Quick Fix Cards

ONE PAGE.
ONE PROBLEM.

> **"Quick" means quick to read, not quick results.** Each card gives you a calm plan you can follow in the moment. Print the cards you need. Stick them on the fridge, by the door, or in your leash bag.

How to read a card

Section	What it's for
Why it happens	What your dog is getting out of the habit
Right now	What to do when the habit is happening
Prevent it	Simple setup changes so the habit stops paying
Teach it	A short step-by-step practice plan, about 5 minutes at a time
Don't	Things that tend to make it worse
Call a pro if	When this card isn't enough

The four ground rules

- **Reward what you want.** Say "Yes!" at the right moment. Then pay with a small treat.
- **Keep it easy.** If your dog gets it right fewer than half the time, make it easier.
- **Be kind.** No shock, prong, or choke collars. No leash jerks, spray bottles, shaker cans, yelling, or hitting.
- **Everyone follows the same plan.** One person giving in can keep a habit alive.

About treats

Use tiny pieces. Keep treats to about 10% of daily calories. Check labels for xylitol, which is dangerous to dogs and can be in some peanut butters. Ask your vet about allergies or special diets.

> **Important:** These cards are general education for everyday manners. They don't replace a veterinarian or a qualified behavior professional. No timeline or result is promised, because every dog is different. If your dog bites, shows strong fear, panics when alone, or changes behavior suddenly, stop and go to the Red-Flag Card at the back.

Pulling on the Leash

QUICK FIX CARD
NO. 1

Why it happens: Pulling works. Your dog leans, you follow, and they reach the good smell. Every step on a tight leash pays for pulling.

RIGHT NOW

- Stop walking. Plant your feet. Keep your arm soft.
- Wait for any slack in the leash.
- Say "Yes!" and pay right at your leg.
- Start walking again.

PREVENT IT

- Use a well-fitted harness and a plain 6-foot leash.
- Skip retractable leashes for now.
- Pick quiet routes at quiet times.
- Scan ahead so you see triggers first.

TEACH IT

1. Indoors: take 1 step, then pay at your leg. Build up to 10 steps.
2. Move to a quiet driveway. Tight leash means stop. Slack means go.
3. If your dog surges ahead, say "This way!" and turn around.
4. Let your dog earn sniff breaks with a loose leash: "Go sniff!"
5. Near distractions, add distance and use your best treats.

DON'T

- Jerk the leash
- Use choke, prong, or shock collars
- Keep walking on a tight leash when you can avoid it

CALL A PRO IF

Your dog lunges, snarls, or looks scared on leash. Your dog can pull you off your feet.

Bolting Out the Door

QUICK FIX CARD
NO. 2

Why it happens: The outside world is exciting, and an open door pays off right away. This one is a safety issue, so management comes first.

RIGHT NOW

- Step calmly between your dog and the door before you open it.
- Close the door gently if your dog moves forward.
- Open it again when all four paws are still.
- If your dog gets out, don't chase. Run the other way or call in a happy voice.

PREVENT IT

- Put up a baby gate at the entry.
- Leash your dog before anyone opens the door.
- Tell family and guests to check first.
- Keep ID tags and microchip details up to date.

TEACH IT

1. Stand at a closed door. Touch the knob. Pay four paws on the floor.
2. Open the door a crack. Still waiting? "Yes!" Pay away from the door.
3. Open a bit wider, one small step at a time.
4. Add a release word, such as "Free," then walk out together on leash.
5. Practice with the leash on every time, until it's easy.

DON'T

- Rely on training alone near a busy road
- Scold a dog who comes back to you
- Grab at your dog, which can turn it into a chase game

CALL A PRO IF

Your dog panics, or escapes to get away from something. Escaping when left alone can be a sign of separation anxiety.

Barking at the Door

QUICK FIX CARD
NO. 3

Why it happens: The bell predicts excitement. Barking often gets people moving, and sometimes the visitor leaves. It feels like it works.

