# **Why do dogs run away?**

**Introduction**

Keeping a pet at home is not an easy task but quite demanding and full of responsibility and accountability. Although In many cases the communion and bond between the dog and his owner is so strong and interactive that it becomes a mutually rewarding and pleasing experience. However, this is not the case in all instances. An owner needs to address the psychological needs of a pet dog besides fulfilling his physical needs. It is necessary to have a clear understanding of a dog’s psyche. It may comprise nostalgia, fear, threat, boredom and many such psychological issues. If at all there is any such issue, it needs to be addressed in time to save any untoward incident. After providing all the possible comforts to his dog, if the owner discovers on an unfortunate day that his dog has run away then one can easily guess his predicaments. The experience could be really traumatic and heart breaking for the owner.

**Early Warning Signals**

Dogs don’t leave the house and the master suddenly. It is an outcome of gradual change in mindset of the dog that results in the eventuality of dog running away. There are many signals that might be picked up by the owner to get forewarned about the impending escape.

1. A dog might show symptoms of boredom.
2. There can be some abnormality in dog’s behavior such as gloominess, scared look, panic attack etc.
3. The dog keeps running down towards exit door as and when it is opened even when there is no obvious reason to go out.
4. The dog keeps tugging at its tether or refuses to enter the kennel.
5. He disobeys the command or shows reluctance in performing his duty etc. For no obvious reasons whatsoever.

## **Reasons**

There can be many reasons for dogs running away from their abode. Some of the common reasons are discussed as under: -

1. **Change in the locality**: - Like humans, dogs too have an attachment to the place where they happen to live for a specific period of time. If the owner shifts to a new locality, it comes as a shock to the dog. In the new locality he soon becomes nostalgic. He starts missing his familiar spots, playground, play mates and acquainted faces. On finding it difficult to cope up with his new surroundings, he tries to run back to his old house where he was more comfortable.
2. **Fear**: -The dog might be encountering certain sounds and sights that are too disturbing for him to tolerate. This could be some sudden explosion or any other sound such as that of a machine or equipment producing an irritating noise unbearable to his ears.
3. **Excessive restrictions**: - If the owner happens to reschedule his dog’s routine due to which either his favorite pastimes are pruned out or some of his freedom is curtailed then he might revolt against this aparent injustice by trying to escape.
4. **Search for excitement**: - Sometimes a dog becomes so bored with his routine life that he needs a change. A dog is a social animal. It needs attention, love, care and regular physical and mental stimulus. If the owner fails to address to his needs, the dog may get allured by some exciting things elsewhere and runs away in search of a better and more exciting life.
5. **Natural urge**: -One of the reasons why an adult dog runs away could be for mating purpose. He might by guided by his urge to go out in search of a mating partner.

## **How to discourage dogs from running away**

1. Before shifting to a new location, keep taking the dog to the target locality so as to make him develop some familiarity and acquaintance with the place and people.
2. Dogs if un-neutered must get neutered as early as possible. If this is not done then at least extra fencing and training must be arranged for the dog so as to avoid any such eventuality arising from the pursuit of their uncontrollable urge.
3. Try to understand the objects or phenomena that scare your dog. If it is a natural phenomenon such as thunder then an appropriate sound proof shelter could be the solution. If it is an occasional sound such as crackers, then ear flaps can be used. If it is a regular sound, such as whining of a mixi or the sound of a saw mill, the irrational fear may be removed by proper training.
4. A dog owner must be quick to know the likes and interests of his dog. The owner must make every attempt to make the things available to dog on a regular basis, lest he runs away for them.
5. The owner must try to keep the dog engaged in various activities that are interesting and stimulating besides making him feel important.

**What to do when a dog escapes?**

No owner wants his dog to escape but the possibility of such an outcome may not be completely ruled out. The owner must have plans for such eventualities as well.

1. On a dog’s escape, the owner must report it to all the people in the locality where dog usually visits. In most of the cases he could be found wandering in such places.
2. On passage of considerable time if the dog can still not be traced, it is advisable to give an advertisement in the local newspaper with appropriate descriptions, or to take help from the municipal workers.
3. If the dog is recovered, be gentle to him don’t show any anger. This will encourage him to return home in future escapes without any fear.
4. Always go for a dog insurance covering the cost of recovery in case he runs away. This will ease out the financial burden caused due to dog’s escape or death.
5. The latest technology provides GPS tracker chips. Such microchips can be inserted into or tied at appropriate places in the dog’s body so as to track him easily when he is at large.