

Understanding Dog Behavior



Why Behavior Matters

A dog's behavior is more than personality — it's a reflection of health, training, environment, and emotional well-being. Understanding canine behavior helps pet owners build stronger bonds with their pets and recognize when professional support is needed.

Normal Dog Behaviors



Some behaviors are completely natural, even if they sometimes frustrate owners:

- **Barking** – Dogs bark to communicate, alert, or express excitement.
- **Chewing** – A normal activity, especially in puppies, but it should be directed to appropriate toys.
- **Digging** – Rooted in instinct; often for play, exploration, or comfort.
- **Jumping up** – A social greeting behavior, though it can be managed with training.
- **Play behaviors** – Chasing, wrestling, and mouthing are typical forms of canine play.

Signs of Stress or Anxiety



Behavior changes may indicate stress, fear, or even underlying health issues. Watch for:

- Pacing or restlessness
- Excessive panting or drooling
- Trembling or hiding
- Destructive behavior (chewing, scratching, digging)
- Excessive barking or whining
- Aggression or withdrawal

Common Behavior Concerns



- **Separation Anxiety** – Distress when left alone.
- **Excessive Barking** – May stem from boredom, anxiety, or territorial behavior.
- **Aggression** – Can be fear-based, territorial, or pain-related.
- **House-Soiling** – May be training-related or due to medical issues.
- **Resource Guarding** – Protecting food, toys, or spaces.

Medical vs. Behavioral Causes



Not all behavior problems are “training issues.” Medical conditions such as pain, thyroid disorders, or neurological disease can cause changes in behavior. Veterinary evaluation is an important first step.

Supporting Positive Behavior



- **Routine & Consistency** – Dogs thrive on predictable schedules.
- **Proper Training** – Positive reinforcement methods build trust and good habits.
- **Exercise & Enrichment** – Physical activity and mental stimulation reduce problem behaviors.
- **Safe Environment** – Provide a calm, secure space for rest and comfort.

When to Seek Help



If your dog shows sudden, severe, or worsening behavior changes, consult your veterinarian. Early intervention prevents escalation and protects both your pet and family.

Our Commitment



At **Pleasant Valley Pet Clinic**, we help pet parents distinguish between normal, concerning, and medical behaviors. We can:

- Rule out medical causes of behavior change
- Provide guidance for behavior modification
- Refer to trusted trainers or veterinary behavior specialists when needed

☎ Contact us to discuss your dog’s behavior and get the right support for a happier, healthier life together.