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If you would like to help with the newsletter, please contact Kathy Lewis.

From the Editor

I am looking for a little help....

Please share a note with me about your hound's favorite things that they would recommend to other dogs and their humans.

All I need is a pic of your hound, his/her name, your name, and a list of some of the things they love—food, treats, beds, toys, collars, leashes, places to go, anything you can think of!

This part of the newsletter will let us get to know you and your hound(s) better and will give us all some new things to try with our hounds!

Did your hound win at a show? Let us brag on him/her!

Doing any fun trainings? Again, let us know!

Thanks, Kathy

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continued

Nationwide Dog Treat Recall Over Metal Contamination Concerns

JUNE 23, 2024



Dennis Limmer, Retail Wire, <https://retailwire.com>

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has issued a nationwide warning to dog owners following a recall of dog treats that may be contaminated with metal objects. The voluntary recall affects 3,551 bags of Green Tripe dog treats produced by Virginia-based TDBBS LLC, sold under the “Barkworthies” and “Best Bully Sticks” brand labels. These treats were available in retail outlets and online across the U.S. from February 2024 to May 2024.

Pet owners who have purchased the affected products are advised to immediately stop feeding them to their dogs and discard them. The company is actively working with distributors and retailers to ensure that the recalled treats are no longer available for sale and have been removed from inventories. Customers can return the recalled products or seek further information by contacting TDBBS LLC via phone at 877-483-5853 or email at Support@BestBullySticks.com during business hours from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Eastern Time, Monday to Friday.

The FDA’s recall announcement emphasized that the presence of metal objects in these treats poses a potential health hazard to dogs. However, there have been no reported injuries or illnesses linked to the recalled products thus far.

The affected treats include specific lots of Barkworthies and Best Bully Sticks Green Tripe treats. The Barkworthies brand treats in 7-ounce packages have UPC 816807015686, item number 2015686, lot codes WO151768 or WO152373, and “best by” dates of February and March 2026. The Best Bully Sticks brand treats come in 2-pound and 5-pound

bags with respective UPCs 816807016027 and 816807016010, item numbers 1016027 and 1016010, and “best by” dates ranging from January to August 2026.

The specific nature of the “foreign metal objects” found in the treats and their source remain unclear at this time. This recall is part of a broader trend of increased pet food recalls in recent years, as noted by a Newsweek review of FDA records. These recalls often involve potential contamination with pathogens or other hazardous substances, but in some cases, like this one, they are due to the presence of foreign metal objects.

In a related incident last month, over 300 bags of “Pedigree Adult Complete Nutrition Grilled Steak & Vegetable Flavor Dry Dog Food” were recalled in four states after metal pieces were found in the product. These instances highlight the importance of vigilance and prompt action in ensuring the safety of pet food products.

Dog owners are urged to monitor their pets for any signs of illness or unusual behavior if they suspect their dog has consumed the affected treats and to contact a veterinarian if they have any concerns.

From Carol Silverthorne, Wicca’s Accomplishments

IWA of New England on June 9th, Wicca took First Novice Bitch Specialty, shown by Serena Ivanoskis



Wicca at the National at Purina Farms in MO, shown by Courtney Smith



How Often Should You Walk Your Dog?

By Nandini Maharaj, Updated: Jun 17, 2024, American Kennel Club

Like people, dogs need daily movement to feel their best. Dogs need exercise to maintain muscle tone as well as an appropriate weight for their age and breed. But walking your dog isn't about physical activity alone. Walks provide mental stimulation, helping your dog build confidence and avoid potential behavioral issues like anxiety and aggression.

How Good Is Walking as Exercise?

"A lot of people think of dog walks as an energy release or a way for their pet to let loose," says Dr. Emily Wilson, DVM, a veterinarian at Fuzzy. "It doesn't just have to be your dog sniffing bushes and relieving themselves. It can be really interactive."

Some dogs, especially younger ones, seem to have boundless energy. Exercise, including long walks, can tire them out, leading to a calmer and quieter companion at home.

But what's essential for dogs is consistency. According to Dr. Wilson, having a routine is "really comforting to the dog and helps them anticipate what the schedule is." Dogs are better equipped to regulate their emotions when they know what to expect, so that means taking regular walks around the same time each day.



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When Is It Safe to Walk a Puppy?

While you want to give your puppy an outlet to let out their energy, certain viruses, such as parvo, are highly contagious and potentially life-threatening for dogs. Most puppies complete their vaccinations by 16 weeks, which is when they should be fine to be exposed to other animals. In the meantime, limit your puppy's exposure to unfamiliar dogs.

