

# Separation Anxiety

- TIP 1:** If they're anxious before you leave the house, change your routine. (ex. if they start whining when you get your coat, get it but go sit on the couch instead)
- TIP 2:** Exercise them before you leave, so they'll have less anxious energy and will be more content to relax while you're away
- TIP 3:** Just before you leave, give them a Kong toy stuffed with treats to take their mind off your departure/avert boredom
- TIP 4:** If they enjoy music/tv, leave it on since a familiar background can help them feel secure
- TIP 5:** Try a spray/diffuser that emits a relaxing odor (Adaptil, Comfort Zone)
- TIP 6:** Try leaving for short periods of time and gradually extend them. This will help assure them that you're coming back
- TIP 7:** Crate-train them. Crate training has many benefits but must be introduced slowly and used appropriately. If they find crating stressful, try confining them to one room with a baby gate
- TIP 8:** Make your departures/returns low-key. When leaving, simply pat their head, say goodbye and leave. When arriving home, say hello and don't fuss over them until they're calm
- TIP 9:** Consider doggie daycare or arrange for a friend/dog-sitter
- TIP 10:** Consult a behavior professional if you're struggling. If they have severe separation anxiety, your vet may prescribe medication to help them cope
- TIP 11:** Never scold or punish. Their anxious behaviors aren't a reflection of disobedience or spite – they're a reflection of distress.