

From the founder of www.dreamdogformula.com **MIKE JAMES**

25 Best Ways

TO CALM AN



*Aggressive
Dog*



(#1 WORKS INSTANTLY)

PREFACE

Being fur parents, we've seen all types of dog personalities.

There are some that are active.

Other pooches are protective.

Some are so chilled out you just wanna hang with them all day.

But there will be times that a dog will be aggressive.

"Yeah, I've seen my pooch do this. What should I do?"

Don't worry, there are effective ways to calm them down.

Continue reading to find out:

- 25 best ways to calm an aggressive dog.
- Which playtime activities can make canines act aggressively.
- The possible triggers that may cause your pooch to be aggressive.
- And this is just the beginning...

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How to calm an aggressive dog - 25 best ways

#1: Remove the cause of their aggression

When your pooch is acting aggressive, keep them away from the cause of the behavior.

If it's a family member or a friend, they might not know what to do.

Tell them to back away slowly and don't stare at the dog.

Especially if your pooch is already being aggressive. And are standing stiffly without blinking at the person they're looking at.

The cause of their aggression could also be an object.

And I don't mean things that they own, like toys and their favorite blanket.

They're very much okay with these things.

You might even catch your pooch chewing on their blanket.

What can cause aggression are objects that are unfamiliar to them.

And are causing them fear like vacuums - they attack and bark at it.

If they become aggressive, take the object away slowly.

Don't do any sudden movements as it can cause them to act rashly and bite.

#2: Distract them

Sometimes, dogs' aggressiveness doesn't stop because they keep focusing on the cause.

They could be staring at the suspicious person that caused this behavior. For the same reason, they might bark at certain people.

Or maybe an object that fell and made a loud noise.

These can startle your pooch and will make them aggressive.

When this happens, you can try and change their focus on something else.

You can try saying calming words that sound like a reward to them, such as:

- “*Good boy.*”
- “*Hey, hey, hey.*”
- “*Come here, baby.*”

If spoken in a calm manner, these words can help your pooch be calmer.

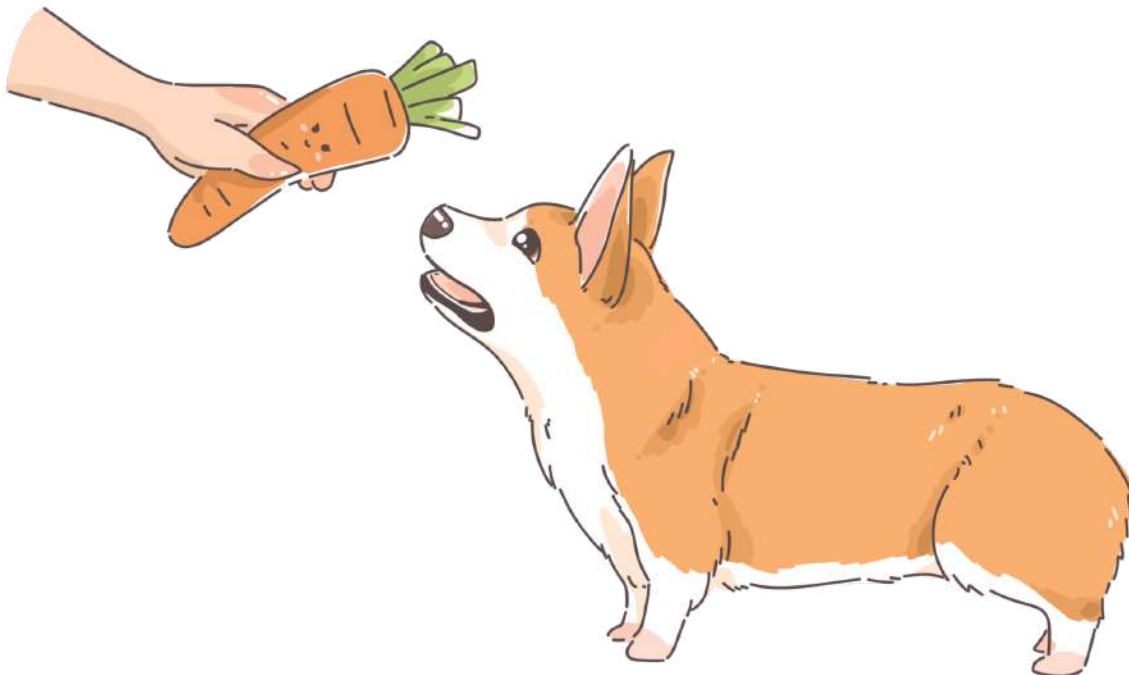
You can also try walking around at a distance.