"It's very important that puppies have had their full series of vaccines especially out in public places," Dr. Wilson says. "I usually recommend waiting two weeks after their last booster to allow their immune system to fully respond."

Puppies also aren't very good at regulating their body temperature, so you need to be mindful of the weather before going outside for a stroll. "If you get a puppy in the summer, make sure you're not walking them on hot asphalt," Dr. Wilson says. The same goes for winter weather. Aside from quick potty breaks, try to keep your puppy inside when the temperature drops and make sure they have cozy things to keep them warm.

How Much Exercise Do Dogs Need?

The amount of exercise a dog needs can vary from dog to dog, based on factors such as age, health, and breed. Here are a few standard guidelines you can follow:

Puppies

Compared to adult dogs, puppies have less endurance and need a potty break every 2 to 4 hours, so you won't be able to take them too far but will need to take them out more frequently. "If you have a little teacup, poodle

puppy, don't go around the block," Dr. Wilson says. "That's a long way for them to go."

Puppies also need to be comfortable walking on a leash before tackling a full-fledged walk. Practice with them in a secure space like the backyard. Start small by walking your puppy up and down in front of the house and build up from there.

"Oftentimes puppies have to relieve themselves right after they eat, so correlating your walks with that can help make potty training more successful," says Wilson. With a 10-week-old puppy, you might go out for a 10-minute walk two or three times a day. For the first few months, it's best to stick with short and frequent walks.



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Adult Dogs

If your dog hasn't been too active or is out of shape, a 10 to 15-minute walk is a great starting point. As with puppies, keep the walk short and positive. Check to see your dog's pace, and if they're trailing behind or walking ahead of you. You may need to slow down or pick up the pace.

As long as your dog doesn't have any underlying health concerns, you can gradually increase the length of the walk or take them out twice a day. How often you walk your dog depends on your schedule as well as your dog's energy level and individual personality.

Dogs with mobility issues can benefit from short walks to avoid joint stiffness and inflammation. A harness is a great option for helping bigger dogs get around.

Senior Dogs

If your dog is willing and able to walk, exercise is an excellent way to keep them fit and active. In addition, senior dogs benefit from experiencing new sights, sounds, and smells to keep their stimulation up.

“The pace just needs to be slower,” Dr. Wilson says. “If your dog has arthritis, slow and frequent movement is beneficial for them.”

Consult with your veterinarian and monitor your dog for signs of pain and fatigue such as limping, stopping, laying down, panting hard, or having difficulty getting on or off curbs. If the walk is too long or strenuous, have your dog ride in a wagon or stroller to give them a break.

“They still get the enrichment [in a stroller],” says Wilson. “They still get to be part of the family and partake in the routine.”



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Tips for Walking Your Dog

Treat the walk as an opportunity to train your dog and bond over new experiences. Positive reinforcement offers the best chance of success, you should use treats and lots of praise.

“Some dogs are ready to see the world,” Dr. Wilson says. “They want to meet people, and others may be shy.” Her advice is to adapt the walk to your dog’s comfort zone. You want your dog to be confident and not feel overwhelmed by people or other dogs.

For puppies and older dogs, be mindful of the wear and tear on their joints. Keep a casual walking pace, and limit their time on asphalt or concrete by opting for grass or wooded trails. You can also use dog booties or a paw balm if their feet tend to get cracked or damaged.

If your dog is going to be tagging along for jogs or bike rides, Dr. Wilson recommends waiting until they are a year old. “Especially with the bigger breeds, you don’t want a lot of concussive forces on hard surfaces,” she says.



Kazakova85/Shutterstock

What Can You Do Besides Walks For Exercise?

You don’t need to venture far to give your dog some worthwhile movement. Training your dog at home or in the backyard can offer them mental enrichment. Once your dog has learned basic commands like sit, stay, and down, move on to new, more challenging tricks. You can even consider training for obedience or AKC Rally together. If your dog is food-motivated, you can hide treats around the house to get them moving or use interactive toys.

Get creative, try different activities, and most of all, make it fun and positive for your dog. Think of exercise as a form of preventive care that will go a long way toward reducing illness and improving your dog’s health and well-being. “As [dogs] get older and evolve, it should be something they look forward to,” Dr. Wilson says.

This article is intended solely as general guidance, and does not constitute health or other professional advice. Individual situations and applicable laws vary by jurisdiction, and you are encouraged to obtain appropriate advice from qualified professionals in the applicable jurisdictions. We make no representations or warranties concerning any course of action taken by any person following or otherwise using the information offered or provided in this article, including any such information associated with and provided in connection with third-party products, and we will not be liable for any direct, indirect, consequential, special, exemplary or other damages that may result, including but not limited to economic loss, injury, illness or death.

