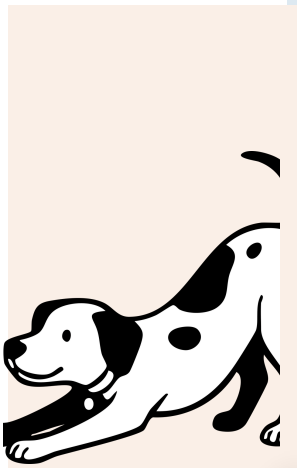




YOU CAN RING MY BELL

A GUIDE FOR DOGS AND VISITORS

WHY ITS A PROBLEM



- Over excitement
- Territorial behaviour
- Fear
- Available space
- Actions of visitors
- Previous experiences
- Lack of practise/ consistency

WHAT YOU MIGHT SEE IN YOUR DOG



- **Excitement** - loose wiggly body, bouncing, whining, tail wagging, high pitched barking
- **Fear** - moving away, hiding behind owner, barking at visitor, tense body, low posture
- **Conflicted** - moving forward and back
- **Frustration** - panting, high respiration rate, frantic movements
- **Non-Social** - intense deep barking direct at visitor, charging, tight muzzle





SET UP FOR SUCCESS



- Make sure you rule out any health issues
- Are all their needs being met:
 - Physical exercise
 - Mental stimulation
 - Food and water
 - Sleep
- Avoid over arousal and play in rooms where they need to act calmly

SET UP EQUIPMENT



- Use a barrier, play pen or stair gate to separate but not exclude your dog
- A settle mat
- Have the dog on harness so you can attach lead quickly
- Treats and a long-lasting calming chew such a Kong or Lick mat





ENSURE THE FOLLOWING GROUNDWORK IS IN PLACE



- Recall at home and responds well to being called
- Are used to settling on a mat
- Can build duration on this by providing a long lasting treat
- If using a barrier - practice getting comfortable behind this by themselves
- Spend some time with harness on at home so this does not feel too strange
- Get them to remain behind their barrier or on their mat while you answer the door to no-one!
- Reduce territorial behaviours e.g. window and fence barking
- Practicing with a familiar person whom they can control their arousal around
- They can cope with absence of attention e.g. when you are busy or on the phone
- Politely greet people they meet - no jumping on people in the street or park
- You don't have to treat constantly to achieve these behaviours

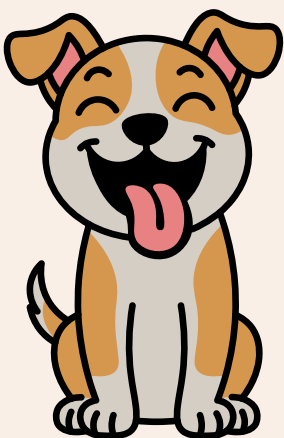




MOVE ON TO THE REAL THING



- If you can meet outside and go for a short walk with your visitor.
- Get set up and ready before arrival, with everything you need.
- Keep calm- regardless how excited your dog gets
- Brief your visitors on what you NEED them to do and what to expect.
- Try one visitor at a time, not a party
- Have realistic expectations. Consider how long your dog has been behaving this way
- For fearful dogs, predictable routine and visitor behaviour will reduce anxiety. They may need proximity to their guardian.
- Don't allow the visitors to give treats as this increases motivation to get to them.
- Visitors must be:
 - Calm in both sound and movement
 - Not too animated
 - Predictable
- Multi dog households need to practise with one dog at a time





WHAT IT WILL LOOK LIKE IN PRACTISE

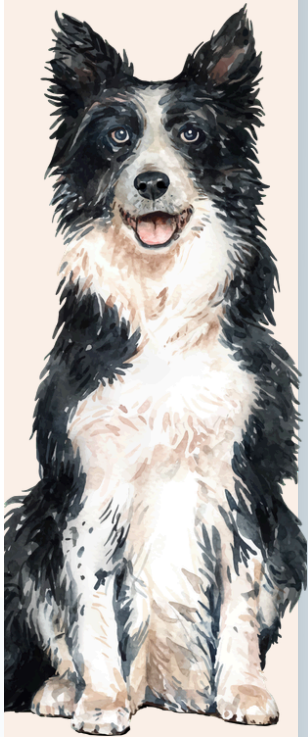


- Have Kong / Lick mat/Treats all prepared and in the locations where they will be required
- Have harness on the dog
- As the doorbell goes, don't jump up
- Calmly stand and guide your dog gently to their place behind the barrier or onto their mat
- Allow the visitors to enter and sit down.
- Make sure they completely ignore the dog, and if space allows don't even walk past them
- Make sure they don't sit in the dog's favourite spot!
- Reassure the dog (if vocalising) with a few treats and encourage them to sit or lie down
- Offer a long-lasting chew or Kong
- On some occasions it may be necessary to allow the dog a very brief interaction on lead and then return them to their station





WHAT IT WILL LOOK LIKE IN PRACTISE



- Once you have at least 30 seconds of continuous calm allow the dog to come out, on lead if necessary.
- Allow approach to the visitor if safe to do so
- If dog becomes too excitable / unmanageable, recall them to you.

The dog has 3 choices now

1. They interact nicely with the visitor
2. They settle down with you
3. They move away and settle somewhere quietly

IF THEY CANNOT DO ANY OF THESE

- They are moved out of the room
- Wait with them for a few seconds until they calm and try again
- Give them the benefit of the doubt to choose the correct action, by recalling them to you, but if no joy, remove again.
- Repeat this as often as necessary





WHAT IT WILL LOOK LIKE IN PRACTISE FOR A FEARFUL DOG



- This will require more patience and training
- Problems are likely to arise when visitors enter leave and move around (go to the bathroom) think about your room layout and adjust accordingly so dog and visitors don't need to pass one another
- Praise and treat calm behaviour
- Visitors may need to do small shifts in movement and announce when they intent to stand up / leave the room
- Let the dog sniff where the visitor has been if they show an interest in doing so

WHAT WILL SUCCESS LOOK LIKE



- Not always holding the lead
- Dog being free to roam around in presence of visitors
- Moving from a barrier to a bed set up
- Settling very quickly after initial greeting
- Reduced barking and vocalisations

