

## Desensitization to Gradual Departures

This outline is intended as a guideline for your dog's treatment. Other stimuli may be relevant to your dog. If this program does not seem to fit your dog's problem, see your veterinarian or behavior specialist for assistance.

There will be instances when you will need to leave your house for long periods of time and you cannot use the safety signal because your dog has not progressed to that point. It is very likely that your dog may backslide with her/his progress at these times. To minimize these backslides, consider:

- Taking your dog with you.
- Confining your dog in a: Crate Room Other: \_\_\_\_\_
- Having a pet sitter come to check on your dog.
- Boarding your dog in a kennel/at your veterinarian's office.

**Your dog's safety signal:** \_\_\_\_\_

### **Activity:**

*Ask your dog to sit approximately 6 steps from the door you exit from, present your dog's safety signal, then:*

1. Lean towards the door, then stand straight.
2. Take 1 step towards the door, and return to your dog.
3. Take 2 steps towards the door, and return, ect.
4. Take 3 steps towards the door, and return.
5. Take 4 steps towards the door, and return.
6. Take 5 steps towards the door, and return.
7. Take 6 steps towards the door, and return.
8. Walk to the door, touch it, and return.
9. Walk to the door, touch doorknob, and return.
10. Walk to the door, rattle doorknob once, and return.
11. Walk to the door, rattle doorknob twice, and return.
12. Walk to the door, rattle doorknob three times, and return.
13. Walk to the door, rattle doorknob several times, and return.
14. Walk to the door, turn doorknob a ¼ turn, let go and return.
15. Walk to the door, turn doorknob a half turn, let go and return.
16. Walk to the door, turn doorknob a full turn, let go and return.
17. Walk to the door, open it a crack, shut it and return.
18. Walk to the door, open it 1 inch, shut it and return.
19. Walk to the door, open it 2 inches, shut it and return.
20. Walk to the door, open it 3 inches, shut it and return.
21. Walk to the door, open it 4 inches, shut it and return.
22. Walk to the door, open it 5 inches, shut it and return.

23. Walk to the door, open it 7 inches, shut it and return.
24. Walk to the door, open it $\frac{1}{4}$ of the way, shut it and return.
25. Walk to the door, open it half way, shut it and return.
26. Walk to the door, open it $\frac{3}{4}$ of the way, shut it and return.
27. Walk to the door, open it all the way, shut it and return.
28. Go out door and return immediately (do not close door).
29. Go out door, close about $\frac{1}{4}$ of the way, open and return.
30. Go out door, close about half way, open and return.
31. Go out door, close about $\frac{3}{4}$ of the way, open and return.
32. Go out door, close completely, open immediately and return.
33. Go out and close door, stay for 1 second, and return.
34. Go out and close door, stay for 3 seconds, and return.
35. Go out and close door, stay for 5 seconds, and return.
36. Go out and close door, stay for 10 seconds, and return.
37. Go out and close door, stay for 20 seconds, and return.
38. Go out and close door, stay for 30 seconds, and return.
39. Go out and close door, stay for 40 seconds, and return.
40. Go out and close door, stay for 50 seconds, and return.
41. Go out and close door, walk away from door and stay for 1 minute, and return.
42. Go out and close door, walk away from door and stay for 2 minutes, and return.
43. Go out and close door, walk away from door and stay for 5 minutes, and return.
44. Go out and close door, walk away from door and stay for 7 minutes, and return.
45. Go out and close door, walk away from door and stay for 10 minutes, and return.
46. Go out and close door, walk away from door and stay for 15 minutes, and return.
47. Go out and close door, walk away from door and stay for 20 minutes, and return.
48. Go out and close door, walk away from door and stay for 25 minutes, and return.
49. Go out and close door, walk away from door and stay for 30 minutes, and return.
50. Go out and close door, walk away from door and stay for 35 minutes, and return.
51. Go out and close door, walk away from door and stay for 40 minutes, and return.
52. Go out and close door, walk away from door and stay for 45 minutes, and return.
53. Go out and close door, walk away from door and stay for 50 minutes, and return.
54. Go out and close door, walk away from door and stay for 1 hour, and return.
55. Go out and close door, walk away from door and stay for 1.25 hours, and return.
56. Go out and close door, walk away from door and stay for 1.50 hours, and return.
57. Go out and close door, walk away from door and stay for 1.75 hours, and return.
58. Go out and close door, walk away from door and stay for 2 hours, and return.
59. Go out and close door, walk away from door and stay for 2.5 hours, and return.
60. Go out and close door, walk away from door and stay for 3 hours, and return.
61. Go out and close door, walk away from door and stay for 3.5 hours, and return.

62. Go out and close door, walk away from door and stay for 4 hours, and return.
63. Go out and close door, walk away from door and stay for 6 hours, and return.
64. Go out and close door, walk away from door and stay for 8 hours, and return.
65. Go out and close door, walk away from door and stay for 10 hours, and return.

If your dog reacts to your car starting, use the same principles as above to desensitize him/her to that stimulus. After your dog is calm while you leave for a few minutes, work through the following exercises in addition to the ones above:

1. Go to your car and return.
2. Go to your car, pull and release the door handle once (not actually opening the door), and return.
3. Go to your car, pull and release the door handle three times, and return.
4. Go to your car, open the door slightly, close it gently and return.
5. Go to your car, open the door half way, close it gently and return.
6. Go to your car, open the door completely, close it gently and return.
7. Go to your car, get into it, shut the door, immediately open it again and return.
8. Go to your car, get into it, shut the door, open it in 5 seconds and return.
9. Go to your car, get into it, shut the door, open it in 10 seconds and return.
10. Go to your car, get into it, shut the door, open it in 15 seconds and return.
11. Go to your car, get into it, shut the door, open it in 20 seconds and return.
12. Go to your car, get into it, shut the door, turn it on and immediately turn it off, and return.
13. Go to your car, get into it, shut the door, turn it on for 1 second, turn it off, and return.
14. Go to your car, get into it, shut the door, turn it on for 2 seconds, turn it off, and return.
15. Go to your car, get into it, shut the door, turn it on for 4 seconds, turn it off, and return.
16. Go to your car, get into it, shut the door, turn it on for 6 seconds, turn it off, and return.
17. Go to your car, get into it, shut the door, turn it on for 8 seconds, turn it off, and return.
18. Go to your car, get into it, shut the door, turn it on for 10 seconds, turn it off, and return.
19. Go to your car, get into it, shut the door, turn it on, put it into gear, immediately remove it from gear, turn it off, and return.
20. Go to your car, get into it, shut the door, turn it on, put it into gear, drive two feet, return to the parking spot, and return to your dog.

**Continue with this process until you gradually get your dog used to your moving your car away from its parking spot and returning it, for longer and longer periods of time.**