Sykesville Sasquatch Saturday



Penn-Mar Irish Festival





Celtic Fling—too hot for pictures

Participants were Susan and Adam Wine with Aulfynn, Joe and Eileen Menzill with Parsnip, Isaac Coffel with Sophia and Mordu and Kathy Lewis with Orlaith

From Toni Underhill, Gold Coast, Queensland

In case this helps anyone with hounds with 'sundowners.'



For those who don't know me this is our girl, Georgie. Georgie turns 9 today and as we all know that's considered old for an IW. Georgie's general health is outstanding. She can outrun her much younger brothers and out play them. She sleeps a bit more these days but when she is not sleeping, she is pretty much exactly as she was when she was young. The only exception to this is that for about the last 6 months Georgie has been exhibiting mild signs of 'sundowners' (dementia, canine cognitive dysfunction.) She has been fully vet checked and is perfect in all other ways.

Her symptoms began as seeming a little confused as to where she wanted to sit and pacing around til she settled. Standing and just staring at us. At night she would need to really snuggle into Greg and myself. That told us her anxiety was high and that she most likely needed the comfort of familiarity so that she wasn't so confused.

As the weeks went on the sleep thing got really bad. It got to the point that she would not rest unless she was sleeping ON us. Literally on our chests. As you can imagine that was unbearable and led to Greg and I being quite sleep deprived. In the day time of course, she could sleep anywhere but Greg and I were expected to be normal functioning humans (whatever that is 😊). Her symptoms of CCD were getting so marked that we honestly thought we would be saying goodbye to her that week - that was about a

month ago.

I don't go to work, so on the Sunday night, I ended up insisting Greg move to another room and keep the door closed at night so he could actually GET some sleep and I stayed with Georgie and the boys in our normal room. Georgie could then sleep up in Greg's spot and snuggle in for comfort - hers not mine 😂.

As an aside - for a few weeks before I had been playing white noise soundtrack through a sleep headband so that I could sleep without being disturbed by snoring - I'm not saying it was Greg snoring, but I'm not saying it wasn't lol- Anyway my sleep was vastly improved doing this.

I decided that while Greg was in another room I would try playing the white noise soundtrack through the soundbar attached to the tv in our room. We also added a thundercoat. From the very first night of doing that Georgie went straight to sleep and stayed that way. Second night the same. Third night she didn't even need to be on our bed but on one of the mattresses on the floor beside the bed. This continued for the entire week.

We decided on the Friday night of that week that Greg would move back to our room and we could see if she still maintained her good sleeping habits. Greg was concerned the white noise would be too much for him, but we were just desperate to get the situation sorted. We figured if the sleep was no good, he would have the weekend days to recover. Turns out that the white noise was not just great for Georgie but also for Greg who suffers from tinnitus.

So it has now been three weeks since we introduced the white noise and the entire household sleeps MUCH better. Our aim was just to be able to get Georgie to be able to settle but the improvement in sleep quality has been hugely beneficial to both Greg and myself, and all three hounds. The thundercoat has not been used for the last week and she is still great, so we

will save that as a add on if needed down the track.

I know this is a long post but I mention this here in case anyone else is going through the same thing. I would encourage you to at least try the white noise - you may be able to use other noise or music if you prefer - I don't know, but I wanted something that was not repetitive and did not keep us awake singing along in our heads.

I will continue to document her behaviour and update if there is anything valid. We will be interested to see how we go on the next full moon since that always disrupts the sleep of all three hounds, but for now we certainly seem to have found a solution and Georgie is showing no signs at all of sundowners since we started doing this.

For anyone interested I will add a screenshot of the soundtrack we use in comments. I stream it through Spotify, just using soundbar not television so the room is still in complete darkness.

Anyway - Happy birthday to our scruffy but gorgeous Georgie girl ❤️

EDIT: I forgot to mention we tried trazodone and it made her 20 times worse. CBD also made her worse.

Finn Recommends by Danielle St. Cyr



Favorite Food: Purina Pro Plan Sensitive Skin & Stomach Salmon and Rice (he's allergic to poultry, and it took us a few tries to figure out a food that both worked for his stomach and he would eat!)

Favorite Treats: Bones & Chews Steak Wrapped Water Buffalo Tail Dog Treats (as a chewy treat), Zuke's Mini Naturals Salmon Recipe (for training), Old Mother Hubbard P-nuttier (for a biscuit) ...and he also *loves*

beef neck bones, cut into 1" slices from the butcher, that he enjoys out in the yard - and they keep his teeth clean too! He also likes the KONG Extreme (black) filled with peanut butter and the WestPaw Zogoflex Toppl filled with pumpkin with some dried beef lung stuck in.

