



THE 10 MINUTE



# Behaviour Consult

Male Neutering



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# A letter from Dr. Tom Mitchell MRCVS

For decades we've been taught that  
castration should be routinely recommended  
for young dogs as a way of treating  
behaviour struggles like:

01

**Barking,  
lunging and  
reactivity**  
(at dogs or people)

02

**Humping,  
inappropriate  
toileting**

03

**Dog-dog  
interaction  
challenges**

04

**Overexcitement,  
boisterousness**  
(And even as a prevention  
before these start)

05

**Adolescence**  
(as if it needs curing  
like it's a disease!)

06

**Jumping  
up**  
(at dogs or  
people)

For Veterinarians, Veterinary Nurses and animal professionals, conversations around neutering represent some of the most challenging conversations we might find ourselves having with clients; as many strong beliefs exist on both sides of the topic. Similarly, for dog owners, the amount of conflicting information available - as well as traditional practice - makes decision-making on neutering a challenge.

## This is where this handbook comes in!

In this handbook, I've answered challenging questions so that you have blueprint answers of the Behavet Team approach to neutering. Whether you are a Veterinarian or Nurse wanting to arm your owners with the very best advice, or you are a dog owner wanting to wade through the options and have something to discuss with the professionals in your life, this handbook will help!







## Before we get started, a **WARNING!**

What I'm about to discuss relates to castration and health and behaviour.

**This does NOT relate to overpopulation management.**

However, of note, in some countries, castration is considered a mutilation and these countries have less of an overpopulation issue than countries where it is routinely recommended, highlighting how intrinsic overpopulation is to societal beliefs around and respect for dogs.

**I repeat - this is not a discussion of population management.**





# How the handbook works

First, I start by providing you with the answers to some common questions owners have around the neutering of male dogs.

I'll talk you through the science of castration and studies that have been undertaken on the Behavioural and physiological changes as a result of castration. I'll also explain some alternatives that are available to dog owners.

I've also included the Holy Grail of Behaviour notes: at the end of this Handbook, you'll find 6 pre-made templates for a "10-Minute Behaviour Consult". Based on thousands of Behaviour Consultations I have had with owners, I've created these templates for you to have on-hand when discussing behaviour and castration with your clients.

As well as providing practical training advice for common struggles that trigger castration requests, they'll also enable you to help the owner decide whether castration is appropriate.

The templates are a combination of First Aid advice and specific direction for the owner to get them started. Of course, a ten minute consultation represents only the tip of the iceberg when it comes to options for helping dogs and owners but they can be kept on-hand for you to give specific advice before or while organising a Behavet behaviour referral.



**INCLUDES**

6 pre-made templates for



**"10-Minute Behaviour Consult"**





# The Castration Lowdown

## “What happens when my dog is neutered?”

Well, to put it bluntly, the testicles get chopped off. What does this lead to?

1. It is a permanent procedure which removes the dog's ability to reproduce.
2. It removes the major source of testosterone. The Leydig cells that produce testosterone reside within the testicles and so experience an extracorporeal relocation too!\* *\*It's important to note here that I say a major source as the adrenal glands in both sexes as well as the ovaries in the bitch produce small quantities also.*

## “What consequence does this have?”

### Dogs testosterone levels and general confidence

Importantly, testosterone is valuable as a hormone from a behaviour perspective. In multiple species, it has been demonstrated to be closely associated with confidence. Why is this protective against behaviour struggles?

Well, behaviour struggles are often driven by lack of confidence, anxiety, fear and situational pessimism and certainly never the result of positive emotional states that testosterone would promote. Testosterone mediates increases in the thresholds at which an animal experiences the emotions of fear and anxiety in the amygdala, the threat detection area of the brain.

### Study Highlight

“Testosterone reduces anxiety-like behaviors in rodents and increases exploration of anxiogenic (worrying) parts of the environment. Effects of testosterone on innate defensive behaviors remain understudied. Here, we demonstrate that exogenous testosterone reduces aversion to cat odor in male mice.”

Click for FrontiersIn [↗](#)

<https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fnbeh.2019.00033/full>



**“There is absolutely no benefit to reducing an animal’s confidence when working on their behaviour. Confidence is never a bad thing!”**

### Testosterone and Social Interactions

Further to this, while before it was always thought that increased testosterone resulted in increased aggression in a very linear relationship, the reality is very different when it comes to testosterone’s involvement in social interactions. In fact, in a 2015 functional MRI study in humans on amygdala activation in response to an angry face, it was shown that amygdala activation increased upon approach to the angry face, accurately aligned with the reality of the situation, but actually decreased when avoided when testosterone is added exogenously (from outside the body) as compared to when it is not.