RIGHT NOW

- Stay calm. Don't shout over your dog.
- Say your dog's name in a happy voice.
- Lead them to the mat. Pay there.
- Pay several small treats while they stay quiet.

PREVENT IT

- Put a mat in view of the door, a few feet back.
- Keep treats near the door.
- Ask guests to text instead of ringing.
- Use a gate while your dog is learning.

TEACH IT

1. Teach "Mat" in a quiet room first.
2. Practice at the door. Touch the knob, then pay on the mat.
3. Play a doorbell recording at low volume. Pay quiet.
4. Slowly raise the volume over several sessions.
5. Ask a helper to ring the real bell. Mat, then pay.

DON'T

- Yell. It can sound like joining in
- Ask "Who's there?" in an excited voice
- Use bark collars, sprays, or shaker cans

CALL A PRO IF

Your dog looks fearful, or lunges at guests. Your dog growls or snaps at the door.

Barking at the Window or Yard

QUICK FIX CARD NO. 4

Why it happens: People, dogs, and squirrels pass by, your dog barks, and they leave. To your dog, that looks like a win. It's practice, every day.

RIGHT NOW

- Walk over calmly. Don't scold.
- Use a happy voice or "Touch" to lead your dog away.
- Pay when they're quiet.
- Close the blinds.

PREVENT IT

- Add frosted window film or curtains.
- Move the couch away from the window.
- Use a fan or quiet music for sound cover.
- Don't leave your dog alone in the yard for long.

TEACH IT

1. Start with a partial view, and someone far away.
2. Your dog notices and stays quiet? "Yes!" Pay.
3. Pay a few more times as the person passes.
4. Wait for your dog to look at the person, then look at you. Pay well.
5. Move a little closer to the window over many sessions.

DON'T

- Leave your dog to bark for hours
- Punish some barks while praising others
- Use barking as a home alarm one day and scold it the next

CALL A PRO IF

Barking goes on and on and you can't interrupt it. Your dog seems scared, or it started suddenly.

Barking for Attention

QUICK FIX CARD
NO. 5

Why it happens: Your dog looks at you and barks. If you look, talk, or scold, it paid. Even a little attention can keep this habit going.

RIGHT NOW

- First check real needs: potty, water, pain.
- If needs are met, go still and look away.
- Say nothing. Step out for a few seconds if you need to.
- After a second of quiet, turn back and pay.

PREVENT IT

- Give a chew or food toy before calls and meals.
- Add a sniff walk or a game each day.
- Keep a calm routine.
- Get everyone in the house on the same plan.

TEACH IT

1. Pay your dog for being quiet before they start.
2. Drop a treat as they lie calmly near you. Do this often.
3. Teach a polite way to ask, such as sit or a nose touch.
4. Answer the polite ask quickly at first.
5. Slowly stretch the time between payoffs.

DON'T

- Give in when it gets louder. It may get worse before it improves
- Ignore a dog who is scared, sick, or in distress
- Scold. For many dogs, that counts as attention

CALL A PRO IF

Your dog barks when alone, or seems anxious. Older dogs with new barking need a vet visit.

Jumping on Guests

QUICK FIX CARD
NO. 6

Why it happens: Faces are interesting, and jumping gets attention. Pushing or scolding can count as attention too, so it can keep the habit going.

RIGHT NOW

- Ask your guest to stand tall, turn away, and stay silent.
- Calmly leash or gate your dog.
- Scatter treats on the floor: "Find it!"
- Say hi only when all four paws are down.

PREVENT IT

- Use a gate or a leash before guests arrive.
- Text your guests the plan ahead of time.
- Offer a sniff walk before they come over.
- Keep young kids and unsteady guests away from a jumping dog.

