

REST • REDIRECT • REPEAT

PUPPY RESET

RESET BAD HABITS FAST

THE COMPLETE TRAINING SYSTEM

8 Modules • Worksheets • Daily Checklists • Case Studies • Glossary

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WELCOME

Your Dog Isn't Broken

If you're reading this, there's a decent chance you're sitting in a house that doesn't feel entirely like yours anymore. Something is chewed. Someone got jumped on. A walk that was supposed to be pleasant turned into a wrestling match. And somewhere in the back of your mind is a quiet, guilty thought you'd rather not say out loud: *maybe I'm just bad at this*.

You're not. And neither is your dog. What's missing isn't effort, patience, or love — it's an **order of operations**.

The Reframe Everything Else Depends On

Here is the single most useful idea in this entire guide, and it's worth sitting with before you read another page: **the behaviors driving you crazy are not defiance. They are normal instincts pointed in an inconvenient direction.**

Jumping is a greeting. In dog-to-dog language, faces meet faces. Your dog is trying to say hello to a face that happens to be five feet in the air. Leash pulling is not dominance — it's a dog moving at its natural pace while attached to something moving at yours. Chewing is teething, boredom, or anxiety, and the mouth is the only tool your dog has. Barking is communication: alarm, excitement, frustration, or a request.

None of those are moral failures. Every one of them has a specific, teachable redirect. That's what the eight modules ahead give you — not a pile of tips, but a sequence.

A Word On Method, Before We Start

Everything in this system is built on redirection, timing, consistency, and reward. There is no shock collar, no prong correction, no alpha rolling, no shouting a dog into submission anywhere in these pages, and there never will be.

This isn't sentimentality. Aversive methods can suppress a visible behavior while creating anxiety underneath it, and an anxious dog is a less predictable dog, not a safer one. More practically: suppression only works while you're watching. Teaching works when you're not. Since the entire point is a dog who behaves well whether or not you're standing over them, we teach.

What This Guide Covers

Eight modules, each building on the one before it:

- **Module 1 — The Reset Foundation.** Why habits form, what your dog is communicating, and the three ground rules the whole system rests on.

- **Module 2 — Quick Start: Your First 7 Days.** A day-by-day opening week with exact session lengths and what progress looks like at each stage.
- **Module 3 — Stop The Jumping.** The greeting protocol, including how to handle guests who won't follow your rules.
- **Module 4 — Fix Leash Pulling.** Equipment that helps versus hurts, and how to rebuild a walk from the driveway outward.
- **Module 5 — End Destructive Chewing.** Teething versus boredom versus anxiety — three different problems, three different fixes.
- **Module 6 — Real Obedience That Holds.** Sit, stay, come and place, taught to the standard where they survive distraction.
- **Module 7 — Calm The Barking.** Four types of barking, correctly separated, each with its own approach.
- **Module 8 — Mindset & Lasting Change.** Keeping the reset holding at month three and month twelve, and handling regression without panicking.

Then three appendices: a printable daily reset checklist, a breed-and-age adaptation reference, and a glossary of every term used in this guide.

How Long This Takes

Honest answer: longer than you want, shorter than you fear. Most owners see the first shifts in attention and focus within the opening week. The headline behaviors — jumping, pulling, barking — typically take several weeks of consistent daily work, and an established habit in an adult dog can take longer still.

The variable that matters most isn't your dog's breed, age, or history. It's whether you do a short session most days, or a long session once a week. Ten focused minutes a day beats an hour on Sunday, every single time. That's not motivational filler — it's how habit formation works.

One Last Thing Before Module 1

Get everyone in the household on the same page before you start. If you're teaching "off" and your partner is letting the dog on the couch, your dog isn't being stubborn — they're being given two contradictory rules and reasonably concluding the rule is negotiable. This is the single most common reason a good system fails. Appendix A includes a printable house-rules sheet for exactly this reason.

MODULE 1

The Reset Foundation

Before you fix a single behavior, you need to understand the machinery underneath all of them. This module is short on drills and heavy on concepts, and it's the one people are most tempted to skip. Don't. Every technique in Modules 3 through 7 is an application of what's here.

How A Habit Actually Forms

A behavior repeats because it works. That's the whole mechanism. Your dog does something, something good follows, and the behavior gets a little more likely next time. "Something good" is broader than treats — attention counts, eye contact counts, and so does a reaction.

This is why scolding a jumping dog often makes jumping worse. From the dog's side of the conversation: *I jumped, and the human immediately looked at me, made noise at me, and put their hands on me.* That is a spectacular result if what you wanted was engagement. The dog isn't ignoring your displeasure — they're not reading it as displeasure at all.

The Three Ground Rules

Everything downstream is an application of these three.

Ground Rule 1: Set The Moment Up, Don't Correct It After

Amateur training reacts. Real training arranges. If your dog jumps on guests, the work does not begin when the guest walks in — it begins two minutes earlier, when you put the leash on and position your dog. Every single module in this guide will ask you to think one step earlier than feels natural.

Ground Rule 2: Reward The Thing You Want, Not Just The Absence Of The Thing You Don't

"Stop jumping" isn't a behavior a dog can perform. "Four paws on the floor" is. "Stop pulling" isn't trainable; "walk beside my leg" is. For every problem behavior, you need to name the **replacement** behavior — the thing the dog does instead — and then reward that specifically.

Write the replacement behavior down before you begin any module. If you can't name it in a single concrete sentence, you're not ready to start that module yet.

