



Separation Anxiety

Here are some suggestions for people who have animals that exhibit signs of separation anxiety.

- ❖ Give your dog more exercise, a tired dog is a good dog. Most dogs can sleep a good portion of the day if they are worn out.
- ❖ Don't underestimate the importance of mental stimulation. Use treat dispensing/puzzle toys, stuffed Kongs, etc. along with training and new places/interactions/dog meetings to keep your dog's mind busy so they don't get bored. If your dog doesn't need to be crated hide treats in random spots around the house for them to find during the day while you're gone.
- ❖ Make your arrivals and departures very low key, don't make a big fuss while saying hello and goodbye. Be casual and calm; interactions with your dog should be on your terms, give them attention when you want to, not every time they seek it or they will come to expect it all the time.
- ❖ Place an article of worn clothing in or near the crate to help the dog stay calm in your absence.
- ❖ Turn on a radio or television with calm talking or gentle music that will possibly help relax and remove stimulation from outside noises. This can also help some dogs bark or whine less.
- ❖ If you have an especially loud dog that barks while you are gone, get a Gentle Bark collar which sprays citronella (not harmful just foul smelling) in the dog's face when it barks.
- ❖ If your dog isn't destructive while you're gone you can switch from crating to baby gating. Having more space can help some dogs relax more and feel less confined.
- ❖ Get your dog accustomed to things that you do before you leave, like getting your keys out, putting on your coat etc. without actually leaving the house. Some dogs get very worked up as soon as they notice patterns of behavior, long before you even leave the house. Reduce this stress by making these "departure behaviors" common place.
- ❖ Vary your schedule if you can. They do not get as worried if they know you aren't always leaving for such a long time.

- ❖ If you return home and find an accident or something destroyed, don't punish the dog; they don't know what they did wrong and it will just confuse them and increase anxiety.
- ❖ Doggie day care can be a good but costly option for some dogs who can't handle being alone for prolonged periods of time. When choosing a doggie day care, make sure they separate the dogs by size so the smaller dogs are not interacting with the large dogs to avoid the risk of injury.
- ❖ Try using Rescue Remedy (an additive that you put on the dogs tongue or in the water) to lower stress.
- ❖ Sprays or diffusers that release aromas into the air made from lavender (only real lavender extract works, imitation smells won't help) which is a natural calming agent, or DAP: Dog Appeasement Pheromones (imitate the pheromones of a nursing mother dog) can also be used to relieve anxiety.
- ❖ If none of the above seem to help, you can speak with your vet about medication. Many medications such as Melatonin, Prozac and others can help with anxiety and stress in dogs.