



**Tips for introducing
the vacuum cleaner
to your dog**

You'll need some really tasty treats, your dog's favourite toy and a long-lasting chew or food-releasing toy.

Only move from step to step at your dog's pace, so they can always be confident and comfortable.

1 Enjoy a fun game with your dog with the vacuum cleaner in sight but switched off.

Scatter some treats around it for them to enjoy finding and let them sniff and investigate it if they wish. If they prefer to avoid it that's fine, just make sure they have a good time while it's there.

2 If they appear comfortable with that turn it on, but don't move it, so they can get used to the noise, and continue to play and/or scatter treats or reward them for doing some tricks they know.

The aim is for them to just get used to the noise and associate it with 'good things happening' to them. If your dog is already worried about noises or appears worried or very excited by the noise, calmly turn it off. Move the vacuum cleaner into a different room altogether and turn it on in there so the noise is much quieter while you continue to play with and treat your dog as before. This way, they can get used to the noise from a greater distance. Getting them used to the noise first means that if they do struggle with its movement you can teach them to stay in another room and enjoy a long-lasting treat by themselves. Then you can vacuum knowing they won't be bothered by its noise.



3 If they seem comfortable with the noise and sight of the vacuum cleaner, start to throw treats away from you for them to chase and find as you begin to move it around slowly and calmly.

This will help them get used to doing something very enjoyable while the vacuum cleaner is moving, and associate its noise, feel and movement with 'good things happening' to them. If they seem interested in its movement and try to pounce on it or chase it then simply stop moving it and distract them away with treats and games. They should be learning that it is much more rewarding to chase their treats than the vacuum cleaner. If they hide away, stop altogether. Repeat the previous step for longer before trying again. Gradually build up to being able to move the vacuum cleaner for longer each time.

4 Once your dog appears comfortable ignoring the moving, noisy vacuum cleaner, teach them to engage in something really fun all by themselves while you get on with vacuuming the house.

Give them a long-lasting food-releasing toy or chew, ideally on their own bed or mat if they have one, and calmly begin to vacuum away from them. By this point they should have learned that the sight, sound, feel, smell and movement of the vacuum cleaner means they're likely to get tasty treats. They'll be learning to settle and enjoy themselves while you're busy vacuuming.

5 If your dog shows signs of being very worried or extremely excited by the vacuum cleaner, arrange for the vacuuming to be done while they're out on a walk and seek professional help.

Consult your vet to make sure your dog isn't unwell or in any pain and ask for referral to an accredited behaviourist.