

Behavior Modification

1. Eliminate anxiety eliminating cues including sensory and social cues

a. be proactive instead of reactive

- exhibit no physical threats, never punish vocally or physically.
- train for independence using sit, stay and NILIF

http://www.bigdogsbighearts.com/Nothing_In_Life_Is_Free.pdf, and teaching your dog to Say Please <http://www.bigdogsbighearts.com/Document2.pdf>,

b. Only reward calm, ignore attention seeking behaviors, and redirect to calm promptly.

c. Do daily habituation: practice the routine you normally do when you leave: grab keys, put on coat, etc., but don't go anywhere. Repeat until the dog stays calm or is tired of getting excited when you initiate departure cues.

d. Practice fake departure often and for a various period of time ie. watching tv or working on the computer.

2. Identify a valuable separation distractor. Pair a distractor with a safe haven near the exit: crate, bed or mat where the dog can settle on their own or on command.

Use several different feeding devices such as: Kong, Twist-N-Treat, antlers, marrow bones - rotate them and stow them away when home

3. Change the significance of departure and return

a. an hour before departure exercise the dog and allow for a chance for elimination

b. 20-30 minutes before departure give a feeding distractor and ignore the dog (no looking, talking or touching)

c. leave without saying goodbye

d. when returning ignore the dog (no looking, talking or touching) until they say "please" by sitting, then reward the behavior profusely

e. remove the feeding distractors from the safe haven so the dog wants you to leave again.

Also here is a link to a good video <http://abrionline.org/search.php> Search separation anxiety, it's the first one