TEACH IT

1. Teach Four on the Floor with family first.
2. Keep your dog on leash, and pay low as a person walks up.
3. If your dog jumps, the person turns and walks away.
4. Paws down? Person returns and gives a low treat and a calm pet.
5. Repeat three or four times. Then stop.

DON'T

- Knee, push, or grab
- Let some people allow jumping
- Force a greeting if your dog looks away or backs up

CALL A PRO IF

Your dog nips hard, stiffens, or growls around guests or kids.

Jumping on You at Home

QUICK FIX CARD
NO. 7

Why it happens: You're the best thing in your dog's day. You come home, they explode with joy, and you say hello. Each arrival is practice.

RIGHT NOW

- Stay low-key as you walk in.
- Stand tall if your dog jumps. Step back. Stay silent.
- Paws down? Say hello in a soft voice.
- Crouch and pet the chest while paws stay down.

PREVENT IT

- Keep a cup of treats by the door.
- Scatter treats as you enter: "Find it!"
- Keep a toy by the door for your dog to carry.
- Leave bags outside the first few times, so your hands are free.

TEACH IT

1. Hold treats at your chest. Wait for four paws. "Yes!"
2. Drop the treat on the floor. Pay low.
3. Wait for 1 second, then 2, then 5.
4. Practice each time you come in, even from the mailbox.
5. Ask everyone in the house to do the same.

DON'T

- Greet your dog with big excitement
- Yell "Off!" and push your dog away
- Pick up small dogs as a reward for jumping

CALL A PRO IF

You can't stay safe on your feet. Your dog seems frantic each time you leave or return. That may be distress.

Accidents in the House

QUICK FIX CARD
NO. 8

Why it happens: A dog may not know where to go, or may not have had enough time outside. But a house-trained dog with new accidents may be sick.

RIGHT NOW

- Stay calm. Don't scold.
- If you catch it, calmly get your dog's attention.
- Take them outside to finish. Pay if they go there.
- Clean the spot with an enzyme cleaner.

PREVENT IT

- See your vet first if your dog was house-trained before.
- Keep a regular feeding schedule.
- Watch your dog closely indoors.
- Use a crate, pen, or gated room when you can't watch, if your dog is comfortable there.

TEACH IT

1. Go out with your dog on leash. Don't just open the door.
2. Give them time to sniff. Many accidents happen because the dog came in too soon.
3. Pay right after they go, outside.
4. Learn the signs: pacing, circling, sniffing, whining.
5. Give more freedom slowly, one room at a time.

DON'T

- Punish. It can teach your dog not to go in front of you
- Rub your dog's nose in it
- Let your dog roam loose indoors before they've gone outside

CALL A PRO IF

New accidents, more drinking, or straining: see your vet. Accidents only when alone may be separation anxiety.

Potty Schedule Planner

QUICK FIX CARD
NO. 9

Why it helps: A steady routine helps. These times follow the AKC's housetraining guidance. Adjust them with your vet for your dog's age and health.

GO OUT AT THESE TIMES

- First thing in the morning
- After breakfast
- Several times during the day
- After dinner
- Right before bed

SET IT UP

- For puppies, add trips after naps, play, and meals.
- Put out meals at set times.
- Don't make your dog hold it for long periods.
- Ask your vet what's reasonable for your dog's age.

MAKE IT STICK

1. Write your times below and put them on the fridge.
2. Use the same door and the same spot.
3. Add a short cue, such as "Go potty," as they start.
4. Pay right after they finish, outside.
5. Play or walk after they go, so going doesn't end the fun.

Wake up	After breakfast	Midday	After dinner	Bedtime

DON'T

- Skip the checkups if accidents continue
- Leave your dog crated for long stretches
- Expect a schedule to fix a medical problem

CALL A PRO IF

Accidents continue even with a steady routine. Talk to your vet.

Mouthing and Nipping

QUICK FIX CARD
NO. 10

Why it happens: Puppies and many young dogs explore with their mouths. It's often play. But quick, hard bites from a stiff dog are a different thing.

