

Let's take a look at separation anxiety from your dog's perspective. YOU ARE THE MOST IMPORTANT THING IN YOUR DOG'S LIFE. Dogs are very social creatures, and your dog thrives on being with you. If he or she had a choice, they would spend all of their time with you. It's only natural, then, when you go out or are away for an extended period of time, they are unhappy at the separation. They are not certain when or if you are coming back. When your dog is separated from you, all they want is to be reunited with you.

FIRST AND FOREMOST:

Punishment is never the answer to treating dog separation anxiety!

Does Your Dog Suffer From Separation Anxiety?

Does your dog suffer from separation anxiety? If any of these things are true, it's quite possible that your dog is experiencing separation anxiety:

1. Your dog gets really worked up and anxious when you are preparing to leave the house. Things like picking up your car keys or putting on your coat can trigger the behavior.
2. Your dog engages in inappropriate behavior only when you are separated. I expand on this topic further down the page, but behavior such as urinating inside, excessive barking and destructive behavior are common symptoms of Separation Anxiety in dogs.
3. Your dog follows you everywhere you go and immediately becomes distressed if he can't be near you.
4. When you arrive home your dog is over the top with his greeting and takes a while to calm down.

Some suggestions for dealing with separation anxiety.

1. Make available to your dog toys that will keep them occupied in your absence; perhaps a Kong containing peanut butter or cream cheese. A toy that is filled with a treat that falls out as your dog rolls it about may also entertain them.
2. Keep a radio or TV turned on.
3. Exercise your dog at least somewhat vigorously before you leave. A tired dog is a relaxed dog.
4. If your dog is crate trained and enjoys their crate, they may prefer being crated when you are away. You will have to determine whether crating them creates more or less anxiety.
5. If you can afford to do so, arrange for a dog walker; or, perhaps a friend can visit your pup while you are away.

How Does Dog Separation Anxiety Manifest Itself?

- Barking
- Whining
- Licking
- Destructive Behavior
- Chewing
- Howling
- Panic Attacks
- Digging
- Inappropriate Urinating
- House Soiling
- Self Mutilation
- Escaping
- Diarrhea
- Loss Of Appetite
- Excessive Salivation
- Vomiting
- Jumping Through Windows
- Crying

What Can You Do To Help Your Dog Overcome Separation Anxiety?

The treatment administered to your dogs separation anxiety problem depends on its severity. You will find lots of theories and suggestions regarding the correct way to treat separation anxiety – I'll just inform you of what's worked for me.

The 4 Step Program I Used To Fix My Separation Anxiety Problem

My dog Harrison developed Separation Anxiety seemingly for no reason when he was about 7 years old. He would start digging and crying as soon as I left the house, even if my other family members were home. My Veterinarian suggested this training process, it achieved the desired result but took plenty of time and patience.

Aside from the 4 step program listed below, I continued to practice the general day to day duties of responsible dog ownership. By this I mean things like providing a safe and comfortable bed, plenty of exercise and obedience training.

Harry would start to get anxious (his whole body would shake) at the very first sign of me leaving the house. This typically would be putting my shoe's on or turning off the TV or heater. It became a real problem for Harry, myself and the rest of my family, this is how we eventually solved it:

The 4 Step Program I Used To Fix My Separation Anxiety Problem

Since Harry was always by my side when I was home I had to slowly teach him that he didn't always need to be close to me. I started out by ignoring his attention seeking behavior (jumping up, barking etc.) and then did some solid practice of his down stay. Little by little we extended the time and distance we spent apart, until he was happy to be alone for up to 30 minutes. Of course, we still spent lots of fun time together.