



Q&A

Picture: iStockphoto.com/chinaface

perth's DOG whisperer

KATHY KOPELLIS McLEOD



How to help your dog become a happier traveller

The respected WA dog behaviour consultant helps us understand our canine companions

Q Rose Lessnau writes, via email, that she is moving into a new townhouse with a small northeast-facing courtyard and wonders whether a mango tree would be suitable for a 1.5sq m raised garden bed, and if bamboo would work as a living screen in a 3m x 60cm garden bed. Rose has been warned about and is concerned with the invasive nature of bamboos and asks if there are species that do not pose this problem. She is willing to consider other fruit trees as an alternative.

A The mango tree will eventually get too big for the raised bed but with careful pruning it certainly could work. An imperial mandarin would be another option. Some bamboos are very invasive but there are others with safer clumping habits. *Bambusa gracilis* will grow to 5m to 6m but can be kept pruned to 3m. A living, green screen could also be achieved with orange jessamine (*Murraya paniculata*).

Q Lorraine Hudson, from Mandurah, writes that her frangipani flowered prolifically last year but failed to flower this season. The plant is healthy and growing well.

A This could easily be a case of too much love. If the plant is getting large quantities of water and nutrients it will tend to take advantage of this to produce lush growth. Heavy shade can also affect flowering. Cut the water back a bit – two standard waterings a week for an established frangipani is plenty, and don't fertilise. Applying potash may also help to encourage flowering.

Darren Seignor

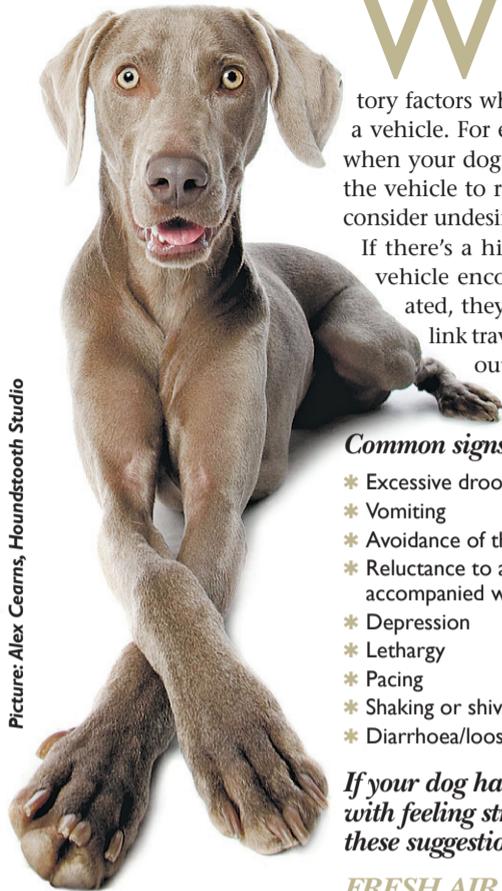
The HOME gardening team to the rescue

For your chance to get gardening advice from Darren Seignor, tell us in 100 words or less about your garden and its problems. Send an email to housecalls@sundaytimes.news1td.com.au or write to **The Sunday Times, HOME Editor, GPO Box D174, Perth, WA 6840**. Include your full name and address and a daytime phone number. Please do not send any soil samples or plant cuttings.

* All readers whose gardening questions are published win a Hortex stainless steel garden trowel, valued at \$8.95.



Picture: Alex Cearns, Houndstooth Studio



WHILE some dogs actually get motion sickness, there are other situations where fear and anxiety are contributory factors when our pets are travelling in a vehicle. For example, this often happens when your dog has only ever commuted in the vehicle to reach a destination that they consider undesirable.

If there's a history of your dog's first few vehicle encounters leaving them nauseated, they may also be conditioned to link travel with vomiting. Not all dogs outgrow travel sickness but the good news is that many will.

Common signs of car sickness are:

- * Excessive drooling (hypersalivation)
- * Vomiting
- * Avoidance of the vehicle
- * Reluctance to approach, sometimes accompanied with tongue flicking and yawning
- * Depression
- * Lethargy
- * Pacing
- * Shaking or shivering
- * Diarrhoea/loose/soft stools in the vehicle

If your dog has associated travelling with feeling stressed and nauseous, these suggestions may help:

FRESH AIR

Have the windows open safely enough for your dog to get fresh air into the car, but not so much that they're not secure enough. Allowing airflow from both sides of the windows can assist in balancing the air pressure inside your vehicle with the outside air pressure. Keep the vehicle temperature comfortable as a stuffy vehicle can contribute to unpleasant sensations for your dog.

CHECK OUT THE SCENERY

Allowing your dog to view their surroundings can help reduce carsickness. If you own a smaller dog you can prop them up allowing them to safely look out of the window while being securely harnessed.

Enjoying the sights and sounds aims to create a positive association in the vehicle by stimulating their senses with the environmental stimuli.

EMPTY STOMACH

Reduce your dog's food intake prior to a trip. Ginger nut biscuits (make sure they don't contain macadamia nuts) given prior to departure have worked with less severe cases but may not make any difference if your dog's situation is serious.

TAKE SHORTER TRIPS

Short trips to fun destinations your dog loves visiting, such as a favourite person or park, can help. If your trip happens to be a longer than usual, depending on how your dog is coping with the trip, stop every five to 10 minutes and let them out for a short frolic before getting back in the vehicle.

SLOW AND STEADY

For your fearful traveller, slowly build your dog's tolerance firstly by making it worth their while to approach the vehicle. Use whatever your dog loves and when you've established your dog's safe critical distance to the vehicle, give them their prize, such as fresh food, a ball, daily meals fed close to vehicle, etc. Next, move on to short sessions inside the vehicle with the motor off, continuing to create fun moments. If your dog's confidence has improved, then proceed with short trips before gradually extending the travel time.

Dogs that don't outgrow motion sickness and don't respond to conditioning may need medication, designed to help reduce your dog's motion sickness that don't cause nausea. This is available from your veterinarian.

There will be times that you have little or no option but to take your dog with you in the vehicle. In these cases, remain calm, patient, upbeat and do your best to make the event as least traumatic as possible – for both you and your dog. Happy travelling!

* Visit www.kathysdogtraining.com.au to check out Kathy's newly released dates for her popular Intensive Dog workshops designed for reactive dogs and while you're there, sign up to receive some free dog training tips.

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