

## The Serene Homecoming

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### The Coming Home Frenzy

There's no denying that dogs are the best "Welcome home!" committee on the planet. Who doesn't love being greeted by canine kisses and a wagging tail when they get home from work?

But most pet parents don't realize that the more exciting your homecoming is, the more your pup's anticipation builds up throughout the day. This build-up can actually be detrimental to your pup's mental health. Not only can it lead to overenthusiastic greetings (like jumping up on guests) but it can also lead to destructive behaviors during the day, such as chewing furniture, to release anticipation.

### The Serene Homecoming

The Serene Homecoming is a simple exercise that you and your entire family can practice with your beloved canine. When coming home to your pup, remain very calm and casual so as not to excite him. Do not speak to your pup or make eye contact with him until he settles down, preferably until he lays down on his own. If it helps, look up at the ceiling as you walk past him, to be sure you don't make eye contact. If your pup jumps on you, ignore him and keep walking away from him.

Once your pup eventually settles down then, and only then, can you calmly pet and greet him. Tell him he's a good pup. Give him a treat. **Make it rewarding to be a nice, calm dog.**

If your pup becomes over exuberant, you must, once again, walk away and ignore him until he settles down again. Once he is settled, you can attempt to greet him again. Keep repeating this until your pup can remain calm while you greet him.

The Serene Homecoming not only prevents and treats anxiety build up and potential destructive behaviors, but it lets your pup know that it's not a big deal when you leave; therefore it's not that exciting when you come home.

This is also an excellent exercise to use when visitors come over, as it is easier for them to ignore the dog and walk away, than try to master the coordination necessary for a physical correction.



While it may feel mean to ignore your dog when they are obviously so happy to see you, it is important to remember that this exercise is actually one of the kindest things you can do for your dog. To be able to reduce even the smallest amount of anxiety while you are gone will greatly benefit them!

If you have a pet behavior question or would like some training assistance,  
San Diego Humane Society is here to help!  
Visit our website at [www.sdhumane.org](http://www.sdhumane.org) to view our behavior and training options,  
or call our **Behavior Helpline at 619-299-7012 ext. 2244** to speak with a trainer.