

*Dog*kind

# THE ZEN ZONE FOR FEARFUL DOGS

—— STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE ——



# Creating a Safe Space

When your dog barks and growls at your guests, it's stressful and embarrassing. Maybe you've even stopped having people over. You need downtime with friends, and you can have it- without hours of training and without compromising your dog's welfare.

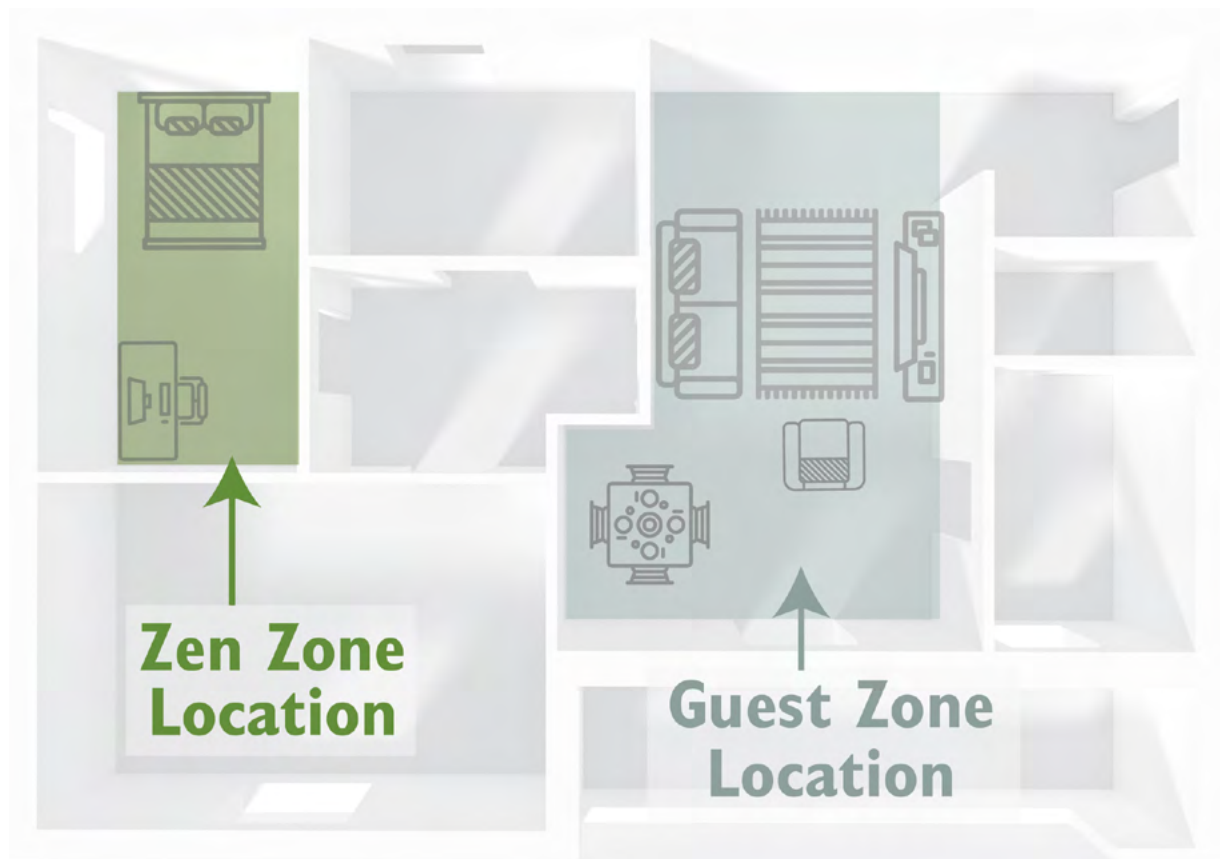
Follow this step-by-step guide to setting up a doggie "Zen Zone" for your fearful dog so you can enjoy time with friends at your home, without stressing yourself or your dog out.

## STEP 1: CHOOSE A LOCATION FOR YOUR DOG'S ZEN ZONE

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Your dog's Zen Zone should check as many of these boxes as possible:

- ☐ Far from where your guests will be;
- ☐ An area where your pup already chooses to spend time;
- ☐ Quiet (least affected by street noise or neighbors);
- ☐ Separated from your guests by one or more closed doors.



