

Preventing, Managing, & Treating High Arousal Behavior in Dogs

Prevention

- **Kibble Scavenger Hunt**
 - + Scatter kibbles on the ground, hide them around a room
 - + Dog is free to discover them and eat them
- **Sniffari**
 - + Dog's nose leads the walk, not the handler
- **Puzzle feeders / puzzle toys**
 - + Feed meals in puzzles instead of a bowl
- **Long-lasting chews**
 - + Chewing is calming to dogs

Low-excitement enrichment

- **Reading to the dogs from the aisle**
 - + Volunteers read aloud to the dogs
- **One-on-one quiet time with a person**
 - + Very calm activities or office-foster

Low-excitement human contact
(person nearby does not predict exciting things)

- **Reward non-aroused behavior at every opportunity**
 - + During cleaning, daily rounds, on walks, meeting adopters, at feeding time
 - + Non-aroused behavior earns food bowl, attention, treats, leashing, walks, toys

Reward non-aroused behaviors

- **Short bouts of exercise**
 - + Frequent breaks for every dog to engage in calm, alternative behaviors
 - + Calm behavior earns more play

Bouts of exercise with calming breaks



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Managing arousal once it starts

- **Move the dog to a low-traffic kennel location**
 - + *So that the excitement of human and dog traffic is reduced*
- **Move the dog away from other aroused or reactive dogs**
 - + *To reduce social facilitation*
- **Move to the top of the walking order list**
 - + *To reduce excitement build-up*
- **Move elsewhere at exciting times of day in kennel area (feeding, walking)**
 - + *To outdoor portion of double-sided kennel*
 - + *To play yard*
 - + *On a walk*
 - + *To an office*
- **Make attention predictable**
 - + *So each time a person walks by isn't an "Are you coming for me?!" moment*
 - + *Always first in walking order*
 - + *Always first to be fed*
 - + *Always out to playgroup at same time of day*
 - + *All one-on-one time at same time of day*
 - + *Also try a predictive cue when it's the dog's turn: e.g., ring small bell*

Treating high arousal (if skilled trainers are available)

Avoid accidentally reinforcing aroused behavior

- + *Don't provide any good stuff when the dog is acting aroused*
- + *Includes attention, food, treats, leashing, play, walking*

Teach self-control behaviors

- "Four On The Floor" for treats
 - + *May need to start training through kennel door (dog inside kennel)*
 - + *Progress to training sessions outside the kennel*
- "Four On The Floor" for leashing
 - + *May need to start training through kennel door (dog inside kennel)*
 - + *Make leash gradually more obvious*
 - + *Progress to leashing inside kennel*
- "Managed Tug"
 - + *Channel the motivation to tug onto an appropriate outlet*
 - + *Jumping / grabbing does not earn play*
 - + *Sit, stand, or look away earns play*

