

Dog 101



When dogs are left alone

Dogs are social animals and they consider you and your family members as part of their family. But the reality is, we must provide for our families by going to work. We have social or other human family demands that leave us with no other choice but to leave our dogs at home. So how do we find that balance between satisfying our human needs while supporting the behavioral and emotional needs of our dogs?



Know the behavior problems and why they occur.

Most behavior issues occur because your dog is lonely or bored. Some herding breeds such as cattle dogs, collies and shepherds or common sporting breeds like retrievers need a job or activity to do when they aren't with you.

These are some of the common signs, no matter the breed, that your dog is bored or lonely.

- **Excessive Barking:** Dogs can often engage in excessive barking to express boredom.
- **Digging:** Digging can be an outlet for dogs' frustration.
- **Escaping:** Dogs may succeed in escaping from the yard in search of companionship or cure for their disinterest in their surroundings.
- **Other Destructive Behavior:** Dogs may turn to chewing on household furniture or even doors or other parts of the home. But they also may find solace in excessive licking or chewing on their paws or body parts.

What is the solution to these problems caused by isolation?

When we make our pets part of our family we expand their world. We do this by increasing his "people time" so when he is left alone, he has had satisfying interaction with you, and knows he will have more when you return. Here are some tips to set you up for success.

When your pet needs more:

- More advanced challenges could need our help. Give us a call to discuss if your pet may benefit from other activities.
- Consider an obedience class to learn skills for mental stimulation and reinforcement of acceptable, desired behaviors. Scholarships are available.

The Basics

- **When you are home, have the dog inside the house with you, not isolated in other parts of your home or property.**
- **Let your dog sleep inside the house.**
- **Include your dog in family activities.**
- **Provide mental and physical exercise each day like walks, fetch or introducing interactive toys.**
- **Engage the entire household in the care of the pet so the pet isn't dependent on one member of the family for their socialization.**
- **Set a routine for activity that tires your pet before they have lengthy time alone.**