This would be consistent with an effective coping strategy when presented with a threatening interaction. Further to this, testosterone has been shown to promote social approach in a variety of species and in 2016, it was shown that administering a single dose of testosterone to human patients with social anxiety disorder increased approach tendencies to a social interaction. These studies alone highlight that the picture isn’t as clear as originally thought and may even be the opposite of what was originally thought.

### Testosterone and Behaviour Problems

In 2018, McGreevy et al published a study in Plos One (<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5931473/>), assessing how the length of time a dog maintained their gonads for influenced the risk of behaviour struggles.

#### What did they find?

The shorter the time they keep their gonads and, in turn, the sooner they lose most of their testosterone, the less likely the dogs’ owners were to report two behaviour struggles - howling when left alone and indoor urine marking. Oh! Easy! Question Answered! To theatre we go....

#### Wait for it...

The findings didn’t end there. The longer the dogs in the study (sample size of 6235) kept their gonads attached and, in turn, their testosterone, the less likely their owners were to report 26 (Yes, TWENTY SIX!) mostly unwelcome behaviour struggles, Further to this, 7 (yes, SEVEN!) of these behaviour struggles that were much less likely the longer a dog remained entire would be labelled as “aggressive” (including “aggression” directed towards people and other dogs). Now, of course, to explore this further, the evidence-base would benefit from a prospective study but in the absence of this in the meantime, we have to consider whether there really is enough evidence to be routinely doing an irreversible procedure when there are reversible options available.

**“The differences reported here between undesirable behaviours of castrated and intact dogs were in the range of 5.04% and 12.31%, suggesting that, for some dogs, partial or complete denial of puberty may reduce indoor urine-marking but have many other undesirable consequences.” - McGreevy et al, 2018**





## Adolescence and Behaviour Changes

Adolescence is a developmental period of brain anatomy, hormonal and cognitive shuffling. Its evolutionary purpose in family-living mammals is proposed to be to test the social group relationship such that it can be established if family genes would most successfully be passed to the next generation by remaining within the family group and supporting the family or rather disbanding to start a new family group.

Both human and canine research shows onset of hormonal cycling is associated with attachment to the family group. Where attachment is strong, puberty being delayed until later is in line with its evolutionary purpose.

Further to this, in both humans and dogs, it has been demonstrated that, through the complex anatomical and cognitive changes that are happening, this is a time of increased conflict within the family group. It has been shown that increased conflict occurs with decreased attachment to the carer in attempt to break already fragile relationships and free that now reproductively capable individual to perpetuate their genes outside of the family.

**“Bitches with behaviour indicative of insecure attachments pre-adolescence became reproductively capable earlier”**

- Asher et al., 2020

**In a 2020 study by Asher et al, dogs in the study were nearly twice as likely to ignore the “sit” cue when they are eight months old (adolescent) as compared to when they were five months old. Further to this, the dogs’ response to a stranger increased over the same period, the dogs becoming more responsive to the “sit” cue when delivered by a stranger.**

Trainability and responsiveness towards their owners reduces during adolescence. While these characteristics continue to increase in response to people outside of the family group, consistent with its evolutionary purpose. Importantly, this effect is compounded with lower relationship measures - the lower scoring the relationship pre-adolescence, the more exaggerated this effect becomes. How does this happen? This is an active area of research but one well documented cause is that of reduced influence of the pre-frontal cortex on the amygdala with actual anatomical changes influencing this.

In summary, adolescence is an evolutionarily beneficial process, not a disease. With education of the real WHY behind dogs’ changing behaviour in this time, owners can be more empathetic and compassionate towards their dogs and themselves and, most importantly, not make irreversible surgical choices in the hope of fixing what is a perfectly normal process in most dogs.

## What about the health benefits?

While the focus of this handbook is to help you wade through the complex topic of testosterone, behaviour and neutering, health is inevitably going to be a consideration. Castration has for a long time been recommended from a health standpoint, reducing the risk of a variety of diseases. However, these health benefits that castration brings - such as prevention (and resolution of) benign prostatic hyperplasia - are only of significance after the age of

5 in most dogs when they become at increased risk of such. Equally, there’s early evidence to show that castration before one year of age could increase the risk of joint disease and allergic skin disease. With this in mind, many practices that I’ve consulted for have adopted a policy of dogs under five years of age not to be neutered without a behaviour consult within practice or referral and temporary, reversible options always considered first.

