



## 4th of July Tips & Techniques to keep your dog safe and relaxed.

1. Begin talking with your dog about what is coming up. Daily. Walk them through what to expect, your plans for them, practice and expose them to the techniques so you know what work bests with your dog.
2. Your dog won't enjoy the fireworks or the big crowded neighborhood party where people are setting of firecrackers. Leave him at home where he will be much more comfortable and safer.
3. Have someone stay with your dog and keep your dog inside on this day to keep him relaxed & safe.
4. Keep blinds and curtains and windows shut. Lock dog doors and escort on a lead when going out for bathroom duties.
5. Do not let your dog outside unattended or fenced in.
6. A tired dog is an easier dog. Before the festivities get going, take your dog out and get some extensive exercise so he gets rid of excess energy and will be more relaxed and even nap later.
7. Thunder shirts may be effective at calming dogs. Some dogs dislike the Velcro. An alternative is a t-shirt. Tie it snug but not tight on their back. Compression wraps work as well.
8. Calming Rescue remedy used: with a diffuser; add a few drops into the water bowl and then fill with water; under the tongue; or in the palm of the hand and rub on chin and chest. When putting on dog directly give 1-2 drops for small dogs and up to 5-8 for large breeds. This activates in 15-20 minutes. It gently calms most animals. Repeat as needed.
9. Having lavender or other calming essential oils or blends being diffused in the area of your dog helps calm everyone.
10. Allow a safe spot for your dog – non-external walled space without windows or doors such as your closet with your familiar smells or a familiar safe basement area, bathroom or other den-like areas - a covered crate with the door open, under a coffee table or small dogs like under a bed (or covers) Perhaps your dog already has selected one. Do not shut a door completely and trap your dog. This could scare him even more and he could injure himself trying to escape the fearful noises.
11. Turn on the TV to low-key turner classic or excitable but normal ESPN for sports fans. Have on slightly louder than normal volume. Review the shows on that station to avoid all fireworks presentations.
12. Record the family sounds of a typical evening and play it on a continuous loop while your dog stays home without you on the 4<sup>th</sup>.
13. Provide a long lasting treat such as a real raw cow bone femur (available at most meat departments, just ask for the dog bones and pick the appropriate size. Some dogs do not need the



marrow and it can be removed prior to giving to your dog.) Another good choice is a frozen stuffed Kong (filled with kibble or dog-friendly crunchy veggies and a small amount of peanut butter, or spray cheese, or cream cheese to mix together; pack Kong and set large hole up in freezer) set on counter about 10 minutes before use to get the “freeze” off the Kong.



14. Provide plenty of clean water throughout the day. July is hot and if your dog is nervous and panting, he'll be extra thirsty.
15. Play with your dog to distract him.
16. Use a large blanket to play hide and seek and wrap him up in the “warm, soft, cocoon” of your love. Some dogs really love this.
17. What works best is often a combination of all the above. It's best to be prepared with many tools to be able to offer choices and determine what works best for your dog at any given moment.
18. It is important that you initiate these techniques before the event to see what works for your dog. You are establishing a program for your dog while paying attention to what works best and it may change over time. What worked last year may not work this year.
19. It is good for you to practice being calm as well. Dogs pick up cues from those around them. If you are relaxed and easy, those around you feel it and it helps them.
20. Avoid using phrases such as "It's ok" and stroking them. This may actually reinforce the behavior! Instead act normally and pet your dog :- ) and talk normally even to someone else and you are indirectly providing calm to your dog in a positive manner. Positive and upbeat interaction goes a long way.
21. Make sure your dog's ID tags have current information and are on dog's collar. Review contact information for correctness on microchip, tattoo and dog license sites. Take current pictures, both headshot and full body of your dog just in case.
22. Check in with your dog throughout the day and make adjustments as helpful. Your dog will appreciate your loving and compassionate care.
23. White noise is helpful for some dogs. Turn on a fan, run the air conditioner or use your sleep white noise machine.
24. If your dog has a severe case of phobia or terror with the fireworks and firecrackers, talk with your vet well before the holiday about the possibility of using medications. Often it takes time to get the benefits of medication and to make sure it is helpful for your dog.
25. Never leave your dog in a car. Overheating in a hot car can happen in minutes causing brain damage or death. A fearful dog could hurt himself by trying to get out and away from sights and sounds of fireworks.
26. After the celebrations check your property for fireworks debris or toxic foodstuffs if you had guests or ate outside.
27. BEST ACTION is preventing sound fears by utilizing Sound Socialization Training. People may want to get additional consulting for special cases. Begin now and next 4<sup>th</sup> of July, you and your dog may be relaxed and at ease.

