

# BACK-TO-SCHOOL TIPS FOR DOGS

FROM PENN VET'S BEHAVIOR MEDICINE CLINIC AT RYAN HOSPITAL



## GET YOUR DOG READY FOR THE SCHOOL YEAR ROUTINE

1

### ANTICIPATE POTENTIAL SEPARATION ANXIETY IN YOUR DOG

After having the family around all summer, back-to-school can be an adjustment for your dog. Recognize signs of anxiousness in your pet such as whining, or yawning that is not associated with sleep or waking up. Other signs can include trembling or constant following of a familiar person. If you can, increase the length of your departures gradually.

2

### SCHEDULE QUALITY TIME WITH YOUR DOG

Schedule long walks, time at the Dog Park (if your dog gets along with other dogs), or periods of play. Exercise can reduce anxiety and promote relaxation to enhance napping while the family is at school and work.

3

### ACCESS TO MENTAL STIMULATION FOR YOUR DOG WHILE HOME ALONE

Be sure your dog has puzzle (food-filled) toys, chew toys, rope toys, or a safe rawhide bone to chew. This can reduce chewing of shoes, clothing and furniture. Always leave water and designate a comfortable place to rest.



4

### BREAK-UP THE MONOTONY OF YOUR DOG'S DAY

Consider the periodic services of a dog walker or doggy day care. Break up the loneliness in your pet's day with some human and/or canine companionship. Dog walkers can also be your first line of defense in identifying potential illnesses or emergencies that might arise while the family is away.

5

### KEEP BACKPACKS AND LUNCH BOXES OFF THE FLOOR

Reduce the opportunity for your dog to get into something that they shouldn't. Items such as glue sticks, pens, ink, candy, gum, and paper clips can pose serious hazards to your pet.

6

### BE SURE YOUR DOG IS SECURE

As kids pile out of the front door, be sure your pet doesn't dart out with them. Just in case, be sure your pet has identification and is up-to-date on all vaccinations. Busy streets also can be a danger for dogs who like to run and roam.

7

### DO NOT LEAVE YOUR DOG ALONE IN A CRATE IF HE IS NOT USED TO IT

Many dogs do not like to be crated when they are left alone. They will panic and may injure themselves attempting to escape. If your dog regularly uses the crate when alone and is comfortable in it, then it is safe to leave him in the crate. Consider using a camera system with live-streaming to know what your dog does when he is left alone.



The **Behavior Medicine Clinic at Penn Vet's Ryan Hospital** is dedicated to helping pets and their owners live together comfortably and safely. To schedule an appointment, please call 215.898.3347. For more information, please visit [www.vet.upenn.edu](http://www.vet.upenn.edu).