ALONE AT HOME PET SERVICES

"Humans would be better off if they tried to be more like dogs!"

November 2026

Your Dog's Ding-Dong Drama!



The busy holiday season is fast-approaching! And while that means great food, fun times and happy memories, it might also mean your dog losing his mind every time your doorbell rings!

It's one of the most common, yet untrained, K9 behaviors. Dogs overreacting to a ringing doorbell or someone knocking! So **why** do dogs worldwide lose their minds over doorbells or knocking? It's a complex combination of an initial trigger, protective instincts, excitement, anxiety, fear or stress and **most importantly**, learned responses from barking and the door opening! To your dog, it's **mission accomplished**!

Dogs and Doorbell Drama

- Strongly reacting to a ringing doorbell comes from a dog's **instinctual need** to protect their territory and people.
- Once the trigger happens, dogs **join in to alert** their owners that something is happening. Much like a pack of wolves communicating and alerting other members through barking or howling.
- The sudden and startling doorbell sound also overwhelms a dog's **hypersensitive ears.** Depending on the dog's temperament, this often triggers an emotional response (depending on the dog's temperament), such as:
  - Fight-or-flight.
  - Increased excitement, anxiety or stress; and
  - A protective response.
- It's also important to remember that your dog's reaction to the doorbell is a **learned response reinforced over time**! Repeated exposure reinforces the dog's automatic behavior. If the owner is excited, stressed or overreacts, the dog learns even faster to overreact to the doorbell or knock.

Calming the Doorbell Drama!

The good news is that **your dog can learn to stay calm**! They can learn to associate positive experiences with the doorbell or knocking instead of excitement or anxiety with desensitization, counter-conditioning and positive reinforcement, along with an owner's calm behavior. See the back page.

Your Dog's Behavior and Beyond



Dog Training: More Is Not Always Better!

When it comes to dog training, do you believe a long session equals a "**productive**" session?

Or is a "**successful**" training session only when a lot gets accomplished?

If you believe either of these statements, you may be unknowingly and **negatively influencing** your dog's overall learning and progress!

Learn why effective dog training depends on **observation**, **not the clock,** in this blog post from Canine Zen.

Alone at Home Pet Services

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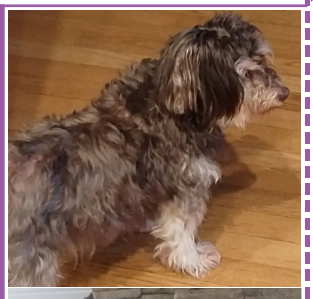

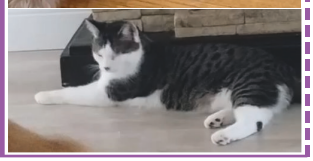

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Disclaimer: This information does not constitute professional veterinary advice. Always work with your regular licensed vet for your dog, their medical history, overall condition, age and breed.

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Veterinary Nurse



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K9 Body Language 101: Barking & Lunging

If you have a dog that gets excited and loves to bark and lunge, start training **now** while there's still plenty of time to desensitize and counter-condition your dog's unwanted barking and lunging before guests arrive!



NOTE: With **highly sensitive dog breeds**, it may be difficult to completely eliminate their tendency to overreact. It can take a few weeks to several months to notice improvements in their behavior. Some breeds, such as terriers and herding dogs, are more **naturally prone** to barking and territorial behavior.

Patience and **consistency** are crucial to improving your dog's reactive barking or lunging. Punishment and ignoring the behavior **will not help**. If your training efforts are not working or you're feeling frustrated and stressed with your dog's lack of progress, **stop and reach out to a certified dog behaviorist** for expert help.



Keep these Holiday Foods Away from Pets!

Remember the tips below to keep your family pets safe and protected **AND share** with visiting family, friends and guests!

Alcoholic drinks including eggnog, beer, wine, spirits, aperitifs, liqueurs and cocktails

Artificial sweeteners including xylitol (also known as birch sugar, birch bark extract, wood sugar, xylite, xilitol, doxylitol and zylatol. **Also** a new sugar replacement called, ***"Bocha Sweet"*** made from the Japanese Pumpkin or Kabocha Squash.

Blue cheese and other dressings

Bread dough (raw/unbaked)

Caffeine including coffee, tea, cocoa, chocolate coins (aka gelt coins)

Candy

Casseroles

Cooked bones and corn cobs

Dairy including butter, milk and cream

Desserts including fruitcake, mince pie, Christmas and plum pudding, ice cream and holiday breads

Fatty meat scraps, skin and drippings

Grapes, raisins and currants

Ham, bacon and sausage

Hanukkah desserts including Latkes (potato pancakes), Rugelach (pastry) and Sufganiyot (doughnuts)

Mushrooms

Nuts including macadamia, black walnuts and pistachios

Onions, leeks, chives and scallions

Raisins, grapes and currants

Snacks that are salty, sugary or fatty

Spices including sage, baking soda/powder, nutmeg, chili peppers, black pepper, excess cinnamon, marjoram, allspice, bay leaves, cloves, onion powder, curry and chili powder and vanilla extract

Stuffing and gravy

Do you have a dog or puppy that loves to ingest everything the second your head is turned?

Consider stocking up on the fast-acting, vet-approved and toxin-absorbing, ***"Chocolate Detox for Dogs."***

Save an expensive holiday trip to the emergency vet or hospital!

Disclaimer: This information does not constitute professional veterinary advice. Always work with your regular licensed vet for your dog, their medical history, overall condition, age and breed.

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Veterinary Nurse