Ground Rule 3: Consistency Beats Intensity

Ten minutes a day, six days a week, will outperform ninety minutes every Saturday by a margin that surprises most people. Short sessions keep your dog under their frustration threshold and keep the behavior fresh in memory. Long sessions produce a tired, over-faced dog and a frustrated human.

Timing: The Skill Nobody Tells You About

Your dog connects a reward to whatever they were doing roughly one to two seconds before it arrived. That window is much narrower than most owners assume, and it's where most well-intentioned training quietly falls apart.

A worked example. Your dog sits. You say "good!" You reach into your pocket. You fumble for the treat. Your dog, bored, stands up. You hand over the treat. You have just rewarded standing up. Do that twenty times and you've taught a dog that sits are followed by standing.

The fix is to have the reward already in your hand before you ask for the behavior, and to mark the moment with a consistent word — "yes" works well because it's short and you rarely say it by accident — the instant the behavior happens. The marker buys you time. Say "yes" at the exact moment of the sit, and the treat can arrive a few seconds later without confusing anything.

The Threshold Concept

Every dog has a distance or intensity at which they can still think. Closer than that, and they're reacting rather than learning. This is their threshold, and it's the most useful diagnostic tool in this guide.

If your dog can hold a sit with another dog fifty feet away but falls apart at twenty, their threshold is somewhere between the two. Training at fifty feet is productive. Training at twenty is not just useless — it actively rehearses the panic. When a session goes badly, the first question is almost always: *was I working over threshold?*

A Worked Scenario

Marcus has an eight-month-old Labrador who jumps on every visitor. For three months Marcus has been grabbing the dog's collar, saying "NO, DOWN," and pushing him off. It works for four seconds, then repeats. Marcus concludes the dog is stubborn.

Run through the three ground rules. **Rule 1:** Marcus is correcting after, never arranging before — the dog is loose at the door with no plan in place. **Rule 2:** there's no named replacement behavior; "don't jump" isn't something a dog can do. **Rule 3:** this only happens when guests come, roughly twice a week, so there's no consistent practice at all.

The revised approach: leash on before the door opens (arrange), reward for four paws on the floor and a sit (replacement behavior), and ten practice reps a day with a family member playing the role of "guest" (consistency). Same dog, same house. Different order of operations.

Common Mistakes In Module 1

- **Skipping straight to the behavior modules.** The techniques will half-work and you won't know why.
- **Repeating a cue.** "Sit. Sit. Sit-sit-sit." teaches that the real cue is the fourth one. Say it once.
- **Training an over-threshold dog.** If they can't take a treat, they can't learn. Increase distance.
- **Fading rewards too fast.** A behavior needs to be genuinely solid before it goes intermittent.

- **Training when you're frustrated.** Your dog reads tone and body tension faster than words. End the session.

WORKSHEET 1.1 — Name Your Replacement Behaviors	
Problem behavior #1 → Replacement:	
Problem behavior #2 → Replacement:	
Problem behavior #3 → Replacement:	
My dog's marker word will be:	
My dog's highest-value reward is:	
Best time of day for our 10-minute session:	

MODULE 2

Quick Start: Your First 7 Days

This module exists so that you close this guide today and actually do something. Seven days, one short session each day, building in a deliberate order. Don't jump ahead — each day assumes the previous one.

Before Day 1: Five Minutes Of Setup

- **Pick your marker word** and tell everyone in the house what it is.
- **Find your dog's real currency.** Test three things — regular kibble, something better (cheese, chicken), and a favourite toy. Rank them. Save the top one for hard work only.
- **Choose a session time** you can realistically hit six days a week. Before a meal is ideal.
- **Pick a quiet training spot** with as few distractions as possible for week one.
- **Print the daily checklist** from Appendix A and put it somewhere everyone will see it.

Day 1 — Charge The Marker (5 minutes)

Say your marker word, then immediately give a treat. Repeat twenty to thirty times. Don't ask for any behavior at all — you're building a reflex association, nothing more. By the end your dog should perk up at the word itself. That reflex is the tool every other day depends on.

What progress looks like: your dog's head snaps toward you at the marker word.

Day 2 — Capture Attention (7 minutes)

Stand quietly. Do nothing. The instant your dog voluntarily looks at your face, mark and reward. Say nothing to prompt it — you are paying for volunteered attention. Repeat for five minutes, then take a two-minute break.

This is the most underrated exercise in dog training. Every other skill requires your dog to check in with you first, and a dog who has been paid well for looking at you will look at you a great deal.

What progress looks like: the gaps between voluntary check-ins get shorter.

Day 3 — Sit, Properly (8 minutes)

Most dogs already know sit. We're rebuilding it to a higher standard: one cue, no repeats, no luring hand. Lure with a treat over the nose for the first three reps, then remove the food from your hand and use the empty gesture. Mark the instant the rear hits the floor.

What progress looks like: a sit on one word, without food visible.

Day 4 — Add Duration (8 minutes)

Ask for a sit, then count one second before marking. Then two. Then four, then two again, then six. Vary it — never build in a straight line, or your dog learns that longer always means harder and starts to bail early. If they break, you went too fast; drop back two steps.

What progress looks like: a held sit of eight to ten seconds.

Day 5 — Add Distance (8 minutes)

Sit, then take one step back and immediately return and reward. Then two steps. Distance and duration are separate skills — when you add one, reduce the other. A dog who can hold ten seconds at zero distance can usually hold two seconds at three steps. That's normal, not regression.