**“My dog is already castrated, how do i stick them back on?”**

Whenever I talk about this, it often causes of a wave of remorse and grieving for the now lost testicles of a dog’s youth. BUT we work with people on a daily basis whose dogs have had their testicles removed and yet they are achieving amazing results and living the lives that they dreamt of when they got a dog in the first place. Just as there are behaviour and training options for behaviour struggles (which we’ll move into shortly) instead of castration, there are behaviour and training options to grow confidence, build environmental optimism and transform behaviour struggles in the absence of the help of testosterone.

The first step we have to take is to ditch the labels we may have unknowingly placed on the dog, the limiting beliefs and the story of how they arrived where they did. If we don’t do this, we remain stuck. The second step we need to take is to take the dog-owning dream off the back burner, make it a MUST and move from problem to the solution. The reality is that, castrated or not, you can unlock real-life results and amazing transformations with clients’ dogs and your dog with the right plan, the right tools, the right games and strategies. And if you need some help, the Behavet Team are here for you!



# Making a Referral to Behavet

The Behavet Team sees over 600 cases each and every month referred by Vet Practices like yours!

Organising a referral is straightforward. Simply get your client's permission, click the link below and give us a few details, and we'll take care of the rest!

## Benefits of a Behavet Behaviour Referral

### Short Wait Times

Our maximum wait time is only 2 weeks, and we also hold spaces so that we can see your client in as little as 24 hours in case of emergency.

### Covered by Insurance

We do direct claims with Petplan, The Kennel Club, Agria, Napo, Every paw, LV and non-direct claims with many other insurers.

### Remote Consultations

This ensures you and your client have access to 100% reward-based behaviour help from a veterinarian behaviourist or clinical animal behaviourist no matter the location. We even take care of remote practical demonstration too so your client knows exactly what they should be doing.







# Behaviour Consult Plans

On the following pages you will find  
the answers to the commonly asked  
questions around male neutering!





# MARKING

**“My dog George is marking everywhere and has begun marking in the house!  
It’s time to get him neutered!”**

**“Let’s tackle this frustrating struggle!”**



# MARKING

**Marking can be incredibly frustrating for owners, but these consultation guidelines can soon help!**

Firstly, how is George's behaviour generally? How is he with people and other dogs? How is he doing around any children/grandchildren (etc)?

**Performing a behaviour-specific closed questioning approach as well as a more subjective, open approach will help this to be a more objective assessment.**

**Where the owner responds with one or more behaviour changes in response to any of the listed triggers, castration may not be indicated AND, when being opted for, should be a reversible options to trial the results. See page 25.**

The reason I wanted to know the answer to those questions is because when we neuter George, we remove his main source of testosterone, which is produced in his testes. Now testosterone could well be the main driver of his marking behaviour but it

A study by Neilson et al., 1997, found that neutering resulted in approximately 80% of male dogs within the sample stopping marking.

also has some big benefits, the main one being that it's closely linked to George's confidence. Now his marking behaviour could be the consequence of this testosterone but 20% of dog marking does not resolve with neutering and could well be the consequence of anxiety (so might actually get worse with neutering!)

**If any of the initial questions suggest concurrent behaviour struggles:**

With this in mind, a behaviour referral could be the best way of ensuring this doesn't get worse and gets better.

**If the initial questioning is unremarkable:**

With this in mind, I would suggest trialing the effects of neutering before doing the irreversible procedure. The cool thing is that we can do this now by utilising an implant. (See the page 25 for how implants work.)

Further to this, it's vital we implement a training plan that'll teach George not to mark, especially as he has practised doing it already and, in most instances, this is actually enough if we wanted to try this first before considering neutering options again.



*Here's a complete training plan that you can provide to owners to combat marking.*

## Limit Rehearsal

1. Utilise a house line to limit wandering, ensure proximity to owner to monitor and spot need for toileting
2. Vertical surfaces (sides of furniture, doorways and walls) are likely to encourage marking so avoid these areas, keep him moving in these areas or employ him in an activity such a Kong or long-lasting chew
3. When owner needs to relax or is preoccupied, make sure to pop him in a crate or puppy pen

## Make Preferred Choices Clear

Teach a marking cue (e.g. when you say "Go Mark", he goes and marks).

This is super easy to grow by taking him to vertical surfaces in the garden and on walks and saying "Go Mark" at the point you know he is about to mark and then reward him. He'll start to do it less in the absence of the cue as you grow this.

## Reward Choices We Want in Challenging Locations

Make sure to reward him with pieces of his daily food allowance for hanging out around challenging locations like vertical surfaces or previously marked locations and NOT marking.

## Relax Your Management Strategies

As rehearsal becomes less and less, you can relax your management strategies.

