

Noise Desensitisation Programme



How to prepare in advance.....

Try to start this programme at least a month before **fireworks** are expected.

But remember that fireworks are no longer confined to November 5!

The trick is to associate firework noise with something nice for your dog, so he gets excited and happy, rather than scared whenever he hears it. This is done by playing firework noise quietly whenever he's enjoying himself.

Here's what you need to do:

Obtain a good quality recording of firework noises –

We have 'Firework CDs' available to purchase at **Park Vets**

List those things which your dog loves most in life and makes him excited:

-For example, feeding; picking up his lead; greeting him in the morning; returning home having been out without him.

Next wait until your dog is relaxed, then play the CD at the lowest volume.

Watch your dog as you slowly turn up the volume until he acknowledges that he can hear it- maybe by lifting an ear, but not by showing fear.

Reduce this volume by one notch. Note this volume and turn the CD off.

For the next two weeks, every day switch on the stereo at this set volume, just before one of the events that make your dog naturally excited.

Leave the CD on all the time your dog is naturally excited, switching it off again once the excitement dies down.

On completion of the above, the dog should be showing no fear when the CD is playing at the set volume, but instead should be associating the noise with the exciting events on your list.

For the final step the following should be done until your dog is happy and relaxed with the recording playing:

- Continue as above, but now gradually increase the volume on the stereo every day, linking this to the exciting events on your list.
- If you reach a level on the volume that causes any fear reaction in your dog, do not turn the volume back down. Instead, mark this level and keep it at this volume for the next 3 to 4 days. If there is still a fear reaction, reduce the volume quite a bit until there is no fear reaction and slowly work it up again.
- Try to vary the actual track played on the CD so that the firework noise is unpredictable and as much like the real thing as possible.

If you have completed this programme successfully, your dog should become excited not fearful when he hears these noises played. This is because your dog should now associate the noise with something about to happen that he loves.

Your dog may need prescribed anti anxiety medication to help you to successfully implement this desensitisation programme.

If you have any problems instigating this programme, or your dog is not responding as you would wish please contact **'Park Vets'** for further advice and possible referral on to a behaviour specialist.

Useful Websites:

www.adaptil.com/uk

www.zylkenepet.co.uk

"Park Vets - caring for your pets 24 hours a day"

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