



dog anxiety

If the habit is too strong

Rarely, but occasionally the problem has become so imprinted on the dog that even when his confidence does improve he still chews or even excretes out of habit. For these dogs an indoor kennel may be required. These have proved to be very successful, but you will need further advice on its proper use. Similarly if the above advice has failed to stop your dog barking when left then a Citronella collar may help. Sometimes the trick is to look further afield. Perhaps you could find a local dog walker/sitter - put an ad in your local paper, newsagents and pet shop - often two dogs left alone together are content about the situation. After all your dog has probably spent most of his life with little human company all day in his racing kennel, but always with a canine companion.

Success!

Past experience has proved that this advice does work, but it will take up your time and energy in the early stages. Your efforts will be rewarded with years of happy companionship, and you too can join the growing number of proud Greyhound owners who sing their praises wherever they go!

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Retired Greyhound Trust
2nd Floor, Park House, Park Terrace,
Worcester Park, Surrey KT4 7JZ

Tel: 0844 826 8424
Fax: 0844 826 8425
Email: greyhounds@retiredgreyhounds.co.uk
www.retiredgreyhounds.co.uk

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dog anxiety



Dealing with anxiety

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Separation anxiety:

typical symptoms



What is it?

It is a dog's inability to cope when left alone. Typical symptoms are howling & barking, scratching/chewing at furniture and fittings and even excreting around the house in your absence. In order to stop the 'bad' behaviour the dog needs to become more confident and secure in himself, and less dependent on you. You need to teach him this by changing the way you treat him in the house. collar may help. Sometimes the trick is to look further afield. Perhaps you could find a local dog walker/sitter - put an ad in your local paper, newsagents and pet shop - often two dogs left alone together are content about the situation. After all your dog has probably spent most of his

Breaking the bad habits

If your dog is allowed to follow you around the house, i.e. when you get up to make a cup of tea or run a bath, you must stop him from now on! In order for your dog to become more confident about being left when you are out, he must learn to cope with letting you out of his sight when you are in the house. He must have a bed of his own and he must learn to sleep *only* in his bed, and to stay in it when you leave the room. If you know that as soon as you leave the room he will get up to follow you then hide around the corner and be ready for him. Put him back in his bed and start to leave the room again. Repeat this until you can leave the room without him following. When you return praise him for staying in his bed (but not so much he gets up or you have defeated the object!). Be prepared to do this every time you leave the room until your dog understands the command. At first this may seem tough and demanding on you and your dog, but if you can win this battle of wills he will soon begin to value his new den as a place where he can truly relax and feel confident in your absence.

Desensitising him

Your dog will associate all the usual going out procedures i.e. putting on your coat, picking up your keys as the start of his period alone and thus will begin to fret as you are doing so. You need to desensitise him of these stimuli, so at any time of day go repeatedly through these actions quietly and without fuss, and then sit back down. Repeat these actions until your dog looks positively bored.

Building his confidence

Now you need to test him further. Start to shut him in the room while you move about the house, for very short periods of time, and then leave him alone for short periods. When you do leave the room or go out don't make a big deal of it. It is a normal every day occurrence and as little fuss as possible should be made of your dog. If you hug him or look lingeringly at him, he will think the pair of you can't possibly cope without each other. Try to ignore him leading up to the time when you go, tell him firmly to sit in his bed upon leaving and quietly shut the door. The only way your dog can learn to cope on his own is if you can wean him off of his dependence on you. *He is addicted to his owner, and it is his owner who must make him realise that he can have a life of his own.*

Quality time

When you do want to give your dog attention feel free. BUT do not let your dog dictate what he gets and when. Call him over for a cuddle by all means, but don't allow him to slouch at your feet, or paw at your lap all evening. He needs to learn to feel confident and learn to sleep in his bed while you are out, so he must use it when you are in.

Training

It is very important to get to grips with general obedience so that your dog will want to please you, and know his place generally in the household. All dogs should know their name and understand the words COME, NO, and STAY. If yours doesn't then enrol in a training class now! You can find details at your vets, pet shop, feed merchant or from other dog owners and walkers. Communal classes will improve your dogs' self confidence which will help reduce his problems.

Occupy his mind

If you are strict on yourself and follow this advice your dog's confidence will increase, and his anxiety (antisocial behaviour) will decrease, however his howling and chewing will not stop overnight. There are some measures you can take to help in the mean time. Don't leave valued chewable items with your dog, and give him things to keep him occupied - his favourite toy, and a long lasting chewy bone. Buy two 'Kongs' (available at any pet shop) and wedge something edible in them that your dog will like. Dogs treat them like bones and will spend hours trying to get the last bit out, and most dogs will eat plain bread stuffed in! If your dog is fussy then you will have to shop around for a good treat (however make sure that you are not piling the calories on your hound). Video recordings have shown that dogs fuss the most just after the owner goes out and just before they come back. The two Kongs give the dog the opportunity to tuck into one as you leave, then snooze and upon waking munch on the other just before your return.