## Behaviour Referral

We can come up with the complete plan, communicate it and demonstrate it through a Zoom consultation. We do direct claims with Petplan, The Kennel Club, Agria, Napo, Every paw, LV and non-direct claims with many other insurers. We ensure maximum wait times of just 2 weeks.

To find out more for you and your dog visit: [www.beha.vet](http://www.beha.vet)



## How Do Deslorelin Implants Work?

Deslorelin is a synthetic analogue of gonadotrophin-releasing hormone (GnRH). Deslorelin, more potent than natural GnRH binds with higher affinity to its receptors within the anterior pituitary gland, acting as an agonist. In the very short term, this stimulates secretion of LH and FSH and subsequently testosterone but with prolonged, continuous exposure (as achieved with the implant, leads to inhibition of secretion through desensitisation.

The evidence base demonstrates the effects of reduced blood testosterone and visible reduction in testicle size, which in 95% of dogs is evident from 6 weeks after implantation with a mild earlier increase in these measures in line with the pharmacology.

Importantly from a reversibility perspective, the majority of dogs regained normal semen function within one year after treatment stopping and so it is assumed blood testster one levels likely precede this considerably. With this latency in mind of up to one year based on current evidence, even reversible options castration should be entered into with careful consideration.





# TRAINING ISSUES

**“My dog Tony has hit adolescence  
- he’s stopped listening, become  
unruly and generally is obnoxious!  
It’s time to get him neutered!”**

**“Let’s help owners to consider other options...”**



# TRAINING ISSUES

**Adolescence is a challenging time.**

**Let's arm owners with a training**

**plan that can help them**

**overcome this struggle!**

Adolescence is a period of development. It's associated with structural brain, cognitive and hormonal changes. It's a period that actively promotes conflict between the animal (human or canine) and their carer as an evolutionarily beneficial temperature check on the relationship, making your dog less responsive and trainable at times. This won't be fixed by neutering but the good news is that there are things we can do that I can talk you through.



Right now your dog's brain is going through a reshuffle that can make it more challenging for them to regulate their emotions. What all the research agrees on in relation to human and canine adolescence is that confidence and relationship are key! A study in 2020 on canine adolescence actually found that conflict (in the form of ignoring a sit cue) was much reduced with increasing relationship between dog and owner. It's a really tough time for dogs (and owners!) but it's transient and we can speed that up with some tips.



*Here's a training plan that you can provide to owners.*

## Here's a training plan that you can provide to owners.

What we need to do is focus on relationship - imagine that you and your dog have a relationship bank account. Positive interactions - like training games, massage and play - pay into the bank account. Negative interactions - like conflict, frustration and attempting to tell them off/intimidate/punish them - withdraw from the bank account.

Your goal in this time is make sure there are way more positive interactions than negative ones and you can get the whole family involved and keep a bit of a log - turn it into a challenge!

## Pick Your Battles

The more your adolescent dog practices running off, jumping up, humping other dogs, you name it, the more they are likely to do that in the future.

The adolescent period represents a time of picking our battles, celebrating small wins and generally setting your dog up for success by not putting them in situations that highlight their weaknesses!

Further to this, now probably isn't the time to be drilling Tony on walking nicely on leash - instead we might want to think of some easy wins we can achieve and have fun with each day.

## Behaviour Referral

We can come up with the complete plan, communicate it and demonstrate it through a Zoom consultation. We do direct claims with Petplan, The Kennel Club, Agria, Napo, Every paw, LV and non-direct claims with many other insurers. We ensure maximum wait times of just 2 weeks.

To find out more for you and your dog visit: [www.beha.vet](http://www.beha.vet)



# DOG-DOG AGGRESSION

**My dog is unpredictable  
with other dogs... It's time  
to get him neutered!”**

**“Let's tackle this worrying behaviour**



# DOG-DOG AGGRESSION

**Dog-dog aggression can be a real worry for owners. Read on to see how we can tackle this.**

Interactions with other dogs involve an interaction chain - a successful interaction involves your dog moving from one step to the next step seamlessly.



The thing is, a successful interaction can only occur with three skills:

- 1. Confidence**
- 2. Disengagement** (seeing value in moving away from the interaction)
- 3. Calmness.**

Any weakness in these will lead to unpredictable (or very predictable!!) breaks in the chain. Now when this chain has a break in it - we might see some unpredictable and inappropriate behaviours!

It might be that your dog unpredictably snaps when having a nose-nose interaction. It might be that your dog stands over another dog and raises their hackles. It might be that your dog charges and barks at other dogs upon the approach.

I'm sure we can all relate to a time in our lives where we've had a fail in one of these departments and had a bad interaction with someone (maybe a partner....) - it didn't come from overconfidence, it came from all the rubbish that went on at the office that day and your sore back!