Favorite Toys: Jolly balls & Jolly eggs will keep him happy for a very long time, but he also loves puzzles, like the Outward Hound Dog Puzzles (he has 4 of them!), and he cuddles with stuffies too. His favorite stuffie, that he's had since he was a pup, is named Meester Frog, and he's a bit the worse for wear (he started out life as a KONG Tugger Knots Frog).

Favorite Things to Do: morning playtime with his neighborhood dog friends (we all meet in one yard and the 5 dogs of all sizes play every morning), walkies anywhere, but especially in the woods with good sniffs, going to the beach (but not actually in the ocean!), and going to Renaissance Faire and other festivals.

Favorite Gear: Gentle Leader (took a minute to get him used to it, but it's been a life- and arm-saver), Professional Climbing Rope Leash from JustPetProducts (Etsy), Collars from GreatDogDesigns (Etsy), Bandanas from ThePlusSizePooch, IttyBittyPittyCo, dingusdesignsco, and KaiyasklosetDesigns (all Etsy), and PJs (yes, I'm that person) from ThePlusSizePooch (Etsy) and Fur Rescue Fashions (online).

Enrichment Games by Kathy Lewis

1. Take a dog blanket/towel and drizzle something strong scented like vanilla extract, and let your dog sniff away. Only use food grade scents as some essential oils will make your hound very sick.
2. Take a clean, empty trashcan and stuff it with toys and treats as it rolls around, the treats will pour out, make it more challenging by putting the treats inside a Kong ball.
3. Put a couple of treats inside the roll, fold up the ends, and hand it over!
4. Get some puzzle toys or research them and make your own.
5. For small puppies, set up an enrichment games #1 and #6 in their crates.

6. Grab three cups, put a treat under one, and ask your dog 'which one?' When they sniff the right one, praise, and lift the cup and let them have their sweet reward. When they are confidently finding it, start moving the cups around before asking "which one?"
7. Set them up with pool to get them used to taking a bath. Smear "safe-NO Xylitol" peanut butter or cream cheese in a bowl add some banana slices and place into a tub filled with a few inches of water or outside in a kiddie pool.
8. Put both hands behind your back, and put a treat in one hand. Offer both closed fists to your pup and ask them, which one?
9. Get some long-lasting chews in appropriate sizes and hardness for your hound. Yak butter/cheese, tracheas, bully sticks, raw bones, collagen sticks are a good place to start. NO rawhide! Monitor and take away any small pieces to avoid choking.
10. Fill a plastic or paper cup with chopped fruit and water, then freeze. Remove the popsicle and serve outside or on a plastic crate tray.
11. Fill a Kong with kibble, treats, peanut butter, pumpkin, yogurt or Kong fillings and freeze. Don't forget to wash them out after playtime. You can also do this with any of your rubber toys like a Lickimat.
12. Refresh known training behaviors, or you can teach your dog something brand new! Use a treat pouch filled with some small, yummy treats and decide what you want to train. Stay positive and keep training light, without pressure. Remember, it is not important to be perfect in one session, your goal is to have fun and work together. Keep sessions short and varied. Advanced, if your dog is great at laying down on cue, then teach them to lay their head down as well or to lay on their side. The vet will love you for this one!
13. Put a couple of treats in an egg carton and close it. Let your dog figure it out.
14. Play hide and seek with your dog just like you played it as a kid! Instead of counting, ask your dog to sit and stay while you hide. Once hidden, call out your release or your recall word! Make it super exciting when they find you, treat or praise. After a while, you won't need the treat reward! If your dog doesn't have a strong "stay" cue, that's alright: a family member can hold them and when you're hidden, then they can release the hound to "find" you!

15. An alternative to #14 would be to have the dog “stay” then hide small smelly treats around a room, let them sniff one of the hidden treats, and tell your dog, “find.” You may have to help them with the first one or two. Then make sure they find all the hidden treats, keep count of how many you hide. I eventually got our shepherd, Jager, to search the entire house and find all the treats.
16. Lastly, just play with your dog. Throw a ball or a stick for a game of fetch, dance, teach your dog to roll a ball back and forth between you. Orlaith loves this game. Use your imagination to come up with new games and most of all, have fun with your dog.



(Nature Heaven)

When I am old...

I will wear soft gray sweatshirts...
and a bandana over my silver hair...
and I will spend my social security checks on my dogs.
I will sit in my house on my well-worn chair
and listen to my dogs breathing.

I will sneak out in the middle of a warm summer night
and take my dogs for a run, if my old bones will allow...

When people come to call, I will smile and nod
as I show them my dogs...

and talk of them and about them...