Tapping softly on something that makes sounds can also make them focus on you.



Note: This works if their aggression isn't directed toward you.

#3: Show them their toys



If your dog has toys, you can use that to shift their attention.

This will work better if you use one that they're attached to.

Or a toy that they always play with.

You can also make their playthings more attractive to them if they don't look at it.

Try pairing the showing of the toy with a playful tone in your words.

Don't just shake and wave their plaything in front of them.

You can start playing with the toy yourself.

Like throwing it from one hand to another.

Exaggerating your reaction to the toy can also help make them think that it's fun to play with it.

I mean, they already know this, but because of their aggression, they can sometimes forget.

 **Warning:** Their aggression can also transfer to you because you "took" their toy. If this happens, leave the toy on the ground and walk away slowly.

#4: Tell them vocal cues

Giving commands can also make your dog distracted from their feelings of aggression.

Especially ones that they're trained for.

These commands will make them remember their training and do what is asked of them.

You can try saying:

- *"Sit down."*

- *“Roll over.”*
- *“Lie down.”*
- *“Watch me.”*

Preferably, say commands that have nothing to do with their aggression.

If you try to counter their actions with direct orders, it might not be effective.

Like saying, *“Stop that!”*

You also need to avoid saying these commands in a screaming voice.

It can startle them and cause them to be more aggressive.

As much as possible, create a safe environment for your pooch.

Their emotions will have a higher chance of dying down if you don't match them.

#5: Give them food

Nothing distracts most dogs better than a tasty treat.

Doesn't matter what they're doing - playing, resting, or being angry and aggressive.

Most pooches will run and grab a bite when presented with food.

For this to be effective, you need to show them meals that are highly attractive to them.

These types of food are commonly called high-value treats.

HVTs smell and taste good, but are rarely given to your pooch.

If you plan on doing this, here are examples:

- Cheese.
- Beef trip.
- Beef jerky.
- Frozen liver.
- Peanut butter.

- Chicken slices.

Since the smell of these treats is very attractive to dogs, it's easy to get their attention.

The scent of these foods might be icky to us, but canines like it.

Just like some dogs like rolling on fox poo.

But back to your situation...

Make sure your pooch notices the HVT first.

Don't just drop it on the ground.

It'd also be helpful to lure them first from the location where they showed aggression.

Call them to get closer to you and use the treat as bait.

#6: Play sounds on your phone that are new to them

Get on Youtube if you have access to it, and search for any sound effect on your phone.

Play it somewhere your dog can hear.

Just make sure you're not playing something that usually scares them such as:

- Thunder.
- Gunshots.
- Vacuum cleaner.
- Barks of other dogs.

#7: Make them think the threat isn't really harmful

In some cases, dogs think that a person or an animal is a threat and will growl at them.

Aggressive behavior like this is pretty normal because dogs can be overly protective

This happens when someone comes up to a place they consider a territory.

Examples of these would be:

- Your home.
- Their dog bed.
- Playpen with their toys.
- A place where they usually eat.

If they notice there are approaching “intruders” they can get aggressive.

For our purposes, let’s say the one that triggered this behavior is a person.

Say, a friend of yours.

When they ring the doorbell upon visiting your home, your pooch could go aggressive.

What you can do is show your dog that they are not a threat.