Success isn't about trying to correct, inhibit or STOP a behaviour. What we need to do is grow the skills needed to behave effectively and go through the world feeling great! Neutering won't achieve this and might reduce your dog's confidence further, testosterone being very involved in your dog's feelings of confidence.

The good news is we can absolutely teach these skills - here's some first aid advice:



*Here's a training plan that you can provide to owners to tackle dog-dog aggression.*

## Confidence

Confidence is grown first of all by avoiding bad experiences with other dogs. This means we need to keep him on lead while working on this - even though he is worried, dogs are inherent gamblers by nature and will put themselves in situations they aren't comfortable with! Then from a distance that they are not reacting, feed your dog some of their daily food allowance when they see other dogs; this will help them link dogs with positive outcomes at same time as stopping any negative outcomes.

## Disengagement

We can teach value in moving away from things too. We'd recommend a behaviour consult to review his life overall and then share and demonstrate specific strategies to teach value in moving

away from other dogs. It absolutely can be taught! And this will repair his conversations with other dogs.

## Calmness

Calmness training often starts before you even leave the house. How is his arousal level at the point he realises he's going for a walk? Start by promoting calmness here first by popping his lead on and working on promoting calmness by calmly feeding to the floor, mixing things up by going and sitting down and rewarding him on his bed or popping his lead on and giving him a long-lasting chew or filled Kong to remove the walk anticipation and arousal spike!

Should you still be struggling, we can arrange a behaviour referral..... we see these cases on a daily basis!

## Behaviour Referral

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# BARKING

**“My dog’s barking all the time,  
it’s time to get him castrated OR  
I want to get my dog castrated  
to calm him down”**

**“Let’s tackle this frustrating behaviour!”**



# BARKING

## Excessive barking can really impact dogs and owners' relationships

Well, every dog has a stress 'bucket' with which they walk through life. Each day, things pay into this bucket and it fills - like a bucket filling with water.

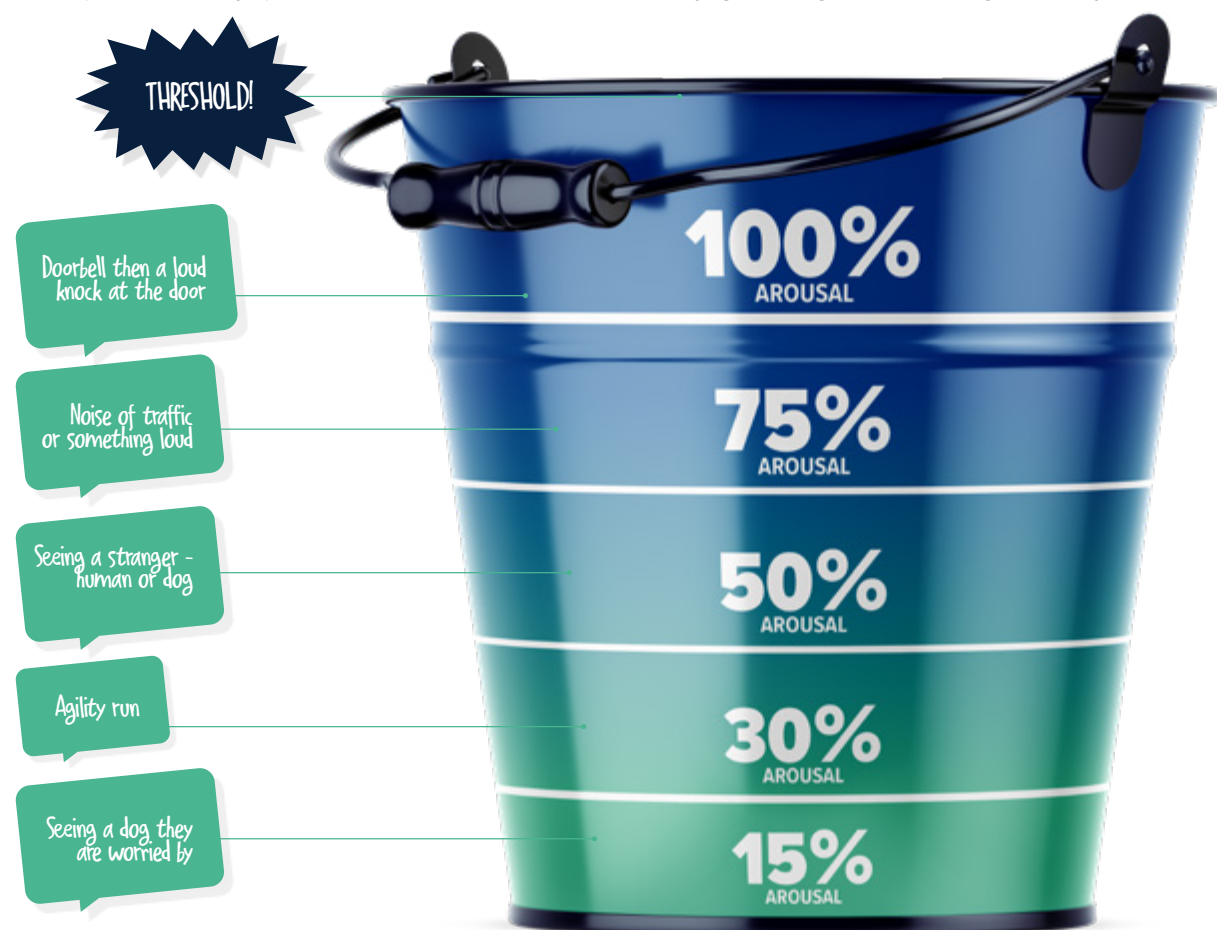
The thing is, both exciting and scary things pay into the bucket. As this bucket fills, the volume dial on your dog's behaviour increases, too - they bark more!

