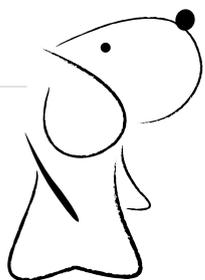


THE PATTERN Hack

All brains of all animals are literally designed to be looking for patterns in their environment and social interactions. When a pattern is found or created the world becomes more predictable, safer, and easier to navigate as a result.

HOW it works!



Predictability lowers anxiety, allows the brain to conserve energy and creates a sense of trust and security in the organism. Like other animals, our dogs are experts at finding patterns, whether we intend for them to or not. They look for and discover patterns in their world and in the behavior of others constantly, and just like us feel so much better when they can make heads or tails of a situation rather than feeling confused or disoriented when no patterns can be found.

We want to find ways to create **Predictable Patterns of Precedent (PPP)** all throughout our dog's day to create structure and help them to anticipate what happens next.

- This eliminates the need for rigid routines while still giving the dogs something to hang their hat on, creating a sense of safety in their world and trust in those around them.
- Clarity and consistency with our expectations of our dogs and how we communicate with them is integral to developing PPPs and building good social currency.
- Patterns also provide a framework for helping the dog to understand expectations during different events (i.e. *laying on their bed during family dinner or calmly chewing a bone behind a gate when company first arrives*).

If this is what happens every time one of these situations presents itself, then the dog starts to understand how they should respond in that scenario. This PPP approach to behavior uses patterns to hold behavior in place (this is just what you do in this situation because that's just what you do) instead of our traditional reliance on commands (which often conflict with the patterns the dog has naturally come to on their own and do not provide the level of predictability for the dog). You can think about this as the context becoming the cue/prompt rather than a random command.



THE PATTERN *Hack*

WHEN to use it

The Pattern Hack is beneficial for all dogs and should be the foundation of any training or behavior program.

It should also be used in

- **Socializing puppies**
- **During remedial socialization with older dogs.**
- **It is extremely beneficial for dogs with trauma, high stress, chronic pain, anxiety, fear or hyper-vigilant behavior.**

You can literally use it with anything! If you want more fluid and functional behavior in a situation, then simply create a pattern and follow it every time with the dog in that situation and you will be amazed how quickly they pick it up.

This is meant to help a dog learn how to handle themselves in all kinds of situations they will encounter as a pet in the 21st century that they do not naturally know how to navigate on their own - it's our job to show them what the plan is and be consistent about the plan so they can succeed in all of these kinds of scenarios

HOW to use it

Establish what pattern you are trying to achieve and begin introducing the elements of the pattern to your dog.

01 Think of this like you are showing your dog “how this works” in the same way you would teach a child “what we do at dinner time” or “how to wash our hands”.

02 Be mindful that your behavior is consistent and clear each time you do this. By being clear with your behavior, what and how you are asking or explaining, the dog soon starts to understand that, “when this thing happens, this is the part I play in it”.

03 Devise patterns around the things you already do with your dog every day in order to create more predictability for them.

- Prepare and deliver meals in the exact same way each time you do it.
- If you do daily enrichment, create rituals of everything from phrases you use to the placement of objects and order of operations around that.
- Ask for the same protocols around and on walks or going outside.
- Have a regimented nighttime routine. There are so many possibilities.

04 Patterns create structure and stability that allow your dog to settle into how things work in your family as well as bridge expectations in new environments or conditions, like if you go on vacation or have company. They help our dogs to find meaning in their world and provide a foundation for them to respond to new or arousing situations