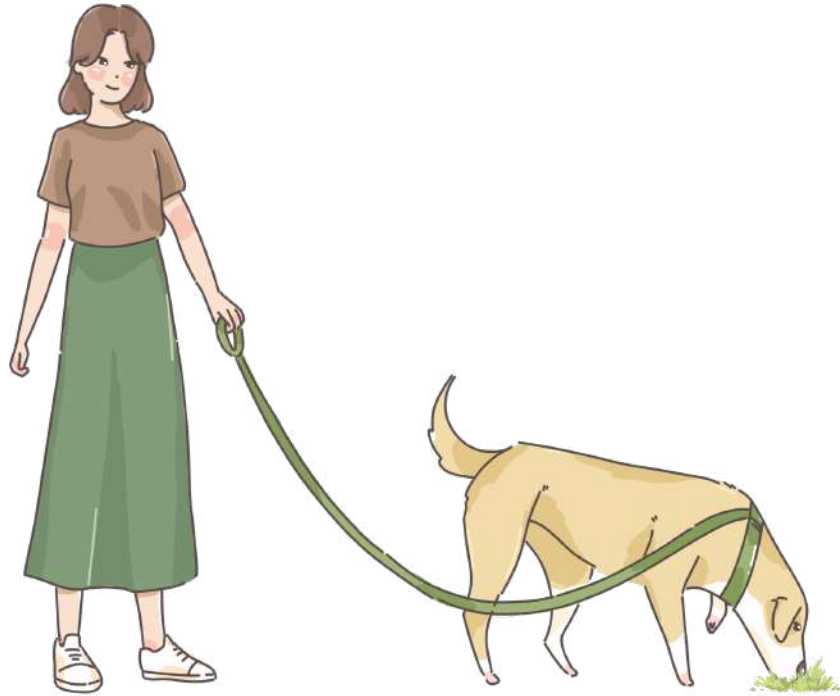
You can also have your visitors bring treats.

And when they enter the door you let them throw these at your dog.



Note: Try to avoid loud greetings when meeting a friend in your home. This can frighten your pooch and make them more aggressive.

#8: Let them walk around



Do you keep them on a leash when you're walking outside?

It's normal for your pooch would want to go off-leash and roam around.

You don't necessarily have to get the leash off. But leave it at enough length for them to explore.

In this case, letting your dog go when they want to can help them calm down.

And if you keep them restrained and don't give them enough slack, they get aggressive.

The reason for this aggression is caused by frustration.

When your dog doesn't get something they want, they could act out.

As long as they aren't in immediate danger when you let them go, it's okay.

 **Warning:** Their aggression could be directed towards other pets and humans. If this is the case, it's better to remove your dog from the situation immediately.

#9: Stop the pain they're feeling

Another reason why dogs get aggressive is because they are hurt.

This can stem from injuries or internal health issues.

If this is the case, try and soothe their pain.

If you are going to reach in, make sure that you do it carefully.

Your pooch might think that you're trying to hurt them more and get aggressive towards you.

Here are a few simple steps to not anger them even more when you approach:

1. Extend your hand out to them slowly.
2. Let them smell you first.
3. If they pull their ears back and lower their head to the ground while growling, don't continue.
4. If they soften their look and stance, slowly go near them.
5. If you are close enough, pet and rub them first to indicate that you're not there to hurt them.
6. Once they've calmed down a bit, check their bodies for injuries and other issues.

You can tell that a dog is having health problems because they do things out of the ordinary. Like scooting their butts across your floor, for example.

#10: Reward them when they calm down

This tip is more useful for preventing future fits of aggression.

And it can help an aggressive dog be more mellow in the long run.

Emotions pass away, and your pooch will no longer be trying to attack you.

When this happens, make sure that you're reinforcing this behavior.

One way to do this is to reward them with praise or petting.

#11: Give them calming treats

Did you know there are chewables that can help your dog calm down?

If you give your fur baby these treats, it will promote relaxation. Which in turn will make them a bit calmer.

Chewables like these would work best if you have a stressful activity ahead.

Examples of these would be:

- Travelling.
- Going to the vet for a visit.
- Being in a crowded space e.g. parks, coffee shops, and restaurants.

These treats contain ingredients with calming properties such as:

- Hemp.
- Chamomile.
- Valerian Root.

"Which one should I get?"

The AKC considers the [Zesty Paws Dog Calming Bites](#) as the best one in the market. It also has peanut butter flavor which makes it more attractive to canines.^[1]

#12: Stop making them feel fear

Have you ever scared your dog unintentionally?

Well, when your pooch gets scared of you, it's most likely accidental.

And if they feel this, your fur baby can get defensive and aggressive.

The most common actions you do that make them scared are sudden ones.

For example, if something falls and you quickly catch it, your dog might be startled.

Being playful can also backfire.

I've tried running towards Lissa before to try and get them to play with me.

When I got closer, they suddenly lowered their heads and growled at me.

A clear sign of fear. And showing aggressive behavior as a result.

#13: Don't interfere immediately



If your pooch isn't in danger, you can leave them alone for a while.

This also applies if your dog isn't trying to hurt anyone.

"Why shouldn't I interfere when they're getting aggressive?"

It sounds counterintuitive, yes.

But if you interfere, the dog's aggression might be transferred to you.

It's similar to getting frustrated because they didn't get what they wanted.

