

BE RIGHT BACK!

HOW TO OVERCOME SEPARATION ANXIETY
AND REGAIN YOUR FREEDOM

THE MAGIC MAT GAME FOR HYPER-ATTACHED DOGS

The **Magic Mat Game** will teach your dog that it's way more rewarding to stay on his mat than to follow you around the house.

You will need:

- A mat that you'll only use for this training (and will put away when not training),
- Lots of great treats, and
- The training plan (outlined in this appendix) and the demo video (see www.berightbackthebook.com)

Here's how to go about it.

“Grading” Rules:

Work in sets of five tries.

- If your dog gets it right four or five times out of five, move to next step.
- If your dog gets it right three times out of five, repeat the current step.
- If your dog gets it right one or two times out of five, drop to the previous step.
- Always reward your dog in a down position. If he gets up when you're reaching for treats after a distraction, get him back into a down before giving him the treat.

The more you practice this, the more magic the mat will become. When you take out the mat, your dog will rush to it. This is because all that reward training you've been doing has made him associate the mat with treats!

Once this behavior is solid, you can start to take the mat on the road, which is great for trips to the vets, visiting friends, or even eating out (in places where that's allowed).

Here's the plan.

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STEP #	WHAT DOG NEEDS TO DO TO EARN TREATS	# RIGHT OUT OF 5
1.	Hold a down for 1 second with a treat ~2 feet away from the dog at his nose level.	
2.	Hold a down for 3 seconds with a treat ~2 feet away from the dog at his nose level.	
3.	Hold a down for 1 second with a treat 2–3 feet away on the ground. (If he moves, cover or grab the treat so he can't pick it up.)	
4.	Hold a down for 3 seconds with a treat 2–3 feet away on the ground.	
5.	(Stand on the other side of dog.) Hold a down for 1 second with a treat 2–3 feet away on the ground.	
6.	(Stand on the other side of dog.) Hold a down for 3 seconds with a treat 2–3 feet away on the ground.	
7.	Hold a down while you take 1 step to the side and back.	
8.	Hold a down while you take 2 steps to the side and back.	
9.	Hold a down while you take 3 steps around the dog and back.	
10.	Hold a down while you walk halfway around your dog and back.	
11.	Hold a down while you walk a full circle around the dog.	
12.	Repeat steps 7–11 in the other direction.	
13.	Hold a down while you walk 6 feet across the room, and return immediately.	
14.	Hold a down while you step to doorway, and return immediately.	

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STEP #	WHAT DOG NEEDS TO DO TO EARN TREATS	# RIGHT OUT OF 5
15.	Hold a down while you step out of the room into the hallway and return immediately.	
16.	Hold a down while you step out of the room and close door and return immediately.	
17.	Hold a down while you go into an adjoining room and return immediately.	
18.	Hold a down while you go into an adjoining room and close door, and return immediately.	
19.	Hold a down while you step to doorway and return immediately.	
20.	Hold a down while you step out of room into the hallway and return immediately.	
21.	Hold a down while you step out of room and close door, and return immediately.	
22.	Hold a down while you go into an adjoining room and return immediately.	
23.	Hold a down while you go into an adjoining room and close door then return immediately.	

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CRATE TRAINING BASICS

This simple plan will help your dog or puppy to love his crate. Note that I strongly recommend that you don't crate your anxious dog when you are out.

Crates can be incredibly useful for lots of other situations, though, such as at groomer appointments or when you're traveling.

You need to know that dogs who have had bad experiences in a crate (which might be the vast majority of dogs with separation anxiety) require a lot of time (and a lot of your patience) to warm up to a crate. But it can be done. I know because my dog Percy used to hate his crate. I worked this plan for six months, and now he happily sleeps in there at night. I still don't ever leave him in his crate when I go out, though.

What you will need:

- A crate that's an appropriate size for your dog (for more information on choosing a crate, visit www.berightbackthebook.com.)
- Yummy treats (lots of them!), and
- Tons of patience!

Be sure to review the grading rules on page 229 of *Be Right Back!* for details on how to move through this plan.

Phase I: Get Him Comfortable with Freely Entering the Crate

STEP # WHAT YOU OR YOUR DOG NEED TO DO

1. Leave crate door open and, randomly throughout day, drop treats at the back.
 - » Keep going for 3 days until he charges in as soon as you open the crate door.

2. Use a treat to lure him into crate, feed at the back (toss treat), let him exit at freely.
 - » Move to step 3 when he does this 5 times in a row.

3. Lure him into crate and continue the flow of treats (~1 second apart) as long as he stays in the crate. (Still let him exit freely.)
 - » Move to step 4 when he will stay in the crate happily for 1 minute.

4. Point to crate to hand-signal him into crate and continue the flow of treats (~1 second apart) as long as he stays in crate. (Let him exit at will.)
 - » Move to step 5 when he will stay in the crate happily for 1 minute.

5. Point to crate to hand-signal him into crate and feed and continue the flow of treats (~2 seconds apart) as long as he stays in crate. (Let him exit at will.)
 - » Move to step 6 when he will stay in the crate happily for 1 minute.

Notes

Phase II: Get Him Comfortable with You Closing the Door

STEP # WHAT YOU OR YOUR DOG NEED TO DO

6. Hand-signal him into crate, move door to half-closed, feed, let him exit.

7. Hand-signal him into crate, close door, feed, open door, let him exit.

8. Hand-signal him into crate, close door for 2 seconds, feed, let him exit.

9. Hand-signal him into crate, close door for 3 seconds, feed, let him exit.

10. Hand-signal him into crate, close door for 5 seconds, feed, let him exit.

11. Hand-signal him into crate, close door for 10 seconds, feed, let him exit.

Notes

Phase III: Add Duration

STEP # WHAT YOU OR YOUR DOG NEED TO DO

Make crate very comfy with bedding, hand-signal him into crate, give stuffed Kong or other special chew object, close door, hang out next to crate reading or watching TV for 10 minutes, dropping treats in every 20–30 seconds.

12.

- » Do this 4–5 times over 2 or more days.
- » Move to next step if he goes in without delay and displays no signs of distress when he's in there.

Repeat step 12 at a different time but now occasionally get up and leave room. Return within a few seconds.

13.

- » Do this 4–5 times over 2 or more days.
- » Move to next step if he goes in without delay and displays no signs of distress when he's in there.

Repeat step 12 at a different time but now for 30 minutes and feeding less frequently (every couple of minutes).

14.

- » Do this 4–5 times over 2 or more days.
- » From here you can increase duration as long as your dog displays no signs of distress when he's in there.

Notes