



The 7-Day Dog Behaviour Diary

A simple printable for separating what your dog did from what you think it meant

Print one copy of page two for each day of the week, and one copy of page three for the end of it. A week of short, honest notes will show you more than a fortnight of trying to remember.

Observation

What a camera in the corner of the room could have recorded. Where he was, what his body did, what you heard, roughly how long it lasted.

Interpretation

Your best guess about what it meant. Worried, sore, bored, asking for something. Useful, and worth writing down, as long as it is labelled as a guess.

A few things worth knowing

- Keep them in separate lines. Both are useful. Trouble starts when the guess gets recorded as though it were a fact, because a week later that is all you will remember.
- Write down the ordinary days too. A diary of nothing but the difficult moments makes any behaviour look relentless, and hides the days that could tell you what helps.
- Describe before you conclude. "He stood behind the chair, closed his mouth and looked at the door twice" is worth far more later than "he was anxious".
- Never set the situation up. Recreating something that frightens your dog is not observation, and it teaches him that the moment is worth worrying about.
- A diary supports observation. It does not diagnose. It narrows possibilities and shows change over time, and the conclusions belong to someone who can examine your dog.

1

Print seven copies of the daily page and keep them somewhere obvious.

2

Fill one in each evening. Two minutes is enough, and phone notes count.

3

At the end of the week, read them together using the review page.

Please do not wait to collect entries

If there is pain, a sudden unexplained change, severe distress, growling, snapping, self-injury or any risk of a bite, contact your vet or a qualified reward-based behaviour professional first. The notes can start afterwards.



Daily observation

print one for each day

DATE _____ ROUGH TIME _____

WHERE WE WERE AND WHO WAS THERE

WHAT HAPPENED JUST BEFORE *a sound, someone standing up, food, touch, waking, a game ending*

WHAT MY DOG DID: THE CAMERA VERSION

Describe what could be seen or heard before naming what you think it meant.

WHAT HAPPENED NEXT

ANYTHING UNUSUAL TODAY *sleep, food, exercise, weather, visitors, medication*

MY BEST GUESS

HOW SURE AM I? ☐ Low ☐ Medium ☐ High

At the end of the week

Read your seven pages through in one sitting. You are looking for what repeats, not for a verdict.

WHAT REPEATED?

DID IT HAPPEN AT A SIMILAR TIME OF DAY?

WERE THE SAME PEOPLE, SOUNDS, ROOMS, OBJECTS OR TRANSITIONS INVOLVED?

DID SLEEP, EXERCISE, FOOD, WEATHER OR VISITORS SEEM RELEVANT?

WHAT DID NOT SEEM TO MATTER?

IS IT HAPPENING MORE OFTEN, OR LESS?

IS IT BECOMING MORE INTENSE, OR LESS?

IS YOUR DOG SETTLING AGAIN MORE QUICKLY, OR MORE SLOWLY?

WHAT IS STILL UNCERTAIN?

WHAT WOULD I LIKE TO ASK MY VET OR BEHAVIOUR PROFESSIONAL?

ONE THING I MAY CHANGE OR OBSERVE NEXT

Change one manageable thing at a time, so you can tell what made the difference. Never recreate fear, pain or danger to test a theory.