

THE AROUSAL BUCKET

Understanding this concept is going to be key to making life with a teenage dog a lot easier!

Your dog's bucket represents your dog's brain. Your dog is constantly exposed to things that can pour into the bucket - these things could be exciting ("positive arousal") or worrying, even ("negative arousal"). And when your dog's bucket is full, they can't think straight. Everything spills out and then we have problems.

We've all had that experience of bursting into tears over something silly after a bad day at work. It is exactly the same for your dog. Your dog's bucket is full to overflowing and barking and lunging is just one way that they might express it.



What does a full bucket look like?

- Barking/more vocal and lunging
- Struggling to settle in the house
- Pulling on the lead
- Jumping up
- Distracted/struggling to focus on owner
- Irritability (with you, your children, other dogs/pets in the household)
- Hiding away/avoidance
- Zoomies

How do you empty your dog's bucket? **CALMNESS**

You want to start guarding your dog's bucket. Learn to watch for signs of your dog's bucket being fuller than normal. The key is to become your dog's expert observer. Know what works for your dog. Know what your dog's positive and negative stressors are. Notice what has an impact on them. Notice what is normal for them physically, psychologically, emotionally and behaviourally, and recognise and identify any changes in the norm. Take action on any changes by giving your dog a few days of rest and relaxation.

IMPORTANT: It can take up to 72 hours for your dog's bucket to empty!