RIGHT NOW

- Go still. Don't pull your hand away fast.
- Offer a toy or a chew instead.
- When your dog stops, pay and go on.
- If they keep going, calmly step away for a moment.

PREVENT IT

- Keep toys within reach in each room.
- Choose fetch and tug over hand play.
- Plan naps. Tired puppies get bitey.
- Don't wave fingers or toes near your dog's face.

TEACH IT

1. Pet with one hand. Feed small treats with the other.
2. Pay your dog for keeping their mouth off your hand.
3. Practice sit, wait, and leave it.
4. Teach tug with clear rules. Teeth on skin ends the game.
5. Keep kids out of rough play.

DON'T

- Slap, flick, or hold the mouth shut
- Play rough hand games
- Use a muzzle as a fix

CALL A PRO IF

See a body gone stiff, a wrinkled muzzle, lips pulled back, or quick, painful bites. Any of these need a behavior pro.

Chewing the Wrong Things

QUICK FIX CARD
NO. 11

Why it happens: Chewing is normal, and it feels good. Bored or teething dogs do more of it. Chewing near doors and windows may mean distress.

RIGHT NOW

- Calmly swap the item for a toy or chew.
- Praise your dog for taking the swap.
- Put the item away.
- If it might be dangerous, call your vet.

PREVENT IT

- Put shoes, clothes, and books out of reach.
- Rotate toys so they stay interesting.
- Use a gate or a safe room when you can't watch.
- Use food puzzles and daily walks.

TEACH IT

1. Pick a few favorite chews.
2. Offer a chew when your dog settles.
3. Pay your dog for choosing their toy.
4. Teach "Drop it": trade a toy for a treat, then give it back.
5. Slowly give more freedom in the house.

DON'T

- Punish after the fact. Dogs can't connect it
- Tape or muzzle your dog's mouth
- Leave your dog in a crate for long stretches

CALL A PRO IF

Chewing happens only when your dog is alone. Your dog swallows objects. See your vet right away if they do.

Food Stealing and Counter Surfing

QUICK FIX CARD
NO. 12

Why it happens: It pays big, and it pays at random. One sandwich can keep a dog trying for weeks. The AKC says you may never fully trust a food-motivated dog, so plan for that.

RIGHT NOW

- Stay calm. Don't chase.
- Trade for something better if it's safe.
- If it's dangerous, call your vet or ASPCA Poison Control: (888) 426-4435.
- Clear the counter.

PREVENT IT

- Keep counters and tables clear.
- Use a trash can with a lid, or put it in a cupboard.
- Gate the kitchen during cooking.
- Don't leave food out when you leave the room.

TEACH IT

1. Teach "Mat" and use it during cooking.
2. Pay your dog on the mat as you prep food.
3. Teach "Leave it" using a boring item, then pay from your other hand.
4. Add more interesting items slowly.
5. Reward four paws on the floor in the kitchen.

DON'T

- Set traps or use noise makers
- Punish after the fact
- Trust training alone around dangerous foods

CALL A PRO IF

Your dog growls, stiffens, or snaps around food. Don't reach for it. Get help.

Begging at the Table

QUICK FIX CARD
NO. 13

Why it happens: Begging works when someone drops a bite, even one time in ten. A random payoff keeps the behavior strong.

RIGHT NOW

- Don't look, talk, or feed.
- Calmly send your dog to the mat.
- Pay on the mat, away from the table.
- Give a chew or food toy.

PREVENT IT

- No table feeding. Everyone follows this rule.
- Put the mat a few steps from the table.
- Feed your dog before your meal.
- Use a gate at first, if you need to.

TEACH IT

1. Teach "Mat" in a quiet room.
2. Practice during a pretend meal with an empty plate.
3. Pay small treats on the mat as you sit.
4. Slowly pay less often during real meals.
5. Use "Free!" to end the mat time after the meal.