What progress looks like: the sit holds while you take three steps away.

Day 6 — Add A Distraction (10 minutes)

Same quiet room, but now add one mild distraction: a family member walking past, a toy on the floor, the TV on low. One distraction only. Reduce duration and distance back to easy while the distraction is new.

What progress looks like: a two-second sit while something mildly interesting happens.

Day 7 — Change The Room (10 minutes)

Move to a different room and run Day 3's exercise again, from the beginning. Your dog will look like they've forgotten everything. They haven't. Dogs generalise poorly — a skill learned in the kitchen is genuinely a new skill in the garden. Expect to re-teach in each new location for the first several. It gets faster every time.

What progress looks like: a working sit in a second location, with fewer reps than the first.

The Three-Variable Rule

You just used the rule that governs everything from here on. Every skill has three variables: **duration** (how long), **distance** (how far), **distraction** (what else is happening). Raise only one at a time. When you raise one, lower the others. Every training plateau you hit in the modules ahead will trace back to raising two at once.

Day	Focus	Time	Success marker
1	Charge the marker	5 min	Head turn on the word
2	Capture attention	7 min	Shorter gaps between check-ins
3	Rebuild sit	8 min	One cue, no food lure

4	Add duration	8 min	8–10 second hold
5	Add distance	8 min	Holds at three steps
6	Add distraction	10 min	2 seconds under mild distraction
7	Change location	10 min	Works in a second room

Common Mistakes In Week One

- **Going longer than the stated time.** Ending while your dog still wants more is the goal.
- **Raising two variables at once.** The single most common cause of a stalled week.
- **Training after a big meal or before exercise.** A full or wired dog is a distracted dog.
- **Skipping Day 2 because it feels too easy.** It's the foundation for every module that follows.

MODULE 3

Stop The Jumping

Jumping is usually the behavior that pushes owners to look for help, because it's the one other people see. It's also, mechanically, one of the more straightforward habits to change — provided you stop treating it as rudeness and start treating it as a greeting problem.

Why Jumping Is So Persistent

Two reasons, and both are about reinforcement. First, jumping has been rewarded thousands of times already — every hand that reached down, every "aww, it's fine," every laugh. Second, and more stubbornly, it's on what's called an **intermittent schedule**: it only works sometimes. Counter-intuitively, behaviors rewarded unpredictably are far more resistant to extinction than behaviors rewarded every time. It's the same mechanism that makes slot machines compelling.

The practical implication is important: your dog does not need to be jumped-on-and-rewarded often for the habit to survive. One enthusiastic guest a fortnight is enough to keep it fully alive. This is why guest management, below, is not optional.

The Replacement Behavior

Per Ground Rule 2, name it: **four paws on the floor, ideally in a sit, while a person approaches and greets**. That's the trainable thing. "Doesn't jump" is not.

The Greeting Protocol

Run this in five stages. Do not advance a stage until the current one is boring.

Stage 1 — Family, No Door (3 days)

A family member walks up to your dog calmly. If four paws stay down, they mark and reward at chest height. If the dog jumps, the person turns their back and steps away — no words, no eye contact, no hands. Wait two seconds, try again. Ten reps a session.

The silence matters. Any verbal reaction, including a stern one, is engagement, and engagement is the payout the dog is playing for. Removing yourself is the only response that removes the reward.

Stage 2 — Add The Sit (3 days)

Same drill, but now the approaching person asks for a sit as they arrive. Reward the sit. A dog who is sitting cannot simultaneously be jumping, which is why we're building an incompatible behavior rather than trying to suppress the old one.

Stage 3 — Add The Door (4 days)

The door is a separate skill. The doorbell alone has become an arousal trigger, so we defuse it first: ring your own doorbell and don't answer it. Do this fifteen times. The bell stops predicting excitement. Then add a family member actually entering, with the dog on leash.

Stage 4 — Real Guests, Leashed (2 weeks)

Leash on before the door opens, every time. You are not correcting the dog with the leash — you're preventing the rehearsal of a behavior you're trying to extinguish. Every successful jump sets you back several days, so simply don't allow the opportunity.

Stage 5 — Off Leash, Real Guests (ongoing)

Only when Stage 4 has been reliable for two solid weeks. Keep the leash on the doorknob for the next month; you'll want it occasionally, and having it within reach means you'll actually use it.

The Guest Problem

Roughly a third of your guests will say "oh, I don't mind!" and immediately undo three days of work. They aren't being difficult; they think they're being kind.

Give them a job instead of a rule. "Would you mind asking him to sit, then giving him this treat?" works far better than "please don't let him jump," because it's a positive instruction with a clear action. Keep a jar of treats by the door specifically for this. For guests who genuinely won't cooperate — small children, an overexcited relative — the dog goes behind a baby gate for the arrival, comes out after two minutes of calm, and nobody is set back.

A Worked Scenario

Rachel's six-month-old Golden jumps so persistently that Rachel's mother stopped visiting. Rachel runs Stage 1 with her partner for three days — ten reps each evening. By day three the dog is offering a sit unprompted on approach, because sitting is now the thing that reliably produces attention.

Stages 2 and 3 take another week. The doorbell desensitisation is the step Rachel almost skips, and in hindsight the one that mattered most — the bell had become a starting pistol. At Stage 4, Rachel's mother visits with the dog on leash and a treat jar by the door. Ten days later the greeting is calm without the leash. Total elapsed time: about three weeks of ten-minute evenings.