...the ones so beloved of the past

and the ones so beloved of today...

I will still work hard cleaning after them,
mopping and feeding them and whispering their names
in a soft loving way.

I will wear the gleaming sweat on my throat,
like a jewel, and I will be an embarrassment to all...

especially my family...

who have not yet found the peace in being free
to have dogs as your best friends...

These friends who always wait, at any hour, for your footfall...

and eagerly jump to their feet out of a sound sleep,

to greet you as if you are a God,

with warm eyes full of adoring love and hope

that you will always stay,

I'll hug their big strong necks...

I'll kiss their dear sweet heads...

and whisper in their very special company....

I look in the mirror... and see I am getting old....

this is the kind of person I am...

and have always been.

Loving dogs is easy, they are part of me.

Please accept me for who I am.

My dogs appreciate my presence in their lives...

they love my presence in their lives...

When I am old this will be important to me...

you will understand when you are old,

if you have dogs to love too.

-Author Unknown

How to Change Your Dog's Routine

By Sassafra Lowrey, CTDI, Published: Jun 21, 2024 AKC

Routines and consistency are a crucial part of training your dog. But what should you do if your schedule changes, and you need to shift your dog's routine? Dogs thrive with routines, and knowing what to expect can help them to feel more secure. However, life happens, and we can't always make the world completely predictable for our dogs.

If you find yourself needing or wanting to change your dog's routine, here are some tips to help them adjust.

Helping Dogs Adapt to Routine Changes

Dogs thrive on routine, so it can be difficult for them when their schedules change. Dogs who are struggling to adjust to routine changes may become stressed or anxious. This stress can manifest in a variety of ways, such as destructive behavior, pacing, or restlessness.

If you know that you'll need to significantly change your dog's routine, it's best to slowly introduce those changes to help your dog adapt. For example, if you typically walk your dog in the mornings but have to change to evening walks, slowly shift the time of day you walk your dog. Making this time shift over a series of days or weeks, pushing their walk back by

small periods of time, will help your dog be more comfortable with a new schedule.

When changing your dog's routine, try to keep other aspects of your dog's life as consistent as possible. If you're switching up the time you feed your dog, try your best not to change other aspects of your dog's life, such as walks or training sessions. By maintaining consistent routines in some areas, your dog will likely struggle less with shifts in timing schedules. Dogs love clarity. When they know what to expect from us, they'll be more relaxed even as some aspects of the routine are changing.



Anthony Brawley Photography/Moment

When Would You Change Your Dog's Routine?

There always will be times when we need to change things up for our dogs. If at any point you're struggling with making your dog's routine fit into your schedule, it's a good indicator that it's time to change or adjust the routine. Similarly, your dog's daily routines will likely need to shift if you have external commitments or schedule changes.

Routine changes also tend to happen seasonally for most dogs and their owners. In the summer, you'll likely be walking your dog earlier or later in the day to avoid high temperatures and make walks more comfortable and safer for your dog. However, in the winter months, people usually walk their dogs later in the morning or earlier in the evening to walk during daylight. School or work schedule changes are also times when you may need to adjust your dog's routine so that you can keep up with all your commitments.



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Ensuring Your Dog's Needs Are Met

When making a change to your dog's routine, it's important to make sure you're still meeting your dog's basic needs. This means ensuring that your dog is getting enough food, water, opportunities to go to the bathroom, and mental and physical exercise. Providing physical and mental enrichment helps our dogs to better adjust to routine changes and be more resilient. Dogs who lead physically and mentally enriched lives are also less likely to display excessive barking and other challenging behaviors resulting from stress or boredom. But remember, just letting your dog out into a backyard isn't the same as structured exercise time like playing fetch or taking your dog on walks.

You can also add more mental enrichment for your dog by providing puzzle toys or playing and training together. Spending time practicing tricks or basic obedience skills each day can help your dog be fulfilled and less stressed by other changes in their routine. If your routine is shifting in such a way that you may not be able to provide your dog with enough exercise and opportunities to get outside to relieve themselves, consider hiring a dog walker.



AVAVA/Getty Images

Changing Routines to Build Adaptability

While dogs do well with routines, it can also be helpful to introduce variety into your dog's daily life. For example, if you feed your dog at the same time every day, they'll likely develop an association that a particular time means when they should be fed. This association isn't necessarily a problem, but what happens if you're running late and can't feed your dog exactly when they expect? At that point, dogs may become distressed when the routine suddenly changes.