DON'T

- Share food from the table sometimes
- Give grapes, raisins, onions, chocolate, or xylitol
- Scold your dog for lying near you calmly

CALL A PRO IF

Your dog guards the area around the table, or growls near food.

Not Coming When Called

QUICK FIX CARD
NO. 14

Why it happens: The world is more fun, and coming back often means the fun ends. We need your dog to learn that coming to you is the best deal around.

RIGHT NOW

- Don't chase. Run away from your dog in a happy way.
- Crouch down and use a happy voice.
- Pay big when they get to you.
- Never scold a dog who came to you, no matter how long it took.

PREVENT IT

- Keep your dog on leash in unfenced areas.
- Use a long line (15 to 20 feet) in open areas.
- Follow local leash laws.
- If you've overused the word, pick a new cue.

TEACH IT

1. Start indoors. Add the word as your dog moves toward you.
2. Pay with your best treats, every time.
3. Practice in your yard. Then use a long line.
4. Call, pay, and send your dog back to play.
5. Add distance and distractions slowly.

DON'T

- Call your dog only when the fun is over
- Repeat the cue over and over
- Call your dog to punish, bathe, or do anything they dislike

CALL A PRO IF

Your dog runs from fear, or won't come to people at all.

Grabbing Things and Running Off

QUICK FIX CARD
NO. 15

Why it happens: You chase, and it becomes the best game ever. Some dogs learn that stealing socks is how to get your attention.

RIGHT NOW

- Stop. Don't chase.
- Walk away, or call your dog in a happy voice.
- Offer a trade: treat or toy for the item.
- If it's dangerous, call your vet.

PREVENT IT

- Keep laundry and shoes out of reach.
- Give your dog more play and chews.
- Use a gate while your dog is learning.
- Pay for bringing you anything at all.

TEACH IT

1. Teach "Drop it" with an easy toy. Trade for a treat.
2. Give the toy back, so dropping doesn't end the game.
3. Do this several times a day.
4. Add new items your dog likes more.
5. Pay your dog for choosing their own toys.

DON'T

- Corner your dog or pull things out of their mouth
- Punish. It can lead to guarding
- Laugh and chase, which pays for the game

CALL A PRO IF

Your dog growls, freezes, or snaps when you get close to an item. That's guarding. Don't test it. Get help.

Red-Flag Card

STOP AND GET HELP

> **These aren't quick-fix problems.** Don't try to handle them with a card. Keep everyone safe, avoid the trigger, don't punish, and make the call.

What you see	Who to call first
Biting, snapping, or attempted bites	Your vet, then a veterinary behaviorist or a certified behavior consultant
Growling or stiffening over food, toys, or spaces	Your vet, then a behavior professional
Strong fear: shaking, hiding, trying to escape	Your vet, then a behavior professional
Panic when alone: damage near doors, self-injury, constant howling, accidents only when left alone	Your vet, then a veterinary behaviorist or a certified behaviorist
A sudden change in behavior at any age	Your vet, soon
New house accidents in a house-trained dog	Your vet
Pacing at night, confusion, new barking in an older dog	Your vet
Lunging and snarling on leash	A reward-based pro, and your vet
Eating something dangerous	Your vet or an emergency clinic right away. ASPCA Animal Poison Control: (888) 426-4435. A fee may apply.

Until you get help

- Use gates, leashes, and closed doors to keep people and pets safe.
- Never punish a growl. It's a warning, and you want to keep that warning.
- Don't test your dog to see if it happens again.
- Keep kids and visitors away from a dog you're worried about.
- Take a short video if you can do it safely. Bring it to your vet.

Where to find help

- Veterinary behaviorists: dacvb.org
- Certified behavior consultants: iaabc.org
- Certified trainers: ccpdt.org

Sources

CHECKED
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These cards are based on the sources below. Being listed doesn't mean these organizations reviewed or endorse this product.

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