



Separation Anxiety

Dogs with separation anxiety experience stress and anxiety when they are left alone which commonly results in:

- Excessive barking, whining, or howling
- Urination and defecation
- Destructive behavior
- Digging and scratching

Signs of Separation Anxiety

- The behavior occurs primarily when they're left alone and typically begins soon after you leave.
- They act anxious, depressed, or overly excited when you are getting ready to leave the house.
- They follow you from room to room when you're home.
- They display frantic greeting behaviors.

Triggers for Separation Anxiety

- A dog accustomed to constant human companionship is left alone.
- A dog experiences a traumatic event, such as a stressful boarding situation or living in a shelter.
- A major change in the dogs routine because of a family disruption, such as the loss of a family member or another family pet.



How to Treat Minor Separation Anxiety

- Keep your arrivals and departures short and sweet so the dog isn't focusing on the events too much. Don't give long drawn out goodbyes and when you come back greet them with calm affection. Leave them with an item that smells like you like a blanket or shirt.
- Provide adequate physical and mental stimulation. As well as meeting their exercise needs, be sure to provide enrichment toys for them.
- When you are away consider using a doggy day care, pet sitter, friends or family.
- Discuss options with your veterinarian.

How to Treat Major Separation Anxiety

- Give your dog a special place to make their own happy place like a dog proofed room or gated off area of the house.
- Make sure this area is away from any noise that could be triggering. Play them soothing music made to calm dogs with separation anxiety.
- Provide them with various enrichment toys, include long lasting chew toys, and add person items with your scent to this area.
- NEVER use this area as a punishment.
- Make this your dog's happy place only. No children, no adults, no other pets unless they help to ease your dog's anxiety.
- Practice small durations of being alone and gradually build up to longer time periods.
- NEVER punish a dog for behaviors they display because of separation anxiety, this will only increase their anxiety and likely worsen the behaviors.
- Talk to your veterinarian about medications that may be able to help.