In this case, you stopped their feelings of being aggressive.

A clear example of this is when you try to break up dog fights.

Have you ever seen how canines get aggressive towards you instead?

This is called redirected aggression.

If a fight breaks out, don't stop it.

Sometimes it just dies down immediately.

But always be on the lookout for more dangerous circumstances.

Pull away your pooch if you think they'll get hurt badly or if they can hurt others.

#14: Try exposing them to music

Getting stuck in traffic becomes more bearable if you listen to the radio.

Do you agree with this?

Or maybe a chill day at home can be improved when your favorite artist's top hits are on repeat.

Music has an effect on our wellness and mood. And if you listen to tunes that uplift you, you'll most likely feel good, too.

I myself listen to electronic music when I'm working - it just pumps me up!

And this kind of influence music has on our minds has the same effect on dogs, too.

Well, not exactly the same.

Their minds are wired differently, but it still has an effect.

Research says that dogs like hearing something they don't normally find in the wild.^[2]

If there's a forest that randomly plays Silk Sonic's Leave The Door Open, point me in its direction.

Kidding aside, dogs' ancestors are more exposed to sounds in the wild, like birds and leaves.

But if you try to expose them to our music, it can help them calm down.

I wouldn't say immediately. But it does have an effect on their overall mood.

"So which Metallica songs do I play for them at full volume?"

Hmmm... I wouldn't suggest playing loud rock music for them.

Based on a study, dogs that listen to classical music appear to be more relaxed.^[3]

This tip is kind of a preemptive method.

If you have an aggressive dog, playing classical music can help.

#15: Stop and go the other way

This is another effective and simple method to calm an aggressive pooch.

This is applicable when you're walking outside. And another dog gets aggressive toward your pooch.

One of the reasons why they keep getting aggressive is they're focusing on your fur baby.

What you can try to do is stop in your tracks, and slightly drag your dog's attention somewhere.

This way, your pooch won't be engaging the aggressive dog in a "staredown".

Which will agitate them more. Once the other dog has calmed down, try going near them.

And slowly introduce them to each other.

#16: Use items that produce sound

Another way you can try and stop your dog from getting aggressive is to use sounds.

It doesn't have to be something that your dog recognizes.

Sometimes, it helps if they hear something unfamiliar to them.

It can get them interested and will leave the cause of their aggression.

An example of this object would be a squeaky toy.

This would work especially if your pooch doesn't have one.

You can purchase a doggy-safe squeaky toy at Amazon: [ZippyPaws - Skinny Peltz](#).

This plaything is designed to create a loud enough sound to entertain or distract our pooch.

If you don't have a squeaky toy, you can try using their feeding bowl.

Lightly tap on it or make a sound that bowls usually make when you're prepping food.

#17: Throw something on the ground and direct them

Letting your pooch see an item of interest can be effective.

But you'll have more success if you make them go and pick it up.

Try using objects that don't make loud noises when dropped, such as:

- Blankets.
- Tennis balls.
- Stuffed toys.
- Throw pillows.

As these can startle them even more as previously said.

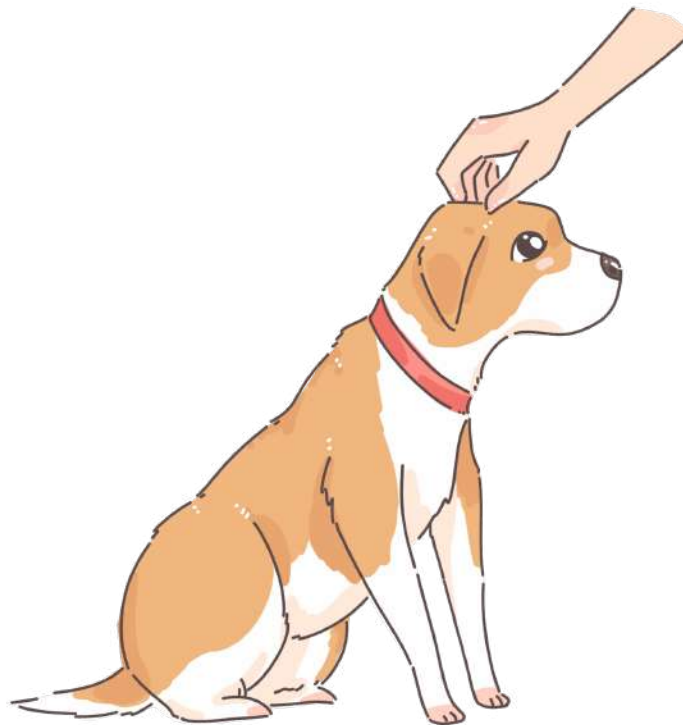
It can be anything - what's important here is that it's attractive for them.

