

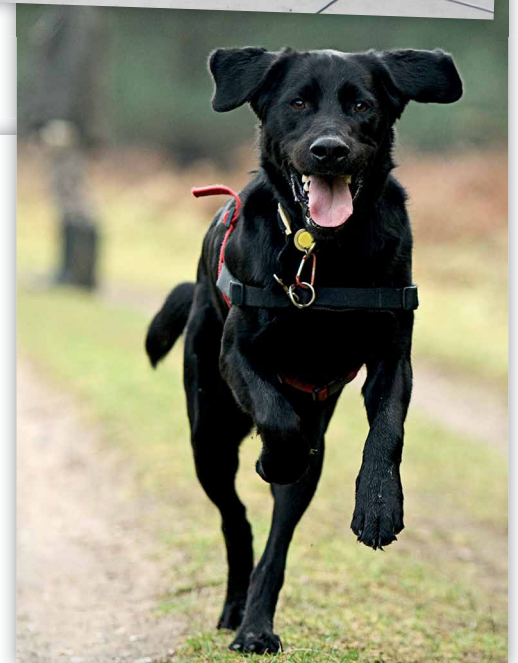
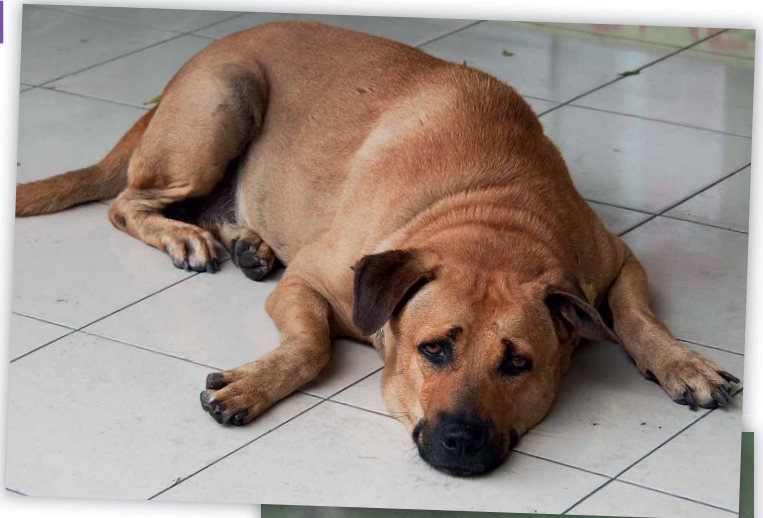
UPPER INTERMEDIATE UNIT 8

1 Work in pairs and discuss.

- 1 Think of a pet you have had or any animal you have known. Can you remember what made the animal happy or sad?
- 2 How easy is it to judge a pet's mood?
- 3 How do our own moods or behaviour influence our pets?

2 Read the article about behaviour in dogs and answer the questions.

- 1 Why is our dog's behaviour more unpredictable these days?
- 2 What is the difference between our dogs' lives today and in the past?
- 3 What can we do to make our dogs happier?



Feeling anxious? Chances are, so is your dog

You know when your dog is happy: it wags its tail, jumps up at you when you come home and runs around a lot. But what about when your dog is down? If he could tell us what the problem was, he would, but he can't – and sometimes we're so busy that we just don't notice that anything's wrong.

We live in stressful times – pressure to perform at work, deadlines, family responsibilities – and this affects our behaviour and those who live with us. It can also affect our pets, particularly dogs, which tend to be more dependent on us.

In fact, dogs are very good at picking up on our mood swings. If we are aggressive, they might become so, too. If we are worried, they might start pacing up and down. But it is our neglectful behaviour which really has an affect on a dog's temperament. Cases of

canine anxiety are on the up, leading to a need for anti-depressants to deal with the stress of living with us humans. The doggy variety is called 'Reconcile' and with just one tablet a day, it seems your dog could really cheer up.

