



Departure & Absence Diary

A camera-and-clock log for gradual alone-time training that actually works

PETSLIKEMINE
BEHAVIOUR & ANXIETY

DOG NAME _____	VET / BEHAVIOURIST _____	TRAINING START DATE _____
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A dog learns to cope with being alone the same way a person gets over a fear of deep water: in tiny, manageable steps where they are never overwhelmed, not by being thrown in. A camera shows you what really happens once the door closes, and this diary turns that into a baseline you can build up from, seconds and minutes at a time.

FILM THE FIRST HALF HOUR

Prop a phone at the door and record an ordinary departure, including the run-up (keys, coat, shoes). Distress is front-loaded: most affected dogs show it within the first 15 to 30 minutes, often within minutes, so the first half hour holds the gold. Film a couple of different days, not just one.

READING THE FOOTAGE: WHAT TO LOOK FOR

- Latency: how long after the door closes until the first sign of unease
- The quiet signs owners miss: pacing, panting, drooling, lip-licking, yawning, freezing, shutting down
- Whether it builds, plateaus, or comes and goes in cycles
- The obvious signs: barking or howling, destruction, toileting indoors
- Where any damage is aimed: at exit points (door, frame, window, crate bars) points to panic, not boredom

STAY UNDER THRESHOLD, ALWAYS

Your baseline is the longest you can be out of sight before the first flicker of unease. Leave for comfortably less than that, return calmly before any anxiety appears, and repeat. Only nudge the time up once your dog is reliably relaxed across several goes. If the signs reappear, you went too far: drop back to the last happy length and rebuild. Keep arrivals and departures low-key. Never "cry it out": a long, panicked absence deepens the fear.

GRADUATED-ABSENCE TRACKER

DATE	PLANNED LENGTH	STAYED CALM?	DISTRESS SIGNS SEEN	NEXT STEP
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

SPEAK TO YOUR VET PROMPTLY IF

Your dog injures itself trying to escape, breaks teeth or nails, bleeds at the muzzle or paws, or destroys crate bars, doors or windows, or shows sustained, unrelenting panic. That is an urgent welfare situation, not a train-harder one, and usually needs veterinary help, often with medication alongside the behaviour work. While you arrange it, do not leave your dog alone over their threshold.

Print at the plan well before sessions: energy, full 100% and clock, clear, open, and so on. This is a weeks-to-months job with plateaus, not a days one.

How to use. Find the honest baseline on camera, build up in small steps your dog can cope with, and track the trend here. Bring the clips and this diary to your vet or behaviourist. A wellbeing aid, not a substitute for veterinary advice.

STAY UNDER THRESHOLD; BUILD UP SECONDS AT A TIME