You can pick items that they usually interact with like:

- Toys.
- Your clothing.
- Food and treats.

And you pair this with a command that they should go to the item.

#18: Pet them if they initiate contact



Another thing you can do to calm down your pooch is petting them.

Physical touch is one way you can show your love to your pooch.

Pets and rubs can help improve the bond you have with your pooch.

This is the reason why your fur baby kicks their leg when you scratch them.

It can also be comforting for them, especially if the cause of their aggression is fear.

#19: If they're trying to bite an object you're holding, let it go

Dogs can get obsessed with objects that attract them.

And when they like something, their tendency is to grab it.

Now, if you keep it away from them, they might show aggressiveness and want it more.

Always be on the lookout for signs of this negative behavior.

Here are a few:

- Barking.
- Snarling.
- Having a low growl.
- Showing their teeth.
- Seeing the hairs on their back stand.
- Their tails are wagging slowly and stiffly.

If it starts to show while they're staring at something you hold, let them have it.

 **Note:** What you're holding might harm them e.g. chocolate. If this is the case, try distracting them and slowly pull back on the thing you're holding and hide it.

#20: Stop running away

Some dogs still have predatory behavior in their brains.

“What does that mean?”

Simply put, the behavior of their ancestors is still inside them.

And when they see someone run away, it's normal for them to chase.

According to the AKC, this behavior is seen more in herding and sighthound dogs such as:^[4]

- Saluki.
- Borzoi.
- Whippet.
- Greyhound.
- Afghan Hound.
- Irish Wolfhound.
- Italian Greyhound.
- Silken Windhound.
- Scottish Deerhound.

If you have these dog breeds, be prepared for non-stop chasing.

But be careful if it turns aggressive.

Playing with your pooch can start out innocently.

Just you and your pooch running around trying to be silly and have fun.

“How do I know they’re already getting aggressive?”

You’ll notice the following behavior:

- Curled lips and low growls.
- Body movements look stiff, and the hairs on their back are raised.

If you start seeing this, it’d be best to stop right away and don’t provoke them.

Then slowly walk away as if to say, *“I’m done playing now, baby.”*

#21: Look at the ground

Sometimes the solution can be as simple as this.

According to the AKC, looking into a canine’s eye might be interpreted as aggressive behavior.^[5]

If you continue to stare at a dog’s eyes out of fear, they’ll just get angrier.

It can also be an automatic response to look at the dog to predict their move.

However, if you do this, they'll think that you're being aggressive towards them, too.

And you'll then see the dog show more signs of being aggressive.

 **Warning:** Just make sure that you're aware of your surroundings. And glance once in a while at the dog to get a feel of what they're doing. Don't do any sudden movements. Just slowly redirect your gaze.

#22: Keep a calm composure

Have you ever noticed that dogs get stressed if you are feeling this way, too?

Let's say you get home from a long day at work.

As soon as you arrive, your aura just screams, *"MOVE AWAY, I AM TIRED."*

Your dog has the ability to detect your emotions. They do this through the chemicals your brain releases.

Awesome, right?

What's even cooler is that they can match your emotions.

That's why your pooch feels stressed whenever you are.

According to research, your cortisol levels can be detected and matched by your fur baby.^[6]

