

# CREATING A SAFE SPACE FOR YOUR DOG

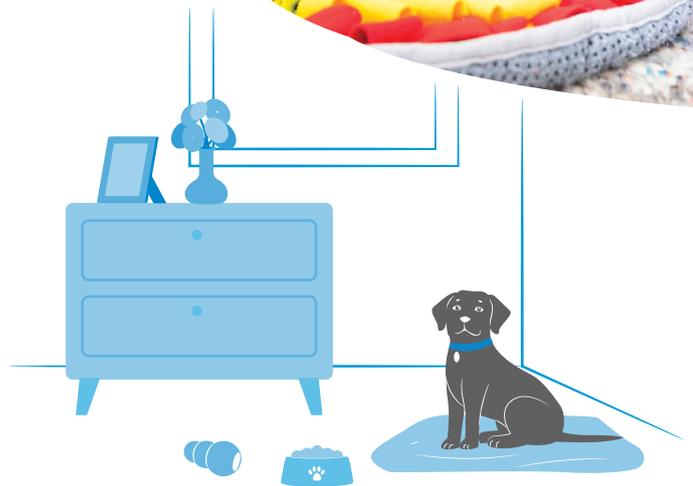


## WHAT IS A SAFE SPACE?

Safe spaces are quiet spots in your home where your dog can rest without being touched or bothered.

### These should be:

- Tucked away in a quiet area, or where people don't go often e.g. a spare bedroom.
- In a quiet area where your dog can **still see you** e.g. in a dining nook, home office, or a quiet corner of the lounge room.
- Not in the way of foot traffic.



## WHY DO DOGS NEED SAFE SPACES AT HOME?

If your dog knows it can go to its safe space when it feels scared, worried, stressed or simply needs time to rest, this can reduce the chance of a bite.

### When your dog is in their safe space:

- Avoid approaching or touching them.
- Try not to move them out of their safe space unless they want to go.
- Make sure your kids understand what the safe space means (leave the dog alone!).



## NOTHING BAD HAPPENS IN THE SAFE SPACE!

- Your dog gets to choose when it uses a safe space.
- The safe space is not a time-out or punishment.
- All your dog's favourite things are in the safe space, so they want to spend time there.
- Make sure your dog can leave the area if they want to - avoid setups that trap them.

**Creating a safe space is a simple step that makes a big difference to your dog's wellbeing.**



## SETTING UP THE SAFE SPACE:

1 Choose a quiet corner or room that can be separated from the busy activity of the rest of the home.

- Is there a place your dog already likes to hang out, like a bedroom or spot in the loungeroom? Try creating a safe space there first.
- Avoid narrow passageways (like hallways).
- Make the safe space cozy with familiar bedding and toys.
- Keep it clean and cozy.



2 Introduce your dog to its safe space slowly.

- It takes time for a dog to feel relaxed in their safe space.
- Toss some small treats into the safe space for your dog to find and add long-lasting chew treat. Licking and chewing helps dogs relax.

3 The safe space should promote calm behaviour.

- If your dog is resting calmly in its safe space, tell them they are a “good dog” and throw a treat to them to show them you like what they are doing.



## YOUR DOG WILL STILL WANT TO KNOW THEY CAN FIND YOU IF THEY NEED YOU



- While barriers (like baby gates) can keep dogs and kids physically safe, some dogs feel worried or upset if they can't get to you.
- Figure out what your dog can cope with and get them used to any barriers you want to use **slowly**.
- Planning for kids? Start training your dog now! Use barriers and practice short separations. It'll make life with kids and dogs easier and **safer** for everyone in the long run.

## TAKE CARE WITH CRATES

- A crate is not the same thing as a safe space.
- A crate is a space that the dog is closed into so they can't get out.
- There are situations where a crate can be useful, but dogs need to be trained to cope in a crate, and crates should only be used under the guidance of a veterinarian or professional dog behaviourist.
- Dogs should not be closed inside crates for long periods of time.



## SAFE SPACE

- A safe space allows the dog to come and go as it pleases.
- Any door on a safe space should always be left open so the dog can leave if it wants.



! Safe spaces help your dog stay calm and keep your family safe.