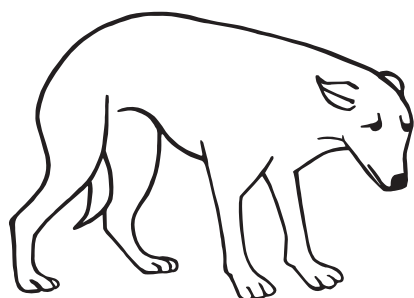


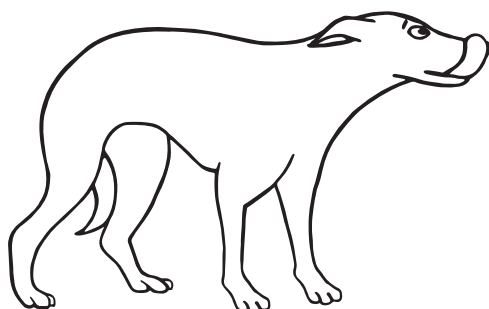
RECOGNISING STRESS

A certain amount of stress is normal and a part of life. Our dogs will learn different coping strategies to calm down or feel safe in certain situations, e.g. hiding in their crate during a thunder storm. Below are signs that your dog could be experiencing stress, anxiety or fear. It is important we are able to recognise them as there will be times when we need to help calm them down or remove them from the situation or put into place a program to manage their reaction to that situation.



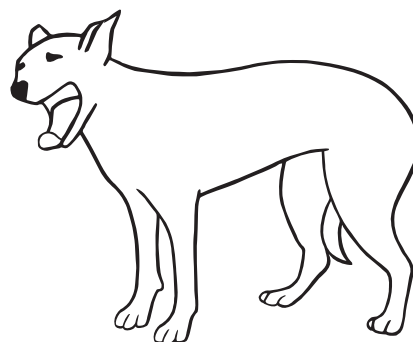
Behavioural Signs

- yawning (when not tired)
- licking lips (when there is no food)
- panting (when not thirsty)
- scanning the room (anticipating real or imagined threats)
- pacing (dogs normally walk only to get from A to B)
- whining or excessive vocalisation
- hyper-vigilance
- increased self-grooming
- avoidance behaviour
- freezing in place
- increased physical activity
- decreased physical activity
- coughing (when they are not sick)
- sneezing (forced sneezing)



Body Language Signals

- widened eyes
- hackles raised
- placing ears closer against head
- tail tucked under body
- cowering
- creased / furrowed brows
- stiff / tense
- body curved and low to ground



Physical Signs

- sweaty paws
- trembling or shivering
- abnormal urination
- pica (eating non-food items)
- nausea (decreased appetite)
- vomiting
- change in defecation
- skin disorders
- excessive shedding

UNDERSTANDING LEVELS OF ANXIETY IN DOGS

Red Zone

WHAT'S HAPPENING

The dog is in survival mode. The reactive part of the brain (amygdala), is making all the decisions for the dog and activate the fight or flight response if they feel threatened or fearful. If they don't resume to the green zone quickly (as in a startle to a loud benign noise) then they remain on maximum alert levels and everything in their world can become a threat.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

Depending on what is most practical:

- remove the stimulus
- or remove the dog from the stimulus
- let them move away to where they feel more safe, e.g crate, cupboard or bedroom. Then plan how to manage the situation in the future.
- NO training sessions or any form of punishment to be used.

Orange Zone

WHAT'S HAPPENING

The dog is somewhat aroused, whether it be from excitement, anxiety or fear. You will be able to see them exhibit signs of arousal through their body language. It could present as rough play, lip licking, ears sharply flat, cowering, panting (when not hot or thirsty), yawning (when not tired), refusing treats, pacing, hypervigilance, sweaty paws or retreating.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

We want to prevent escalation into the red zone and help calm them down to the green.

Depending on what is most practical:

- always supervise your dog until they are calm
- remove the stimulus
- or remove the dog from the stimulus
- relaxation techniques, e.g. massage
- if they are comfortable in a crate put them there (as a calming retreat, not as punishment)
- divert their attention to another activity
- no training sessions or tricks
- if out on a walk use the 'curving' technique
 - or the 'emergency U-turn'
 - or find it

Green Zone

WHAT'S HAPPENING

This is the safe zone. The thinking part of the brain (cerebral cortex) is in control of all the decision making and problem solving. It is responsible for processing thoughts and maintaining cognitive function. It allows your dog to behave normally.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

- positive training sessions
- reward their calm behaviour