



DOGS AND LOUD NOISES

If your dog is afraid of loud noises, such as thunderstorms or firecrackers, you may need some advanced training to help him overcome his fears. This training can also be used for dogs who are afraid of doorbells, sirens, motorcycles, etc.

If your dog is afraid of more than one noise, start by determining which scares him the most, and work on this first.

Record the sound that scares your dog. Then expose him to the sound gradually by playing the recording at a volume low enough so as not to frighten him. While he hears the unpleasant sound, create a pleasant environment by using food, a toy, a gentle touch, or lavish praise. Each time your dog calms down and stops paying attention to the sound, praise him and increase the volume slightly.

If your dog does not relax and you have waited a few minutes, turn the volume down. When he is relaxed, praise him, give him a treat and keep the recording at that volume for at least five minutes before increasing the volume again.

Begin with short sessions, but increase the volume of the recording at each new session. Over a period of time, lengthen the sessions until your dog is capable of facing the recorded noise at a level similar to the real thing.

If possible, expose your dog to the real stimulus gradually. For example, if your dog is afraid of firecrackers or lawn mowers, create that sound 100 yards away. Calm him and get him accustomed to the sound. Gradually decrease the distance of the sounds until he doesn't respond to the sound occurring in front of his home.

Remember to keep your dog on a leash while doing these practice sessions. If you do not have control of your dog and he is scared, he could run off.

Your dog can overcome his fears if you gradually expose him to the stimulus that scares him. If you need further help, contact a local AKC dog training club. With time and patience, these fears are treatable.

For more information or contact information for a purebred dog club in your area, visit www.akc.org.



AMERICAN
KENNEL CLUBSM