Adding schedule variance into your dog's daily life can help dogs become more adaptable and prevent dogs from becoming too attached to a routine. Assuming your dog has no medical conditions requiring medication or feeding at an exact time, it can be useful from a training and behavior perspective to slightly change when you feed your dog daily. You can also switch up how you feed your dog, alternating between different food bowls or puzzle feeders. By switching up when and how you feed your dog, they'll be less likely to become attached to a fixed schedule. These slight changes can also help your dog to be less stressed in the event of a more significant change to their routine.

Expert Tips to Help Soothe Your Dog's Anxiety

By Stephanie Gibeault, MSc, CPDT, Updated: Dec 07, 2023 **AKC**



Mitja Mladkovic/Getty Images Plus via Getty Images

AKC GoodDog Helpline (GDH) is our telephone and video dog training consultation service, offering live, personalized help with to answer questions about training your puppy or dog! We're celebrating GoodDog Helpline's tenth year in 2023, so we've rounded up the most common

questions that our dog trainers hear from owners just like you. A common question is, “How do I help my anxious dog?”

Dogs share many of the same emotions as people, including feeling anxious. And if you’ve ever had a case of nerves, you’ll understand that dog anxiety is extremely difficult for your pet. It can overwhelm them, shut them down, and make it impossible for them to learn or respond to cues. In addition, dog anxiety is responsible for many problem behaviors from destroying the house while alone to lunging at strangers on the street.

But how do you help your anxious dog? Whether it’s fear of other dogs, an inability to be left alone, or stress during a thunderstorm, these 10 tips will help calm an anxious dog and even potentially change their emotional response from negative to positive.

1. Understand Why Your Dog Is Anxious

There are all kinds of dog fears and phobias that can lead to anxious behavior. Dog anxiety can also be caused by lack of socialization while your dog is a puppy. Even senior dogs with cognitive decline can exhibit anxiety as a symptom. Because there are so many underlying causes of dog anxiety, you can’t effectively address the problem without understanding its source. Watch your dog, take note of their anxiety triggers, and consider their past experiences. Finally, consult your veterinarian to rule out health conditions that could be contributing to the problem.

2. Recognize Early Signs of Anxiety

Although it’s never too late to help your dog, the longer they have experienced anxiety, the more challenging it can be to treat. You want to step in as soon as you can rather than letting your dog suffer. It’s also important to intervene quickly in the moment. Don’t let your dog’s emotions ramp up past the point of no return. Learn to read dog body language so you can spot the first signs of stress, such as lip licking or pulled back ears. Then, whether it’s walking in another direction or distracting your dog, you can act quickly to change the situation and relieve your dog’s discomfort.



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3. Build Your Dog's Confidence

The more confident your dog feels, the better they can cope with situations that trigger their fear. One way to build confidence in your dog includes providing a consistent routine so that your dog can predict when they will eat, take a walk, engage in playtime, etc. It's also helpful if you don't provide resources at random. Teach your dog how to earn what they want. For example, ask your dog to sit before you lower the food bowl, clip on the leash, and so on. It will give your dog a sense of control over their environment and therefore reduce anxiety. Finally, consider trying a dog sport like agility. Your dog will learn they can tackle greater challenges than they imagined.

4. Teach Your Dog to Settle

Training your dog to settle on cue is a practical part of teaching emotional self-control. The idea is your dog learns to relax at your request. Of course, your dog's ability to comply will drop the more nervous they become, so either use this in anticipation of a trigger or before the anxiety level gets too high.

First, teach your dog to settle in a calm situation without any distractions. One way to do that is to interrupt a gentle play session and ask your dog to sit or lie down. When they do, quietly praise and treat them then start up the game again to further strengthen the reward. Once they have the hang of it, stop the game and wait for them to sit or lie down on their own. When they do, offer your rewards. Now that you can predict their behavior, add a cue like "settle" or "calm down." Then it's time to increase the duration of the settle and the intensity of the game before slowly adding distractions.

5. Create a Safe, Calm Place for Your Dog

Anxious dogs benefit from a safe place that they associate with positive things – treats, toys, or undisturbed rest. A dog bed or mat is perfect for this because it's portable, meaning you can take that safety on the road. The mat can be used at the vet's office, in the car, or at a friend's home to help your dog feel calm and secure.



SolStock/Getty Images Plus

Once you've taught them to love that safe place by pairing it with rewards and pleasant experiences, train your dog to go to their place on cue. Start close to the bed in a quiet room, then slowly build the distance from the bed and the duration they will stay on the bed before adding distractions. Your goal is to have a portable relaxation station you can send your dog to whenever they are in an anxious situation.