## STEP 2: SET UP BARRIERS

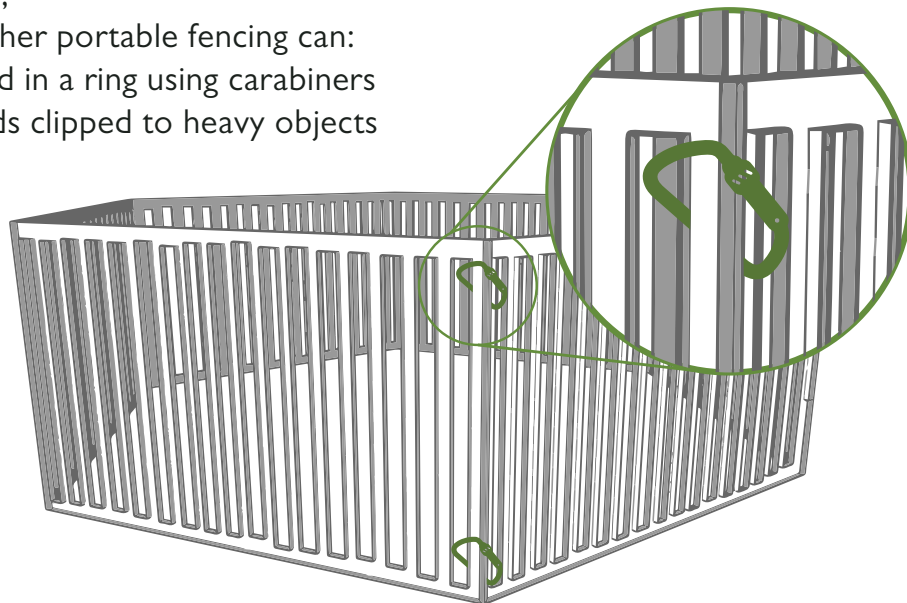
Choose barriers to enclose your dog's Zen Zone, and separate your dog from your guests. We recommend 2 barriers, for safety. Barriers should be strong enough to hold up if your dog jumps against them, and tall enough that your dog can't jump over them. Take your dog's size and strength into consideration when choosing the right combo. Mix and match any of these options:

- » Crate (only if your dog is comfortable in a crate);
- » Room door;
- » Baby gate;
- » Ex-pen or other portable fencing;
- » Muzzle (only if your dog has been trained to wear a muzzle happily!).



## STEP 3: SECURE THE BARRIERS

- » Crate door doors should be latched securely;
- » Room doors should be closed firmly, and locked if children will be present;
- » Baby gates should be pressure mounted or mounted to the wall using hardware, with doors latched;
- » Ex-pens or other portable fencing can:
  - be closed in a ring using carabiners
  - have ends clipped to heavy objects



Now that you've got the basic layout for the Zen Zone, it's time to make it as safe and cozy for your dog as possible.

## STEP 4: BLOCK THE VISUAL

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"Hide" the sight of your visitors from your dog:

- » Cover the crate with a blanket;
- » Drape blankets over baby gate or ex-pens;
- » Using solid barriers like room doors.

## STEP 5: BLOCK THE SOUNDS

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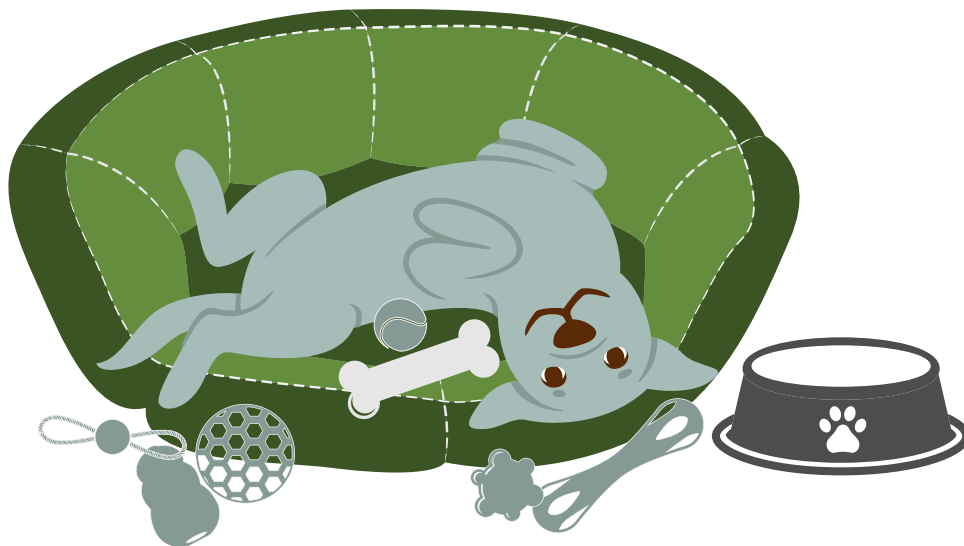
Mask or at least mute the sounds of visitors by:

- » Turning on a white noise machine or a fan;
- » Playing classical music;
- » Turning on a TV.

