

STRANGER DANGER

Stranger danger is a very common issue for dogs and their humans. Below are some guidelines to help.



Stranger danger is a common issue with some dogs.

Lunging, growling, barking, etc. when strangers approach is a dog's way of telling you they are not comfortable.

The thing to remember is that strangers are scary to the dog so we have to change the association the dog has with strangers.

To change this we use very high value foods, distance, proper management and a helpful stranger.

1. If you are at home and a stranger is coming to the door, put your dog on a leash so that you can remove him/her from the situation easily if needed.

2. Place a container with high value foods at the door. Have the stranger come in and remain at least 5 feet away from the stranger with your dog. The stranger should stand sideways and using an underhand toss, throw a high value piece of food behind the dog without talking to the dog or making direct eye contact.

NOTE: If your dog is already lunging and growling, create more distance by moving your dog back. Never remove the stranger. Remove the dog.

3. Have the stranger toss a treat underhanded behind your dog and watch your dog. If your dog eats the treat and starts to come toward the stranger (not in a lunging fashion, but approaching) have the stranger toss another treat behind the dog. Repeat for a few minutes then have the dog stay on leash beside you OR put the dog in another room with something yummy to eat.

It takes time and consistency to change the association. Keep with it and things will get better. Always watch your dog. They will tell you with their body language whether they want to interact with the stranger. If they say no, that is ok. Honor what your dog is telling you.



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