Common Mistakes

- **Kneeing the dog in the chest, or stepping on paws.** This causes pain, damages trust, and doesn't teach an alternative.
- **Shouting "down."** It's engagement, and it usually conflicts with the lie-down cue.
- **Rewarding at your own face height.** Reward low. Where the treat is, is where the dog goes.
- **Advancing stages on a schedule rather than on performance.** The dog sets the pace, not the calendar.

- **Letting one guest 'off the hook.'** Intermittent reward is exactly what keeps the habit alive.

WORKSHEET 3.1 — Greeting Protocol Tracker	
Stage 1 started ____ / completed ____	Reps per day: ____
Stage 2 started ____ / completed ____	Reps per day: ____
Stage 3 started ____ / completed ____	Doorbell reps: ____
Stage 4 started ____ / completed ____	Guests practised with: ____
Stage 5 started ____	Setbacks noted: ____

MODULE 4

Fix Leash Pulling

A walk should be the best twenty minutes of your dog's day and a genuinely pleasant part of yours. For a lot of owners it's neither. The good news is that leash pulling has an unusually clean explanation.

Why Dogs Pull

Because it works. Your dog pulls toward the interesting thing, and forward motion happens. Every step you take while the leash is tight pays for the pull. Over a year of daily walks, that's tens of thousands of reinforcements. There is no dominance in it, no defiance — just a very well-rewarded behavior and a mismatch in natural walking speed.

Equipment: What Helps, What Hurts

Equipment	Verdict	Notes
Flat collar	Fine for tags	Not ideal for a hard puller — pressure on the throat
Back-clip harness	Comfortable, but	Engages the opposition reflex; can increase pulling
Front-clip harness	Recommended	Redirects forward momentum sideways; no pain involved
Head halter	Situational	Effective for strong dogs; needs slow, careful introduction
Standard 4–6ft leash	Recommended	Predictable length is what makes training possible
Retractable leash	Not recommended	Teaches that tension produces forward motion
Prong / choke / shock	Not used here	Relies on pain or fear; excluded on both welfare and efficacy grounds

A front-clip harness is a management tool, not a cure. It buys you walks that aren't miserable while the actual training below does the real work.

The Core Drill: Direction Changes

Start in your driveway or hallway — somewhere staggeringly boring. Walk forward. The instant the leash goes tight, stop, say nothing, and turn and walk the other way. Mark and reward the moment your dog catches up to your leg.

This is repetitive and, for the first several sessions, you will cover almost no ground. That is expected and it is the point. You're rewriting the association from *tension produces forward motion* to *tension produces the opposite of what I wanted, and staying near the leg produces good things*.

The Rebuild Sequence

- **Week 1 — Indoors and driveway only.** Five minutes a day. Almost no distractions.
- **Week 2 — The end of your street and back.** Expect the standard to drop; reduce your criteria.
- **Week 3 — One quiet block.** Add the "sniff break" release cue (see below).
- **Week 4 — Normal route, quiet time of day.** Accept that some days will be worse.
- **Week 5+ — Normal route, normal time.** Maintain the drill; don't retire it.

The Sniff Break

A walk where a dog is never allowed to sniff is a frustrating walk, and frustration produces pulling. Build sniffing in deliberately as a reward rather than fighting it: pick a release word ("go sniff"), give it at a designated spot, allow sixty seconds of free sniffing, then call your dog back to heel position and continue. Now sniffing is something you grant rather than something the dog has to drag you toward — and it becomes one of your most powerful rewards.

A Worked Scenario

Dan has a year-old Border Collie mix who pulls so hard that walks have become a two-person job. Dan switches to a front-clip harness and spends week one doing direction changes in his driveway for five minutes an evening. He covers perhaps thirty metres a session and feels ridiculous.

Week two, at the end of the street, everything falls apart — more distraction, lower performance, exactly as the three-variable rule predicts. Dan reduces his criteria rather than pushing through. Week three he adds sniff breaks, which turn out to matter more than anything else, because for a high-drive breed the sniffing was the entire point of the walk. By week five the walk is a one-person job with occasional tension near squirrels, which Dan decides he can live with.

Common Mistakes

- **Starting on the real walk.** Your normal route is far too distracting for week one.
- **Yanking or 'popping' the leash.** It causes pain and teaches nothing about where to walk.
- **Talking during the direction change.** Silence makes the consequence clearer.
- **Never allowing sniffing.** Guarantees a frustrated dog and undermines the whole exercise.
- **Retiring the drill once it improves.** Keep two or three direction changes in every walk, forever.

WORKSHEET 4.1 — Weekly Walk Log

Week ____ Equipment used: _____	
Location practised:	

Direction changes per session (aim 10–15): ____	
Sniff breaks given: ____ Release word: ____	
Best moment this week:	
Hardest moment this week:	

MODULE 5

End Destructive Chewing

Chewing is the module where owners most often apply the wrong fix, because "chewing" is not one problem. It's three, and they need different responses. Diagnose before you treat.

