

# B

## Be positive

- Focus on rewarding relaxed behaviour. Always use positive reinforcement (affection, treats and toys) that rewards and helps to shape increasingly relaxed behaviour.
- Do not reprimand undesirable behaviour; the negative attention increases anxiety and confusion for a dog suffering from separation anxiety.

# O

## Only reward calm behaviour

- Spend time with your dog and calmly reward your dog only when he/she is relaxed.
- Ignore attention-seeking and don't inadvertently reward anxious behaviours with attention.
- Reinforce calm behaviour with quiet attention, affection, a treat and/or toy.
- Include daily walks and play time in your schedule whenever possible.

# N

## No more drama when you come and go

- **When you leave:** 20 to 30 minutes before going out, provide your dog with a favourite distraction (treat or toy) then try to minimise your interaction with your dog until it's time to leave so your dog becomes engaged with the distraction. When you go, simply leave with a minimum of fuss.
- **When you return:** speak quietly and calmly to your dog as you greet him/her and then reward the calm behaviour. Keep the greeting low key and calm. Remove the treat or toy that you left as a distraction. (Be careful; consult your veterinarian if your dog reacts negatively.)

# D

## Develop your dog's independence

- Reward your dog with treats or attention when he/she is relaxed.
- Once your dog will relax on cue, teach him/her to stay settled down in a specified area so he/she has a consistent place to feel safe and secure while you move away. Gradually increase the time and distance separating you from your dog.

**Remember, this process will take time, so don't be tempted to rush your dog through it.**