if, more often than not, you don't leave. Practice desensitizing your dog to any rituals you do before you leave the house.

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## GET YOUR DOG COMFORTABLE WITH YOU LEAVING THE ROOM....

**Practice cues like down-stays and sit-stays. As your dog gets better at the stays you can start to put your dog in a stay and move out of the room. Starting with only a half second outside of the room and moving toward longer periods of time. Be sure not to add too quickly. Work on 2 secs for a couple of sessions, then 3 seconds. Then 5 seconds. Etc.**

**A TIRED DOG IS A  
GOOD DOG**





**EXERCISE – THE AMOUNT NEEDED VARIES BY BREED/DOG**

**EXAMPLES OF  
GREAT EXERCISES**

Tug of War

Going for a run

Playing Fetch

Agility



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## MENTAL STIMULATION

- Chew Training – Add this to your schedule. Set time aside each day to leave your dog in his safe space alone with something appropriate to chew on. Remember not to choose things that are similar to household items like furniture or clothes.
- Food Puzzles
- Raw Marrow Bone – A bone for a dog is like a good book for a human!
- Training
- Need more ideas? Read *Canine Enrichment* by Shay Kelly



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## TO SNIFF OR NOT TO SNIFF.....THAT IS THE QUESTION



- Studies show that a long walk (45 minutes or more) may mentally and physically stimulate your dog just as much as a 20-30 minute run.
- How is that possible? When your dog is sniffing it's like a human working on a complicated math equation, your dog is using mental energy to process information gathered.

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**NEED A FEW  
MORE  
REASONS?**

## Mental Stimulation Helps:

- Decreases Boredom
  - Releases Pent-Up Energy
  - Increases Confidence
  - Keeps the Memory Sharp
  - Improves trainability
  - Strengthen Your Bond
  - Give the Feeling of Accomplishment
- 



## CRATE FOR PUNISHMENT?

NEVER ever put a dog in a crate or their safe space for "punishment" - your dog does not understand this human concept and will only learn to relate the crate to something negative. So, whenever you crate or put your dog in their safe space, do it calmly, gently and keep it a very neutral experience.

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## DON'T GET ANGRY...

It's important to never get angry with your dog or scold them for their anxiety.

Scolding your dog will only contribute to the behavior and prove to your dog that he/she is anxious for a reason.

Separation Anxiety requires a lot of patience and sometimes being very creative. In the beginning stages of training, you may not be able to leave your dog alone. Daycare could be a great option, if your dog is dog friendly, when you need something in a pinch.

Ultimately you must do what your schedule allows but preventatively dealing with this will save you a lot of time and trouble.



## **IN RARE CASES**

**Medical intervention may be necessary. Your vet can prescribe something that will help your dog relax so that learning can take place. If you are at this point, you should consult with a professional trainer and your vet to make a decision that is right for you and your dog. Just don't give up!**

**THANK YOU FOR  
YOUR TIME!**

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