The Three Kinds Of Chewing

Type	When it happens	Tell-tale sign	Primary fix
Teething	Roughly 3–7 months	Prefers cold, firm objects	Appropriate outlets + time
Boredom	You're home but busy; long idle stretches	Stops when you engage	Mental + physical enrichment
Anxiety	Only when alone, often near exits	Doors, frames, windows; may drool or pace	Gradual alone-time work

That third row deserves emphasis. Damage focused on doors, window frames, and crate doors — especially combined with drooling, pacing, or vocalising when you leave — is a distress signal, not misbehaviour. It is the one presentation in this guide where a certified professional behaviourist is genuinely worth the money, and severe cases may warrant a veterinary conversation.

Teething Chewing

Adult teeth push through from roughly three to seven months and it's physically uncomfortable. Your dog will chew; the only question is what. Provide multiple textures — rubber, rope, soft — and rotate them so they stay novel. A damp washcloth twisted and frozen is cheap and genuinely soothing. Keep three or four chew options in the rooms your dog actually spends time in, not in a toy box in another room.

Boredom Chewing

The mistake here is treating boredom as a physical-exercise problem. A dog who has run for an hour and then has nothing to think about is a tired dog who still chews. Mental work tires dogs disproportionately: a food puzzle, a snuffle mat, ten minutes of training, or a scatter-feed in the grass will often do more than another twenty minutes of fetch.

Try replacing one bowl-fed meal a day with a puzzle feeder or a scatter feed. It costs you nothing in time and converts a thirty-second event into a fifteen-minute one.

The Redirect Sequence

When you catch your dog chewing something they shouldn't, use this exact sequence. It takes about six seconds and it teaches, rather than merely interrupting.

- **1. Interrupt neutrally.** A cheerful noise or your dog's name. Not angry — you want their attention, not their fear.
- **2. Offer the correct item.** Present an approved chew, ideally something better than what they had.
- **3. Mark and praise the swap.** The instant they take the right item, mark it.
- **4. Let them settle with it.** Give thirty seconds of chewing the right thing before you move on.
- **5. Remove the wrong item** once your dog is engaged elsewhere, not by tugging it away first.

Step 5 matters more than it looks. Snatching an item out of a dog's mouth is the reliable way to create resource guarding — a much harder problem than chewing. Always trade up, never take.

Why Punishing After The Fact Never Works

You come home, find a destroyed shoe, and your dog looks guilty. It's a compelling scene and it's misread almost universally. Your dog cannot connect your current displeasure to an act committed two hours ago — the association window is a second or two, not hours. What you're seeing is an appeasement response to *your current body language*: you're tense, so they're placating.

The practical outcome of scolding after the fact is a dog who becomes anxious when you come home, with the chewing entirely unchanged. Management — confinement, removal of temptation, adequate enrichment — is the only thing that works retroactively.

Puppy-Proofing That Teaches

There's a difference between hiding everything forever and managing an environment while training catches up. The goal is to remove opportunities during the learning phase and then reintroduce gradually, rather than living in a permanently stripped house.

- Confine to a dog-proofed space when unsupervised, and make that space genuinely pleasant.
- Keep shoes and remotes out of reach for now — every successful theft rehearses the habit.
- Cover or block cables. This one is a safety issue, not a training one.
- Reintroduce one item at a time, supervised, once redirects are reliable.

Common Mistakes

- **Giving an old shoe as a chew toy.** Dogs don't distinguish old shoes from new ones.
- **Punishing after the fact.** Creates anxiety, changes nothing.
- **Treating anxiety chewing as boredom.** More exercise won't touch a distress response.
- **Snatching items away.** Trade up instead, or you'll create guarding.
- **Leaving all toys out all the time.** Rotate; novelty is most of a toy's value.

MODULE 6

Real Obedience That Holds

Plenty of dogs "know" sit. Far fewer will sit when a squirrel crosses the garden. This module is about the difference — taking cues from a quiet-kitchen party trick to something that holds when it actually matters.

The Three D's, Formally

You met these in Module 2. Here's the discipline: **duration**, **distance**, and **distraction** are raised one at a time, and when you raise one you lower the other two. A dog holding a thirty-second stay in the kitchen is roughly a five-second stay in the garden. That isn't backsliding — it's a new context, and contexts are learned separately.

Sit

Rebuilt in Module 2. The standard: one verbal cue, no hand lure, held until released. Add your release word now — "okay" or "free" — and use it every single time. A stay that ends whenever the dog feels like it isn't a stay; the release is what defines it.

Down

Lure from a sit: treat to the nose, then straight down to the floor between the front paws, then slightly forward. Mark the moment elbows touch. Some dogs resist lying down on hard or cold floors, which reads as stubbornness and is actually a surface preference — try a rug.

Fade the lure by rep four. If you're still waving food at rep twenty, you've taught "follow the food," not "down."

Stay

Stay is not a separate posture — it's duration applied to sit or down, plus a release. Build it in a deliberately jagged pattern: one second, three, two, five, three, eight. Random progression keeps the dog guessing in a productive way. Linear progression teaches them to anticipate the breaking point and pre-empt it.

Return to your dog to reward, at least at first. If you always call them to you for the treat, you're rewarding the coming, and the stay quietly erodes.

Come (Recall)

The most important cue in this guide, and the one most commonly ruined. Three rules, and they are close to absolute.

- **Never call your dog to something they dislike.** Not to nail trims, not to the bath, and never to be told off. Go and get them for those. One negative recall can undo months.
- **Never call a recall you can't enforce.** If they might not come, use a long line so the cue always ends in success. A cue that sometimes gets ignored teaches that it's optional.
- **Pay recall better than anything else.** This is where the highest-value reward from Module 2 lives. Recall should be the best financial decision your dog makes all day.