The challenge is that, although things pay into this bucket quickly, it takes a while to drain. This means that, over the course of hours (or even days), the bucket fills and the

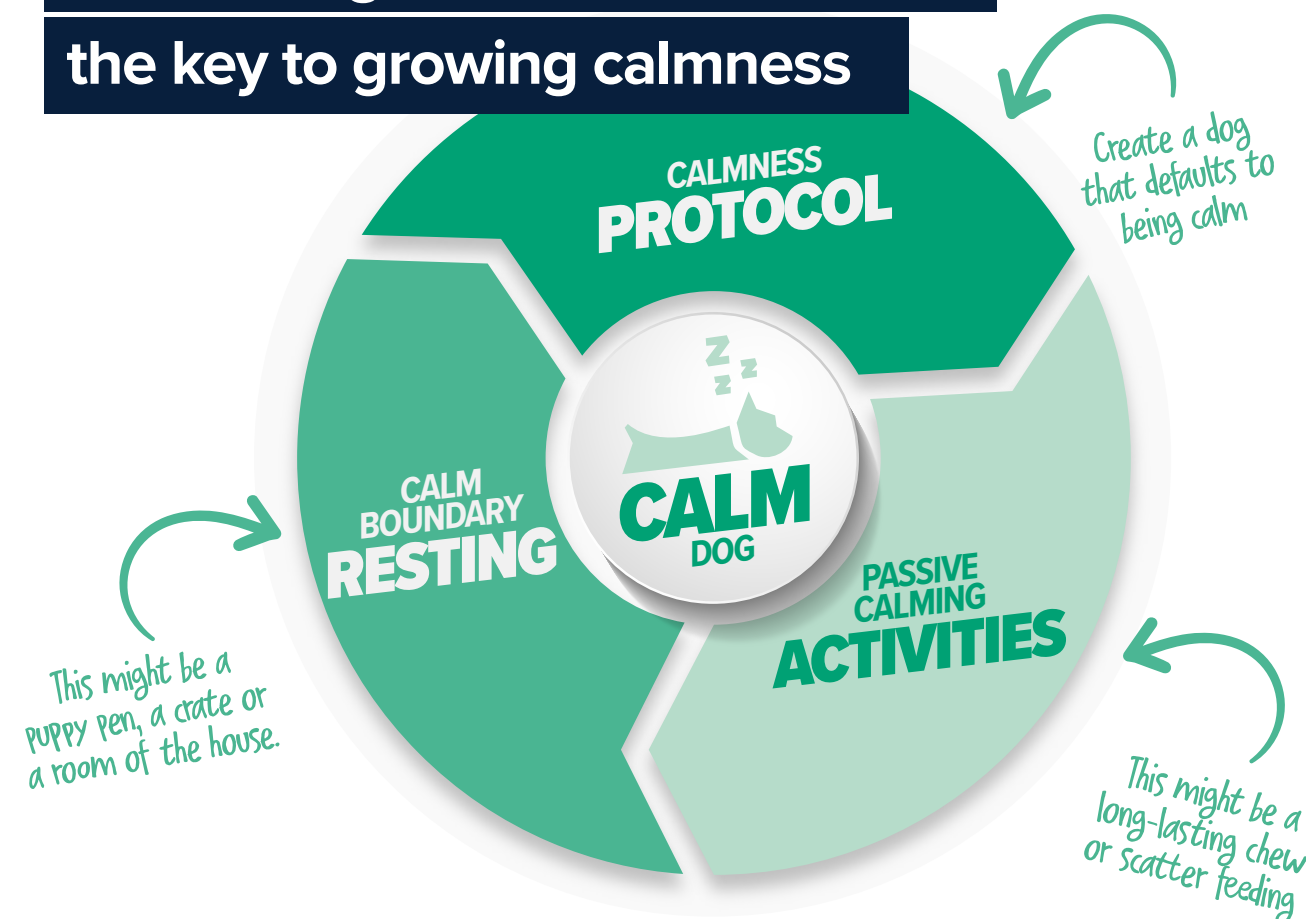
volume increases, due to an accumulation of all the events that have happened.

