



Stranger Danger

Stranger Danger			
Requirements – Treats, Harness and Lead			
Optional – Control and Management may require the dog to have a muzzle			
Reminder – Marker Word is GOOD! Or Clicker 'Click'			
Current Behaviour	Fearful or aggressive towards strangers	Goal Behaviour	Accepts strangers being in their space and are relaxed
<p><i>This is a counter conditioning technique that needs to be done gradually</i></p> <p><i>There is NO EXPECTATION on the part of the human to make 'friends'</i></p> <p><i>There is NO EXPECTATION on the part of the dog to make 'friends'</i></p> <p><i>Use the metric (data collection sheet) to monitor progress and different situations</i></p> <p>With the dog under control and some of their favourite treats the following is a way that may take a few months. Remember some dogs find touch aversive from humans and children outside of their family and will protect themselves.</p> <p>If the dog needs a muzzle then use Chirag Patel's video to gain positive associations with it</p>			
Preparation	Dog is placed in their harness and on a lead (control and management) The dogs favourite treats are available The person has a non-confrontational body language – better sitting and not 'facing' the dog head on – no looking at the dog other than sides ways glances, no reaching for the dog, no talking to the dog. Owners are the handlers		
Step 1	Stranger comes in and if the dog barks the owner does the Reflex to Name and rewards. If the dog is not paying attention then just toss some tasty bits onto the floor – this usually elicits the dog taking up the treats. The person stays where they are and the owner keeps tossing treats over their head. This is facilitating a positive association with the appearance of the stranger Repeat this a few times then allow the dog to relax, get a drink, or go potty.		
Step 2	Repeat this exercise observing your dogs body language and where there may be indicators of signs of stress (See Appendix Signs of Stress) Repeat the cycle of few times of the stranger going out and coming in (observe any arousal levels with your signs of stress in your dog) Give the dog a break to relax and relieve themselves or a drink		



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Step 3	<p>Once you gain your criteria for moving on then add the stranger coming in and sitting down at the furthest point from you.</p> <p>Repeat 5 repetitions of 5 sets of stranger coming in sitting down. The stranger goes out in between repetitions</p> <p>Give the dog a break to relax and have a drink, or potty</p>
Step 4	<p>Repeat Step 3 a few times over the course of a few days where possible</p> <p>When you change the stranger go back to Step 1! As it's a new distraction that they must be proofed.</p>
Step 5	<p>Once your dog becomes relaxed where the stranger can come into the room sit down and they look to you to start the 'rain of treats', and your data is indicating 4/5 treats have the right response, then move to step 6</p>
Set up	<p>Reiterate – owner is responsible for the dog and the safety of the strangers. Stranger has some treats in a box or treat pouch</p>
Step 6	<p>Start the process with Step 3 and 4 one set of each (5 tries each set)</p> <p>Give a break and begin again</p> <p>Allow the dog to relax, drink and potty</p>
Step 7	<p>Then you and the dog step toward the seated person</p> <p>Person throws some treats in front of the dog either to the side (dog should not move nearer at this point as this causes a conflict – they want the food-stranger is there though)</p> <p>Dog looks at stranger – cue to throw the treat (repeat 5 reps of the sets)</p> <p>If the dog easily moves forward and body language is relaxed (see Signs of Relaxed body language) t</p> <p>Note the distance and after a few more rep sets</p> <p>Owner gains dog's attention with the touch and moves the dog away, as stranger gets up and leaves (avoid person getting up whilst dog is close)</p>



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Step 8	Over time you repeat step 6 and 7 Over a long time observing any changes in physiology (dogs body language) it may be that you have also done sufficient touch exercises where the stranger that has lots of positive associations with is able to offer a hand signal after the distance
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Caveat – a dog responds by its defence mechanism if it feels that it does not have a choice or is conflicted the dog may nip or go back a few steps – which is to be avoided. Avoid forcing the dog, they learn over many repetitions and don't necessarily generalise this stranger is ok, so this one must be.

It's worth having a stranger dress up too 😊 – fireman, policeman, clown, vet, vet nurse, etc.