Build it on a long line for the first several weeks: say the word once, reel gently if needed, throw a party when they arrive. Practise ten times a day in low-stakes moments, so the cue isn't only used in emergencies.

Place

"Place" means go to a specific bed or mat and stay there until released. It's the most practically useful cue in the whole system — it solves door greetings, dinner-table begging, and general underfoot chaos in one move, and it gives an over-stimulated dog somewhere to decompress.

Teach it by rewarding any interaction with the mat, then only stepping on it, then all four paws, then lying down, then duration. Then distance — sending from across the room. Then distraction — the doorbell. It's the three D's again, applied to a mat.

Proofing: The Step Everyone Skips

A cue isn't finished when it works. It's finished when it works in eight different places, with three levels of distraction, from two body positions, after a distraction has already occurred. That sounds excessive until the first time your dog holds a stay while a cyclist goes past.

Proofing level	Example	Target
Level 1 — Home, quiet	Kitchen, nobody else in	20 sec / 5 steps
Level 2 — Home, activity	TV on, someone cooking	15 sec / 4 steps
Level 3 — Garden	Outdoor sounds, smells	10 sec / 3 steps
Level 4 — Quiet street	Occasional passer-by	8 sec / 3 steps
Level 5 — Busy area	Other dogs at distance	5 sec / 2 steps

Common Mistakes

- **No release word.** Without one, your dog decides when the stay ends. That's not a stay.
- **Calling a recall you can't back up.** Long line, every time, until it's solid.
- **Raising two D's at once.** The most common cause of a stall in this module.

- **Practising only in one room.** Eight locations, minimum, before you call it proofed.
- **Using recall to end fun.** Occasionally call, reward, and release back to play.

WORKSHEET 6.1 — Proofing Matrix	
Cue: _____ Level reached: ____ Date: _____	
Cue: _____ Level reached: ____ Date: _____	
Cue: _____ Level reached: ____ Date: _____	
Cue: _____ Level reached: ____ Date: _____	
Locations practised (aim 8):	

MODULE 7

Calm The Barking

Barking frustrates owners more than almost anything else, partly because it's relentless and partly because generic advice fails so reliably. It fails because "barking" describes four different problems that happen to make the same noise.

Identify Which One You Have

Type	Trigger	Body language	Approach
Alert	Doorbell, passers-by, noises outside	Alert, forward-leaning, ears up	Acknowledge, then redirect
Demand	Wants food, attention, a door opened	Faces you directly, may paw or nudge	Ignore completely, reward silence
Frustration	Sees something it can't reach	Straining forward, tense body	Increase distance; work under threshold
Anxiety	Being left alone	Pacing, drooling, destruction near exits	Gradual alone-time work; consider a professional

Alert Barking (Doorbell, Window, Passers-By)

Your dog is doing a job: something happened, and they're reporting it. Fighting the instinct is slow going; acknowledging and then closing the loop is much faster.

- **Acknowledge it.** Walk over, look where they're looking, say "thank you" calmly. The report has been received.
- **Redirect to a known behavior.** "Place" is ideal here — a job that's incompatible with barking at the window.
- **Reward the quiet** that follows, not the silence you demanded mid-bark.
- **Manage the environment.** Window film or moving the sofa away from the front window removes half the triggers.
- **Desensitise the doorbell** exactly as in Module 3 — ring it, don't answer, repeat until boring.

Demand Barking

This one is simple to describe and hard to do: it has to be ignored completely, and it will get worse before it gets better.

*That worsening has a name — an **extinction burst**. A behavior that used to work stops working, so the dog escalates before giving up. If you cave during the burst, you've now taught that louder and longer is what pays. This is genuinely the hardest single moment in the whole system, and knowing it's coming is most of what gets people through it.*

Ignore means fully: no eye contact, no talking, no sighing, no looking over. Then, the moment there is a gap of silence — even two seconds — mark and reward. You're not teaching "barking doesn't work." You're teaching "quiet works better."

Frustration Barking

Your dog sees a dog across the street and erupts. This is threshold work, straight out of Module 1. At the distance where they're barking, they're over threshold and not learning anything except how to bark at dogs.

Find the distance where your dog notices the trigger but can still take a treat and respond to their name. That's your working distance, however absurdly far it seems. Reward calm looking at that distance, and close the gap over weeks — a metre or two at a time, dropping back whenever the barking returns.

Anxiety Barking

Barking that only happens when your dog is alone, particularly with pacing, drooling, or damage near exits, is separation distress. Treat it as a welfare issue rather than a training annoyance.

The outline of the work is gradual: departures so short they don't register (picking up keys, stepping outside for five seconds), built up in tiny increments over weeks, always staying below the point where distress begins. Mild cases respond well. Moderate and severe cases genuinely warrant a certified separation-anxiety professional, and your vet should be involved — this is one of the few areas where a book, including this one, is not enough on its own.

The "Quiet" Cue

Once you've addressed the underlying type, a quiet cue is useful. Counter-intuitively, the easiest route is to teach barking on cue first — a behavior you can turn on is one you can turn off. Get a bark, name it ("speak"), reward. Then wait for the pause, name that ("quiet"), reward. Build duration on the quiet.

Never shout the quiet cue. To a barking dog, a raised human voice sounds like joining in.