You might laugh, but all this is hardly surprising. In the past, dogs worked in the country, they were outside the whole time and their owners let them wander around freely. At the end of the day, they would be 'dog-tired' (this is where the English expression comes from). Now, dogs might only go out with a dog-walker and perhaps for just half an hour a day. The rest of the time they are left alone on the sofa. We forget that dogs don't only need exercise but also attention and stimulation. If they don't get this, they can develop compulsive disorders like whimpering or chasing their own tails. Such lifestyle changes might also explain how our pets can suddenly surprise us with antisocial

or wild behaviour that seems uncharacteristic and confrontational. We forget that simple games can turn nasty and that the cute dog we pet at home can suddenly turn into a predatory beast without very much warning. With dogs, the particular problem is boredom and lack of company. Dogs also like consistency on the part of their owners. If your behaviour and habits suddenly shift, this can upset a dog and make its interactions with you unpredictable as well.

So, you could resort to 'Reconcile', but it would probably be better to understand what's going on with your dog. If there seems to be a problem, you could do a lot worse than start by looking at your own behaviour!

3 Read the article again. Underline the correct alternative.

- 1 It is *harder/easier* to see when your dog is depressed than when it is happy.
- 2 Sometimes dogs *mirror our own behaviour/ do the opposite to what we do*.
- 3 The author thinks it is *logical/surprising* that an anti-depressant for dogs has arrived on the market.
- 4 Lifestyle changes mean that dogs can be depressed and *unfriendly to their owners/ generally unpredictable*.
- 5 The article says that dogs feel happier when *there is a routine to follow/they have constant attention*.
- 6 The author concludes by saying that it is better to focus on *yourself/the dog's world* than attempt to understand the dog's behaviour.


4 Complete the sentences with the correct form of the verbs in the box.

be on the up deal with cheer up resort to
wander around turn into shift upset

- 1 You can walk your dog on a lead but it's better if you can let it _____ freely.
- 2 The trend for getting 'designer dogs' _____, it's becoming really popular here.
- 3 It's amazing how your pet can suddenly _____ a wild animal, it's quite scary.
- 4 When you have a dog you have to _____ all kinds of things, it's a big responsibility.
- 5 If you take your dog for regular exercise, it is bound to _____.
- 6 Your pet's behaviour can _____ suddenly if something shocking happens.
- 7 To solve a pet's problem, you don't need to _____ discipline.
- 8 Separation from its owner can _____ dogs a lot. They often feel very sad.

5 Work in pairs or small groups and discuss.

- 1 Do you agree that human behaviour can alter a dog's behaviour?
- 2 Do you think it's fair that people keep dogs in cities?
- 3 What other problems can occur with dogs or can dogs cause?
- 4 Does having a cat cause the same problems?

6  **8.1** Listen to a conversation between a dog lover and a cat lover about the behaviour of their pets. Choose the best summary of their conversation.

- 1 Moira loves that dogs are real companions, Ken doesn't want a pet to be too demanding.
- 2 Ken hates that dogs smell, Moira doesn't like the idea of having an independent pet.
- 3 Moira believes that you can't trust cats, Ken says that you shouldn't need to train an animal.

7 Listen again. Are the sentences true (T) or false (F)? Correct the false sentences.

- 1 Moira says that dogs are more trustworthy than cats.
- 2 The problem for Ken is that dogs take over your life.
- 3 Moira understands that independence is a positive virtue in pets.
- 4 Ken would like to play more with his cat.
- 5 Ken complains that dogs are dirty.
- 6 In the end, they agree to disagree.

8 The words in the box are from the recording. Complete the sentences with the words in the box.

reliable needy self-sufficient interactive
adaptable neurotic fearful obedient

- 1 I can't stand animals who are too _____, it's just too demanding to be with them.
- 2 Dogs are not always _____. Sometimes they don't pay attention to you at all.
- 3 My dog worries about really unimportant things, he's getting _____!
- 4 I love my cat but she's so _____, I feel like she doesn't need me sometimes.
- 5 My dog always tries to communicate with me and she loves games, anything which is _____.
- 6 Some dogs can become _____ of fireworks and loud noises.
- 7 People say that cats are not as _____ as dogs, but I can really trust my cat.
- 8 Some people say it's not good to keep a big dog in a small flat, but I think you can. Dogs are _____ to different locations.

9 Work in pairs or small groups and discuss.

- 1 Do you live in a pet-friendly society or not? In what way is this apparent?
- 2 Would you like where you live to be more permissive or less so with pets?
- 3 Do you think pets can be a substitute for a human? If so, how?