

Leash Reactivity



Leash reactivity while out on walks with your dog can be both frustrating and overwhelming for you and your dog. Please read the [Reactivity Overview](#) page before proceeding with any training techniques. A hallmark sign of leash reactivity versus aggression is that your dog has a history of reacting well with other dogs or people without a leash compared to on a leash. Another hallmark sign of leash reactivity compared to aggression is that your dog increases negative body language or retreats if the trigger (human or animal that causes a reaction) gets closer to your dog.

Leash reactivity can come from either extreme discomfort/anxiety towards the trigger or can be frustration of not having the freedom of interacting. In either instance, it is important to work with your dog to decrease any lunging/barking/growling that you observe, in order to have more peaceful walks and a calmer dog.

Remember that reactivity usually comes from a place of anxiety and/or fear, so adding any punishment to your training is more likely to make the reactions worse than better. **It is best to work with a certified dog trainer for any reactivity issues.** For more information on how to find a trustworthy trainer, follow this link [here](#).

Training guide for Leash Reactivity:

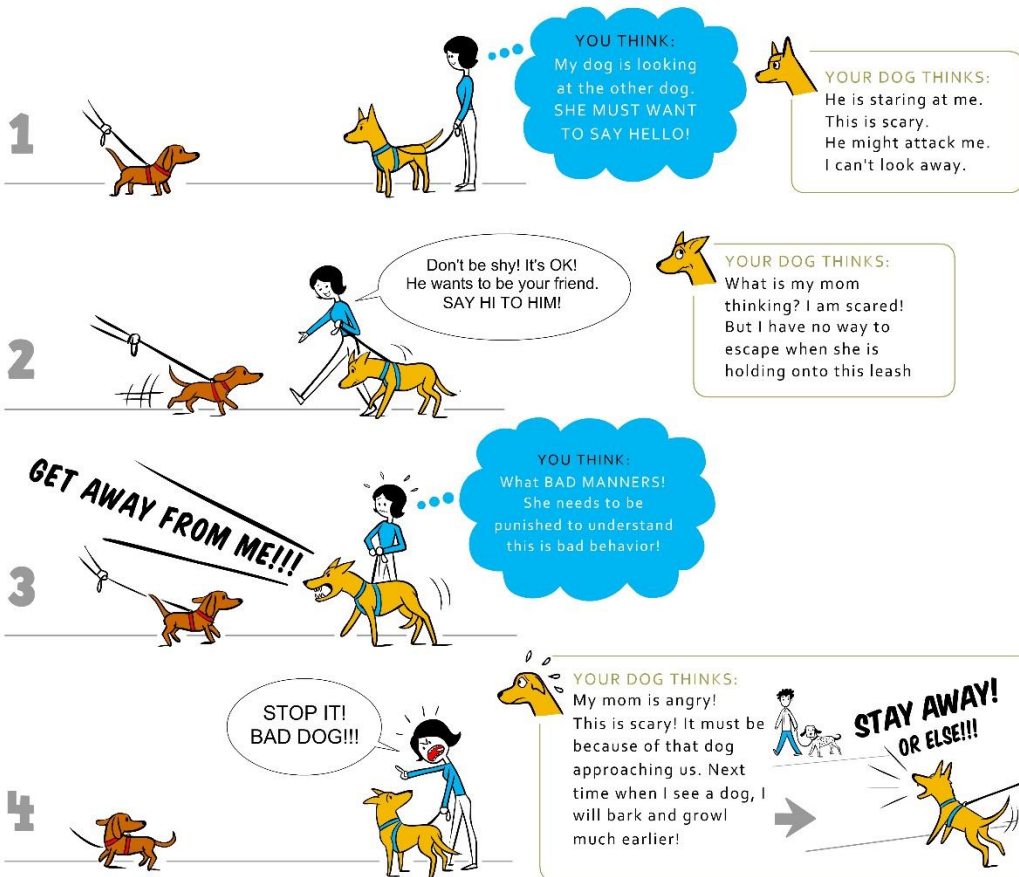
1. Try to limit your walk routine so there is less traffic during walks. This can include walking during an earlier or later time each day or choosing a less-used route. Less interactions on walks will help avoid [trigger stacking](#) and can help your dog feel less stressed during walks.
2. Pay attention to your dog's body language. Any hints of fixation, tense body postures, tail being held high and stiff, etc should be observed. Note the distance of which your dog starts to grow tense or anxious in the presence of a trigger. This distance can decrease slowly over time as you continue to work with your dog.
3. If your dog does show signs of above-mentioned body language, call your dog away from the trigger instead of pulling on the leash. Pulling on the leash while your dog is showing any fixation or tense body postures can actually prompt a negative reaction to occur. **Treat often and consistently!** Reward any relaxed body language and if your dog turns away from the trigger. It is important to always give a positive reinforcement to your dog when they come away from the trigger and/or look towards you. This helps break the hyper-focus that is normally followed by excessive reactions.
4. Walk your dog away from the trigger in order to increase distance. This may be in the opposite direction or by crossing the street. Walking your dog away from the trigger can help your dog quickly feel more at ease. Always plan for exits and watch behind you to make sure the way is clear for you and your pup.

5. If your dog starts to excessively react (i.e. barking/lunging/growling) attempt to call the dog away from the trigger as quickly as possible. This can be in conjunction with a high-value treat or clapping your hands to get their attention to move in another direction.
*Never try to interrupt their reaction with body handling (grabbing or lifting the dog) as this puts you at a great risk of bite and/or injury. It is also important to never try to pull or yank the leash to stop their reaction, since this will add more anxiety to the situation and the behaviors will often get worse.
6. Movement is key! Standing in one spot as the trigger gets closer can actually make your dog more anxious or frustrated. Try to always keep movement going on a walk to lessen the chances of a bad reaction or worsening the reaction.
7. For more information on leash reactivity, visit <https://www.calmcanineacademy.com/webinars>.

*If any bite, injury, or other emergency happens while working with your dog- please separate and contain the dog as quickly and safely as possible. If appropriate, call 9-1-1 for medical assistance and call Animal Law Enforcement at 719-302-8798 for assistance with a dangerous dog.

YOUR CHOICE Affects Your Dog's Choice.

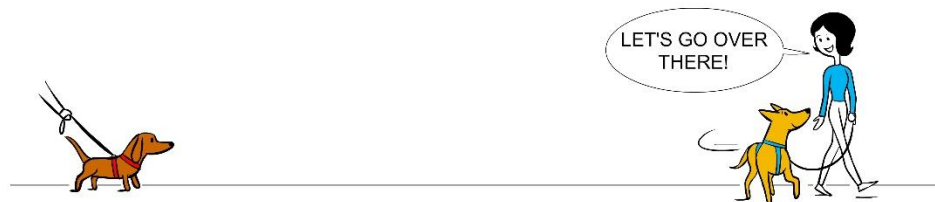
A case of BARKING at other dogs



Dogs don't always want to greet and/or play with other dogs even if they LOOK at another dog.

When they feel fear, they may find it hard to turn away.

You can choose to help your dog feel safer and prevent undesirable behavior.



In the early stages, **HELP YOUR DOG KEEP DISTANCE FROM OTHER DOGS**, or help your dog focus on something else that is pleasant - treats, a toy, or you - to avoid escalating her fearful and excited feelings. If your dog is unable to look away from the other dog and continues to react, then she needs more distance and more help. Please talk to a professional trainer using science and reward-based dog training techniques.

Your dog can make better choices if YOU make better choices!

Let's learn more about dogs and Positive Reinforcement Training!

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