Because it's often things that your dog is worried about that pay into this bucket, it's quite possible that the bucket will get even fuller and the barking or unruly behaviour increases when you neuter your dog. This is because testosterone is closely linked to your dog's sense of confidence and whether they see a situation as worrying or not.

Now the way that we can improve this is by growing calmness generally.



## Introducing the calmness wheel! the key to growing calmness



The calmness wheel shows three different ways you can grow calmness with your dog. Each segment represents a way your dog can spend their time that will promote calmness.

**Remember: what they practice, they become.**

### Calmness Protocol:

this involves keeping some of your dog's daily food allowance to one side and feeding them bits of it spontaneously throughout the day as you spot them being calm. This puts value into calmness and creates a dog that defaults to being calm.

A lickable calm mat Scatter feeding or Sniffing.

### Active Rest:

this strategy acknowledges that actually choice is tiring. Think about having a long day at work, followed by a restaurant meal where you can't decide what to eat because you have made way too many choices already that day! Active rest involves your dog spending time away from the action – whether that be in a crate or puppy pen or relaxation room within the house.

### Passive Calming Activities:

Passive Calming Activities are activities that both calm your dog and promote further calm feelings. Examples of these activities may include: A long-lasting chew,

# HUMPING

**“My dog Randy is humping everything! It’s time to get him neutered!”**

**“Let’s tackle this embarrassing behaviour!”**



# HUMPING

**Humping can be distressing for owners. Read on to learn how to help them combat it!**

**Your dog might be humping for a variety of reasons. Firstly, how is Randy's behaviour generally? How is he with people and other dogs? How is he doing around your grandchildren?**

**Performing a behaviour-specific closed questioning approach as well as a more subjective, open approach will help this to be a more objective assessment. See page 25.**



The reason I wanted to know the answer to those questions is because when we neuter Randy, we remove his main source of testosterone, which is produced in his testes. Now testosterone could well be involved in his humping behaviour but it also has some big benefits and could actually help in reducing it, the main one being that it's closely linked to Randy's confidence.

Humping could be the consequence of Randy not quite knowing how to interact with the individual or thing OR as a coping strategy for being worried about something else in the environment. Further to this, it could just be a consequence of overexcitement.

If any of the initial questions suggest concurrent behaviour struggles:

With this in mind, a behaviour referral could be the best way of ensuring this doesn't get worse and gets better. If Randy continues to feel worried about things in his world, this could escalate to more significant behaviour struggles.

## **If the initial questioning is unremarkable:**

With this in mind, we could trial the effects of neutering before doing the irreversible procedure and the cool thing is that we can do this now utilising an implant whose effects last a specific timeframe. Prior to doing this, it would be worth implementing a training plan - we could then revisit this option in a few weeks.

Regardless of whether neutering is an option or not for Randy, it's vital we implement a training plan that'll teach Randy not to hump and, in most instances, this is actually enough if we wanted to try this first before considering neutering options again.

## **Limit Rehearsal**

What he practises every day, he'll get better at! That means he could be getting very skilled at humping! With this in mind, we need to make sure we limit rehearsal. List the top 5 scenarios that he will hump

on a piece of paper and next to each one, write what we could in that situation to ensure he doesn't, for example we might not put him in the situation at all, we might pop him on lead, we might give him something to do like a filled kong.

## **Make Preferred Choices Clear**

We could also teach him something else to do in those situations. For example, if he tends to hump you while you are sat watching TV in the evening, how about we reward him with some of his daily food allowance on a bed to teach him something else to do at that time.

## **Reward Choices We Want in Challenging Locations**

Make sure to reward him with pieces of his daily food allowance for hanging out around challenging locations and NOT humping like next to your legs or around that favourite cushion that he likes to hump usually so that we promote the choice of not humping.

