

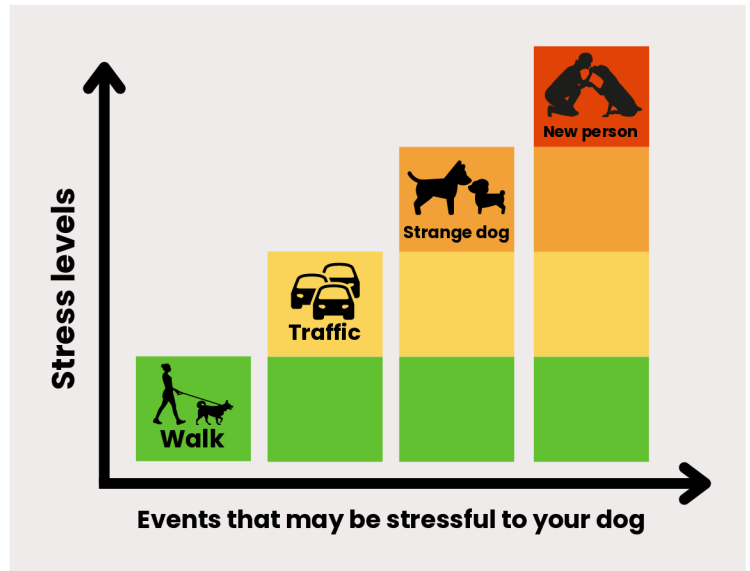
Let's talk about TRIGGER STACKING

Understanding Trigger Stacking

Just like people, some dogs—especially those who are sensitive, anxious, or reactive—can become overwhelmed when faced with multiple stressors in a short time. This is called trigger stacking. A **“trigger”** is anything a dog finds scary or unpleasant.

When a dog encounters a trigger, their body releases stress hormones like cortisol (the fight-or-flight hormone). It takes **5–10 hours** for cortisol levels to return to normal. If stressful events happen too close together, cortisol builds up, making the dog more reactive to even minor stressors.

Most dogs can handle stress if they have enough time to recover between triggers. However, stress tolerance varies—just like people, dogs have different personalities and comfort levels. Some love meeting new dogs, while others prefer their space, especially when on a leash. Understanding your dog's individual needs can help prevent stress and unwanted reactions.



5 Ways to Prevent Trigger Stacking at Home:

- **Take It Slow:** Give your dog time to settle in before introducing new people, places, or animals.
- **Minimize Stress:** Avoid stressful situations when possible, and allow your dog time to recover after any stress.
- **Pay Attention:** Dogs communicate through body language, not just barking or whining—watch for signs of discomfort or stress.
- **Be Patient:** Stress hormones take time to return to normal. Give your dog the space it needs.
- **Prioritize Safety:** Dogs don't want to bite—biting happens when warnings are ignored. Respect their signals to keep everyone safe.