## STEP 6: MAKE IT COZY

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- » Turn down the lights;
- » Provide soft bedding;
- » Stock the Zen Zone with your dog's favorite toys & chews, and a water bowl.



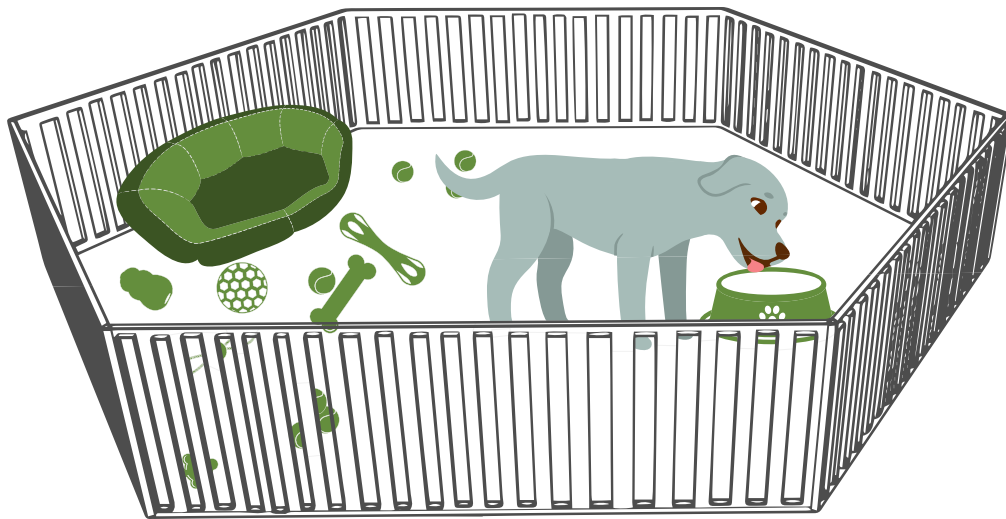
*Your Zen Zone is ready! But is your dog ready to be left in his Zen Zone?*

## MAKE YOUR DOG'S ZEN ZONE HIS FAVORITE PLACE

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**Before** you need to use it:

- » Feed meals in the Zen Zone;
- » Hide treats in the Zen Zone throughout the day for your dog to find;
- » Give your dog his favorite treats or chews to enjoy in his Zen Zone, while you read or work nearby;
- » Confine your dog in his Zen Zone for a few minutes at a time, with his favorite food toys or chews, while you are doing chores around the house.



## HOW TO USE THE ZEN ZONE FOR VISITORS

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- » Get your dog settled in his Zen Zone before your guests arrive;
- » Ask your visitors to text or call, rather than knock on the door;
- » If a visitor arrives early or unexpectedly:
  - Ask them to wait outside;
  - Hustle your dog to the zen zone;
  - Give your dog the food toys or chews you have ready;
  - Let the visitor in.

## TROUBLESHOOTING

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What if my dog barks or whines when confined away from me? If your dog is uncomfortable being separated from mom or dad:

- » **Train your dog to be comfortable when confined:** Practice very short periods of confinement when you don't have guests, and slowly increase duration in the Zen Zone as long as your dog is comfortable.
- » **Try the backyard:** Try putting your dog in your backyard- ONLY if your yard is secure and weather is mild. Don't forget his favorite food toys!
- » **Create a larger Zen Zone:** If your dog isn't comfortable in a crate, try a pen or an entire room as your dog's Zen Zone.

## NONE OF THAT WORKED! WHAT SHOULD I DO?

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If your dog cannot be left alone, here are two other options to try:

- » Ask a family member or friend that your dog likes to stay with your dog or take him for a walk;
- » If you don't have help:
  - Set up the Zen Zone in an area that adjoins the room where your guest will be.
  - “Hide” the sight and sound of the visitor as best you can by covering the crate or gate with a blanket, and playing music.
  - Sit next to the Zen Zone so you can talk with your visitor while staying close to your dog.



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