6. Give Your Dog Plenty to Do When They're Alone

Dogs are social creatures who want to be around their humans, and for some, being alone causes separation anxiety. Teaching your dog how to be alone can go a long way to preventing anxiety. It's also important to give your dog lots of things to do while they're on their own. Give them a favorite chew bone or a food-stuffed chew toy to keep them occupied. Or consider using puzzle toys that exercise your dog's mind. Finally, some dogs like the background noise of a TV or radio so they don't feel as alone.

7. Play Calming Games

Games can be a great way to ease your dog's nerves and distract them from their anxiety triggers. Consider calm games that engage your dog's brain rather than riling them up with roughhousing or high energy activities.

Try scattering food across the ground for your dog to sniff out or placing treats behind furniture or pillows in a doggie game of hide-and-seek. Snuffle mats also encourage your dog to sniff out hidden food, and lick mats are particularly handy if bath time or grooming stress your dog. Finally, consider using training as a game. Exercises like nose targeting or “watch me” are easy and fun for your dog to do, so they can work well during tense situations.



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8. Use Desensitization and Counterconditioning

Another way to help your dog is to change their anxious response into something more pleasant using desensitization and counterconditioning. It might be helping your dog relax around other dogs or calmly listen to fireworks – as long as you can identify the trigger, you can change your dog’s reaction from negative to positive. To achieve improvement, it’s important to proceed at your dog’s pace and break the procedure down into small steps. It’s a powerful technique so don’t hesitate to get the assistance of a professional dog trainer or animal behaviorist.

9. Never Punish After the Fact

Punishment only serves to increase your dog’s anxiety. If done in the moment, such as when your reactive dog lunges at a stranger on the street, your dog can associate the punishment with the trigger. That will only convince them they were right to be anxious in the first place. So, although the punishment might suppress the lunging, your dog’s negative emotional response will have strengthened.

And punishment applied after the fact will make your dog anxious around you. For example, if you come home to find your property has been destroyed, it’s too late to do anything about it. Your dog won’t remember

what they chewed up hours ago and now you seem angry out of the blue. No amount of showing your dog the damage or explaining in words will make your reaction seem any more reasonable from your dog's perspective.



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10. Never Force Your Dog to Face Their Fears

You might be tempted to force your dog to face their fears. Don't! Known as flooding, this technique lets the dog panic until they're too exhausted to react anymore and finally realize nothing bad actually happened. It would be the equivalent of putting a person afraid of spiders in a bathtub full of tarantulas until their phobia was gone. Sounds terrifying, right? Although sometimes flooding can be effective, it's impossible to know that in advance. And if it doesn't work, you've now made the problem exponentially worse. Instead, use the tips above to avoid the risk of intensifying your dog's anxiety.

If you need expert advice from experienced trainers or have additional dog training questions, visit the AKC GoodDog! Helpline page for an online chat or to register for the GDH program.

How to Keep Your Dog Calm During Fireworks

By Teresa Traverse, Sponsored by Pet Releaf Updated: May 22, 2024 **AKC**



Whether for the Fourth of July, New Year's Eve, or another celebration, many dog owners deal with howling, barking, and generally anxious dogs during fireworks. It's even largely believed that Independence Day is the day when the highest number of dogs run away. But just what are the dogs afraid of?

"It can be the smell. It can be the noise and the flashes of the light," says Woodstown, New Jersey-based Dr. Judy Morgan, DVM, of Dr. Judy Morgan's Naturally Healthy Pets. Your dog may "tremble, shake, shiver, howl, and bark — some of them get frantic."

If you are unsure of how your new dog might react, Morgan says that dogs that don't cope well during thunderstorms are likely to get scared of fireworks. The good news is that there are steps you can take to help your dog. Here are some expert-approved tips to prevent your dog from freaking out during fireworks.

Keep Your Dog Away From Fireworks

"First of all, don't take your dogs to fireworks shows," says Morgan. "And don't leave them outside during fireworks." Keeping your dog inside on the evening in question is the best idea, especially if you fear they might not react well.

Make Sure Your Pet Has Proper ID

Ensure that the information on your pet's collar is current and make sure your dog is microchipped and has a GPS device. "If they escape, there's a better chance they'll get returned," says Morgan.



evijaf/Getty Images Plus

Create a Safe Haven for Your Dog

Morgan recommends creating a place where your dog will hopefully feel comfortable. “You should get your pet used to a calming environment beforehand. Dogs are den animals — they’re looking for that cave to get away from it all,” she explains.

Try setting up an area in a quiet space away from windows, such as a basement or a larger closet. so that they can’t hear or see fireworks. Use a crate if that’s where your dog feels safe, and make sure to provide them with familiar toys and treats. Morgan says she likes to freeze bone broth in ice cube trays as a summer treat.