A Worked Scenario

Marcus has a nine-month-old Beagle who barks at the front window constantly. He assumes it's boredom and adds a second daily walk. No change — because it was alert barking, and a well-exercised dog alerts just as reliably.

Re-diagnosed: he applies window film to the lower half of the glass, which removes most of the triggers outright, and teaches "place" on a bed positioned away from the window. When barking does start, he walks over, looks, says "thank you," and cues place. It takes about five weeks rather than the two he hoped for — Beagles are vocal by design, and the realistic goal was fewer, shorter episodes rather than silence.

Common Mistakes

- **Applying one fix to all four types.** Diagnose first; the table above is the whole game.
- **Caving during the extinction burst.** Teaches that escalation works.
- **Shouting.** Reads as participation.
- **Working over threshold on frustration barking.** Rehearses the exact behavior you're removing.
- **Expecting zero barking.** Barking is normal communication; the goal is proportionate, not silent.

MODULE 8

Mindset & Lasting Change

Most training programmes end when the behavior improves. That's the point at which most training quietly falls apart, which is why this module exists.

Regression Is Normal, And It Has A Shape

Progress is not a line. It's a staircase with dips. Your dog will have a brilliant week, then a day where everything you taught seems to have evaporated. This is not failure and it doesn't mean the system stopped working.

*Common causes of a bad day: an environment change, a disrupted routine, a household stressor, insufficient sleep (adult dogs need a great deal, puppies more), or something physical. That last one is worth flagging — **a sudden, unexplained behavior change deserves a vet visit before a training plan.** Pain, thyroid issues, and declining eyesight or hearing all present as "behavioral" problems.*

The response to a bad day is boring and effective: drop your criteria for a session or two, get some easy wins, and carry on. Don't escalate, don't drill harder, don't start over.

The Maintenance Rhythm

Once behaviors are solid, you don't stop — you shift into maintenance, which is much lighter.

- **Daily:** two or three minutes of cues woven into normal life. A sit before the food bowl. A place cue while you cook.
- **Weekly:** one ten-minute session in a new location. This is what stops skills narrowing back to the kitchen.
- **Monthly:** revisit whichever behavior was your hardest. Run one refresher session before it slips.
- **Ongoing:** keep rewards intermittent but real. A behavior that's never paid eventually stops being offered.

The Whole-Household Problem

The most common cause of a system failing isn't the dog or the technique. It's two people applying different rules. A dog given contradictory information doesn't split the difference — they conclude the rule is situational and test which human is which.

Have a five-minute conversation and write the answers down: Is the dog allowed on furniture? Who feeds, and when? What's our marker word? What's our release word? Are table scraps allowed, ever? Who does the daily session? Appendix A has a printable version to stick on the fridge.

Realistic Expectations, By Behavior

Behavior	First signs	Typically reliable	Notes
Attention / focus	2–4 days	2 weeks	Fastest win; build here first
Sit / down	1 week	3–4 weeks	Proofing is most of the timeline
Jumping	1 week	3–6 weeks	Guest consistency is the variable
Leash pulling	1–2 weeks	5–8 weeks	High-drive breeds take longer
Chewing	1 week	4–8 weeks	Teething resolves partly with age
Recall	1 week	8–12 weeks	Never rush off-leash
Barking	2 weeks	4–10 weeks	Varies hugely by type and breed

These are ranges from consistent daily work, not promises. Age, history, breed and household consistency all move them.

What Success Actually Looks Like

Not a robot. Not a dog who never makes a mistake. The realistic target is a dog who **checks in with you when they're unsure** — who, at the moment of decision, glances at you rather than acting alone. That's what all of this has really been building.

A dog who looks at you before deciding is a dog you can take places. Everything else is detail.

APPENDIX A

The Daily Reset Checklist

Print this page and put it where the whole household will see it. The fridge works. Somewhere hidden does not.

DAILY — takes about 12 minutes total

■ 10-minute focused training session (one skill only)	
■ 3 × sits woven into normal life (before food, before door, before lead)	
■ 1 × recall practice in a low-stakes moment	
■ 1 × enrichment feed (puzzle, snuffle mat, or scatter feed)	
■ 2–3 direction changes on today's walk	
■ Ended every session while the dog still wanted more	

WEEKLY

■ One session in a brand-new location	
■ Rotated the chew-toy selection	
■ Reviewed the log — what improved, what stalled?	
■ Household check-in: is everyone still using the same rules?	

HOUSE RULES — agree these once, write them down

Marker word:	Release word:	
Furniture allowed? Y / N	Beds allowed? Y / N	
Table scraps? Y / N	Who feeds, and when:	
Greeting rule at the door:		
Who runs the daily session:		

Dog's designated 'place' is:	
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30-DAY PROGRESS LOG	
Week 1 — biggest win / biggest struggle:	
Week 2 — biggest win / biggest struggle:	
Week 3 — biggest win / biggest struggle:	
Week 4 — biggest win / biggest struggle:	
Behavior that improved most:	
Behavior needing another 30 days:	

APPENDIX B

Breed & Age Adaptations

The principles in this guide don't change between dogs. The **pacing** and the **motivation** do. Use this as a tuning guide, not as a set of stereotypes — individual dogs vary far more than breed averages suggest.