## **Behaviour Referral**

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# RECALL

**“My dog’s recall has vanished! It’s time to get him neutered!”**

**“Let’s combat this worrying struggle!”**





The behaviour portal  
for veterinary professionals

We Make It Easy  
To Integrate  
Behavioural Care

**FREE**  
**CPD COURSES**  
for your team with every  
case you refer



<https://www.beha.vet/behavet-pro-newsletter-sign-up>



Rated **Excellent** on Trustpilot

[www.beha.vet](http://www.beha.vet)

✉ [hello@beha.vet](mailto:hello@beha.vet)

# RECALL

**Worsening recall can be a real worry for owners. Fortunately there's lots we can do to help.**

A recall is the consequence of the balance between value for engaging with you and value for disengaging from the environment. Now when one of these tips in the wrong direction, we see our dogs questioning whether a recall is a good deal or not.

Further to this, some dogs' recalls fail as a consequence of being worried about the thing they won't recall from. Dogs are inherent gamblers as a species and don't like mystery - this means if they are unsure whether they are going to like an experience or find it worrying, they tend to put themselves right in the middle of the action!

This poses a challenge when it comes to considering whether neutering will help your dog or not as this will take away their testosterone, which could be promoting confidence and helping the picture.

With this in mind, how is his behaviour generally? How is he with people and other dogs? How is he doing around your grandchildren?

**Performing a behaviour-specific closed questioning approach as well as a more subjective, open approach will help this to be a more objective assessment. See page 25.**

**If any of the initial questions suggest concurrent behaviour struggles:**

With this in mind, a behaviour referral could be the best way of ensuring this doesn't get worse and gets better. If Randy continues to feel worried about things in his world, this could escalate to more significant behaviour struggles.

**If the initial questioning is unremarkable:**

With this in mind, we could trial the effects of neutering before doing the irreversible procedure and the cool thing is that we can do this now utilising an implant whose effects last a specific timeframe. However, as this isn't a direct consequence of your dog being entire, this is unlikely to help the struggle and might introduce some new ones. So prior to doing this though, we must implement a training plan - we could then revisit this option in a few weeks.



*Here's a training plan you can provide to your client.*

## Building Engagement with You

You can build engagement with you by playing some simple games with your dog's daily food allowance. Here's one to get you started - make sure to play it at home and in the garden before taking it out and about.

### The Orientation Game:

1. Throw a piece of your dog's daily food allowance or a tasty treat a short distance of 2 metres to your left
2. Your dog will eat the tasty treat and then likely turn back to you wanting another
3. As they turn back mark the moment of orientation with a "yes"
4. Then throw the next piece of food to right and repeat!
5. This creates a dog that loves orienting back to you and sees value in orienting back to you. It also grows your dog's value for engaging with you.

## Building Disengagement From the Environment

This is huge and one that there are a tonne of strategies for. We can now use the orientation game to start to grow it!

1. Once your dog is responding quickly and consistently to the orientation game, start to play it in environments with distractions on lead.
2. Occasionally you might throw a tasty treat in the direction of one of your dog's distractions at a safe distance where you think you'll be successful.
3. When your dog orients back to you and you say "yes" and feed, you just put value into disengaging from that distraction!

### Limiting Rehearsal

While working on growing engagement with you and disengagement from the environment, it's vital you limit your dog's rehearsal of ignoring your recall. This is going to mean being intentional about where you take your dog and utilising management strategies like a lead and a long line.

## Behaviour Referral

We can come up with the complete plan, communicate it and demonstrate it through a Zoom consultation. We do direct claims with Petplan, The Kennel Club, Agria, Napo, Every paw, LV and non-direct claims with many other insurers. We ensure maximum wait times of just 2 weeks.

To find out more for you and your dog visit: [www.beha.vet](http://www.beha.vet)



# TEMPLATE BEHAVIOUR

Behaviour-Specific Questionnaire

For You & Your Clients

Does Your Dog Do Any of The Following in response to insert trigger.

Destructive Behaviour .....	Yes ____	No ____
Toileting.....	Yes ____	No ____
Vocalising, Barking, Growling .....	Yes ____	No ____
Salivating, Pacing, Panting, Lip Licking .....	Yes ____	No ____
Trembling / Shaking .....	Yes ____	No ____
Hiding / Escaping .....	Yes ____	No ____
Freezing .....	Yes ____	No ____
Refusing Food / Treats .....	Yes ____	No ____
Lunging .....	Yes ____	No ____
Redirecting on Owner / Lead .....	Yes ____	No ____
Seeking Out People .....	Yes ____	No ____
Chase & Unresponsiveness .....	Yes ____	No ____
Biting, Snapping .....	Yes ____	No ____

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