



Alone Time Training

Every dog reacts to being home alone differently. Some are perfectly OK with it right away, while others will take time adjusting. Here are some tips on how to leave your new Muttville Mutt home alone:

- If your mutt starts having issues when left alone, it could be for various reasons. **Change in environment and schedule can be very stressful, so it's important to keep a consistent routine.**
- Start by leaving the mutt alone in a room in small increments. Example: 5 minutes at a time; 10 minutes at a time; 20 minutes at a time, etc.
- **Only re-enter the room when he is quiet.** If you enter when he begins to whine or cry, he will soon learn that that behavior will bring you back.
- Once he is comfortable with being left alone in a room, you can move up to leaving him home alone in small increments. Example: 5 minutes at a time, 10 minutes at a time, 20 minutes at a time, etc.
- Remember to behave in a very calm and quiet manner when going out and coming in. This will lower the contrast between times when you're there and times when you're gone.
- Ignore the dog for a full 10 minutes before leaving and a full 10 minutes when coming home. This will help alleviate the nervous energy your dog may feel when you leave and come home.
- You can offer the mutt a tasty treat whenever you leave, so that they can develop a positive association with you leaving. Kongs and food puzzle toys are great tools for this.
- Placing the dog in a crate or confined space can be helpful when utilized correctly. Never leave a dog in a crate for longer than 6 hours at a time, and ensure the dog will be safe and comfortable in the confined space.
- Exercising the dog before/after you leave can help alleviate stress.
- The use of medications can be very helpful, especially for severe cases of alone time stress, **but always consult with your veterinarian or a veterinary behaviorist before giving your dog any type of medication for a behavior problem.**