Play White Noise

You can try leaving a fan, TV, or sound machine on to help mask the sounds of the fireworks. “There’s some classical music called ‘Through a Dog’s Ear’ that has been shown to have calming effects for dogs,” says Jenn Stanley, certified behavior consultant and professional dog trainer, and co-owner of Awesome Pawsabilities Pet Training & Behavior Consultations, based in North Carolina.



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Comfort Your Dog

If you can, try staying home with your dog or leaving them in the hands of a trusted person. One of Morgan's relatives usually stays with her dog in the closet to help soothe the animal.

"You absolutely can and should comfort your dog if he's afraid," says Stanley. "The key here is in how you do so. It's important to remain calm and use a soothing, even tone. Petting them can be comforting — long, slow, firm strokes along the length of their body are typically very soothing."

The one thing to avoid? Seeming frantic in any way, says Stanley. Rapidly saying, "It's OK, it's OK, it's OK" in a higher-than-average pitch may make your dog think that there really is something to fear. Try your best to remain calm and reassuring to help your canine companion.

Walk Them Before the Fireworks Start

Head out for your long walk before the sun sets to increase the chances that you'll avoid the sounds. When you do go out, you'll want to ensure your dog is secure on a leash before your walk.

"Double-check the fit of your dog's collar or harness before going outside. A leash, even if you have a fenced-in area, is a great added safety measure to help keep your dog close to you and under control should they get startled," says Stanley.



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Desensitize Your Dog to the Sounds of Fireworks

If you suspect your dog will freak out at the sound of fireworks, try playing sounds of fireworks (softly) so your dog is used to hearing them. Stanley

suggests pairing a video of the sounds of fireworks with a treat your dog likes. This process is called counter-conditioning.

“The volume should be low enough that your dog can notice it, but does not show signs of stress like panting, pacing, leaving the area, or trying to hide,” says Stanley. “We call this keeping the dog ‘below threshold,’ and it makes it possible for learning to take place. If the dog is overwhelmed, they’re looking to escape the situation and are not going to be nearly as capable of learning that it’s not a threat.” Her other tips including increasing the volume gradually, varying the source of the sound, and using different recordings.

To help dogs cope with the noise of fireworks, you can also try using dog-friendly headphones or earmuffs. The random and unexpected nature of fireworks’ sounds can cause stress in dogs, but headphones can comfort your dog by muffling these sounds and providing ear protection.

Talk to Your Vet

If your pet’s anxiety is severe, consider booking an appointment with your vet well in advance of the holiday so you can discuss a medication that could help soothe your dog’s anxiety. “If you have a dog that is bad enough and you haven’t done any prep work, and you know your pet is going to be in panic, try true therapeutic treatment,” says Morgan. You can also ask about trying over-the-counter CBD, dog-calming treats or supplements, or dog anxiety vests.

Consider Hiring a Trainer

If fear is negatively impacting your dog’s life, consider enlisting the expertise of a trainer, says Stanley. “You can work with a trainer or behavior consultant to desensitize your dog to fireworks or other fears gradually — it’s never too soon to start planning for next year.”

Whether your dog gets stressed during fireworks, managing ongoing hip & joint issues, or if you want to incorporate a general wellness supplement into their everyday routine, Pet Releaf has your pet’s perfect CBD match. As the original and #1 CBD brand, Pet Releaf has helped more than 5 million pets live happier, healthier lives. Pet Releaf’s USDA-certified organic CBD chews and CBD oils are safe and effective, using third-party testing to ensure quality products. Designed by veterinarians, Pet Releaf products can help dogs of all sizes, ages, and health statuses. AKC readers get exclusive access to 10% off all Pet Releaf products using 10AKC.



PVIWC List of Remaining Meeting & Events for 2024

June 8	Carroll County Celtic Festival, Westminster, MD
June 9	Regular Meeting
June 15	Penn Mar Irish Festival, Shrewsbury, PA
June 21-23	Celtic Fling <i>(with a concert on Friday night)</i> PA Renn Faire grounds
August	MD Mini Renn Faire Howard County Fairgrounds
August 11	Regular Meeting
Aug 31 & Sept 1	Virginia Scottish Games
September 15	Fun Day
September 21-23	PA Renn Faire
October	<i>Irish Wolfhound Assoc of the Delaware Valley Specialty</i>
October 20	Regular Meeting
November 2	Lá Gaeilge (Irish Day), Front Royal, VA
November 8-10	Maryland Irish Festival, Timonium, MD
November 17	Regular Meeting
December 8	Holiday Party
December	Druid Hill Winter Solstice 5Miler , Baltimore, MD
December	Military Bowl Parade, Annapolis, MD

Dates, Time, or location to be determined and subject to change on some events.

Need Volunteers to Host meetings.