By Age

Age	Session length	Key adjustment
8–16 weeks	3–5 min, 3× daily	Very short attention span; prioritise socialisation and handling
4–7 months	5–8 min, 2× daily	Teething peak; adolescence begins; expect regression
7–18 months	10 min, 1–2× daily	Adolescence proper — the hardest stage. Consistency matters most here
18 months–7 yrs	10–15 min daily	Prime learning years; can handle longer, harder sessions
7+ years	8–10 min daily	Watch joints and stamina; rule out pain before assuming stubbornness

Adolescence deserves a warning. Somewhere between seven and eighteen months, many owners feel their dog has forgotten everything and become deliberately difficult. This is developmental and it is temporary. The dogs who come out of it well are the ones whose owners kept the routine going through it rather than concluding the training failed.

By Type

Group (examples)	Tendency	Adaptation
Herding (Collie, Aussie, Kelpie)	High drive, needs a job, may chase movement	Add mental work to every session; give a legitimate outlet for the chase instinct
Sporting (Lab, Retriever, Spaniel)	Food-motivated, sociable, slow to mature	Easy to train, easy to overfeed — use kibble from the daily ration
Terrier (Jack Russell, Staffie)	Independent, persistent, high prey drive	Short, high-energy sessions; make yourself more interesting than the environment
Working / Guardian (Rottweiler, Mastiff)	Alert, strong, slower to arouse	Start leash work early while size is manageable; alert barking needs early management
Toy (Chihuahua, Pomeranian)	Often under-trained because size hides it	Train exactly as you would a large dog; jumping and barking still need the full force of correction
Scent hounds (Beagle, Basset)	Nose overrides ears; vocal by design	Long-line recall work for much longer; use scent games as the reward

Rescue / unknown	History unknown; may have specific fears	Go slower. Let them decompress for weeks before formal training. Build trust.
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Adult And Rescue Dogs

Nothing in this guide is puppy-only. The mechanics of habit formation are identical at four years old. What changes is that an established habit has more repetitions behind it, so the replacement needs more repetitions to overtake it — usually somewhere between one and a half and two times the timelines in Module 8.

With rescue dogs specifically, resist the urge to start training on day one. Give two to three weeks of low-pressure settling first. A dog who is still decompressing cannot learn well, and the relationship you build in those weeks makes everything afterwards faster.

APPENDIX C

Glossary

Aversive

Anything the dog finds unpleasant, painful, or frightening, used to suppress a behavior. Not used anywhere in this system.

Capturing

Rewarding a behavior the dog offers on their own, without prompting. Used in Module 2's attention exercise.

Counter-conditioning

Changing an emotional response to a trigger by pairing it with something good — the mechanism behind the frustration-barking work.

Cue

The word or signal that asks for a behavior. Said once. Repeating it teaches the dog to wait for the repetition.

Desensitisation

Gradual exposure to a trigger at an intensity low enough not to provoke a reaction, then slowly increasing. Used for doorbells and alone-time work.

Extinction burst

The temporary escalation of a behavior when it stops being rewarded. Expected, and the point at which most owners accidentally cave.

Generalisation

Applying a learned skill to new places and contexts. Dogs do this poorly by default, which is why Module 6 insists on eight locations.

Incompatible behavior

Something the dog physically cannot do at the same time as the problem behavior — sitting instead of jumping.

Intermittent reinforcement

Rewarding only sometimes. Makes behavior far more durable — useful for maintenance, disastrous for habits you're trying to remove.

Luring

Guiding a dog into position with food. Effective for the first few reps; a trap if you never fade it.

Marker

A short, consistent word ("yes") that pinpoints the exact instant of a correct behavior and bridges the gap to the reward.

Opposition reflex

The instinct to push against pressure. Why a back-clip harness can increase pulling in some dogs.

Place

A cue meaning go to a specific mat and stay there until released. The most practically useful cue in this system.

Proofing

Deliberately testing a cue across locations, distractions, and body positions until it holds reliably.

Redirect

Interrupting a behavior and immediately offering an acceptable alternative, then rewarding the swap.

Release word

The word that formally ends a stay ("okay", "free"). Without it, the dog decides when the stay is over.

Resource guarding

Defensive behavior around food, toys, or space. Often created by taking items away rather than trading up.

Shaping

Rewarding successive approximations of a behavior, building it in small steps rather than waiting for the finished product.

Threshold

The distance or intensity at which a dog can still think and respond rather than react. Train under it, always.

Three D's

Duration, distance, distraction — the three variables of any cue. Raise one at a time.

Trade up

Swapping an item the dog has for something better, rather than removing it by force.

FINALLY

Start Tonight

You now have the entire system. The temptation at this point is to read it again, plan thoroughly, and begin properly on Monday. Don't. Every day the current habits run is another day of repetitions reinforcing them.

Go and do Day 1 of Module 2. It takes five minutes and requires nothing but treats and your dog's attention. That's the whole ask.

And keep the frame from page one in mind on the hard days: your dog is not being difficult. They're doing what has always worked, in the only language they have. You're not fixing a broken animal. You're teaching a willing one what you'd prefer — and dogs, given a clear and consistent answer, are remarkably good at taking it.

PuppyReset is an educational training programme. Results vary significantly based on your dog's age, breed, temperament, history, and the consistency with which the system is followed, and no specific outcome is guaranteed. This guide is not veterinary care and is not a substitute for professional advice. Consult your veterinarian about any sudden or unexplained change in behavior, which can have medical causes. Seek a certified professional behaviourist for aggression, bite history, or moderate-to-severe separation anxiety. Never use any training method that causes your dog pain, fear, or distress.

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