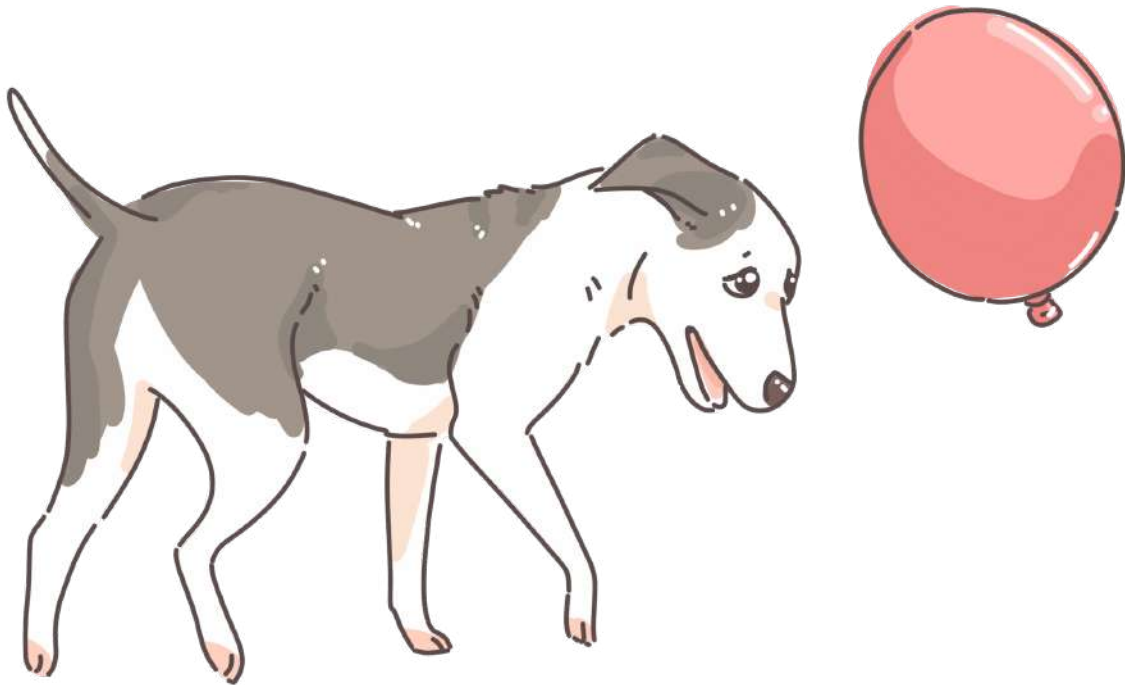
The paper studied 58 dog-human pairs and found that there is a similarity in their stress levels.

And this fact will also apply when your pooch is suddenly aggressive.

Your efforts to calm them down might fail if you yourself aren't serene.

Let your pooch feel that you're not scared and are there to help them.

#23: Give them a balloon



Nothing is as whimsical as a balloon.

And it can also provide a fun time for your pooch.

This is going to be effective if they enjoy booping it.

It also floats above your pooch and is something they can play with.

Balloons provide a good way to distract an aggressive dog and a crying baby.

 **Note:** Some dogs may be scared when they see balloons. Slowly introduce the object to them and don't throw it at them directly. Try letting it float away from them first and check their reaction.

If they seem interested and don't look scared at all, you can start throwing it in the air a little closer. Inch your way until they're already playing with it.

#24: Push a toy car their way

Another thing you can do to deviate their attention is to make something fast go their way.

Something that rolls is a good option.

A ball is probably the most accessible if you have a dog.

But it's better if you roll something that will definitely catch their attention.

Just enough to keep their focus away from being aggressive.



Note: Be careful in rolling toy cars. If you hit your dog hard they might think of it as you trying to hurt them.

#25: Act as if you're leaving

What's your usual routine when you're about to leave?

Try and do this and act as if you're about to leave your home.

This applies only when your pooch is getting aggressive at something else.

And if it won't hurt them if they continue to be in this behavior.

Acting like you're about to go out can easily distract your dogs.

Maybe they'd even try and be clingy to you so you won't leave them.

Just like how they are on normal "non-aggressive" days.

People also ask:

Can an aggressive dog be cured?

An aggressive dog can be cured in some cases. Aggression caused by underlying health issues can be attended to by vets.

However, according to the ASPCA, this behavior may not be entirely removed from a dog. The next best thing is to limit their exposure to what triggered them.[7]

Dr. Horwitz listed a few causes of aggression in dogs:[8]

- General fearfulness.
- Conflict with other dogs.
- Being protective or territorial.
- They learned it from other dogs.
- Aggression towards unfamiliar people and pets.

There are specific training routines you can ask from your vet to alter their behavior. Dog trainers are also a good option if you want to teach your pooch to be less aggressive.

Remember to use positive reinforcement. This way, the coaching will be efficient and effective.

What triggers dogs to be aggressive?

Loud noises, flashing lights, or an unfamiliar human can trigger a dog to be aggressive. Their aggressiveness may also come up if they feel something is being taken from them.

How do you calm an older aggressive dog?

You can calm an older aggressive dog by checking their health first. One of the main reasons why pooches at this age behave like this is because they feel pain. They might be feeling discomfort from an injury or an internal health issue.

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