

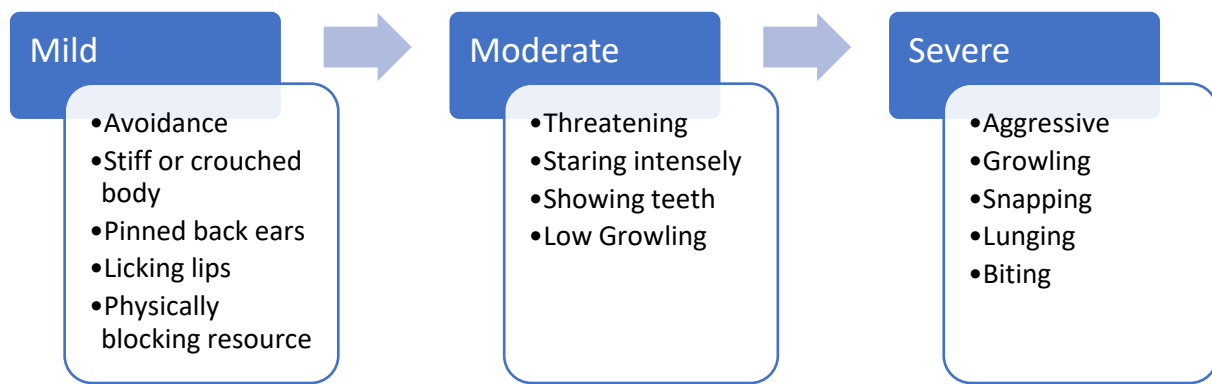
Resource Guarding: Management

Resource guarding is when a dog uses avoidance, threatening, or aggressive behaviors to maintain control over an item from another animal or a person.

Resource guarding may begin suddenly when changes in the environment or routine occur (new dog, new home, new toy, etc). It may also increase in intensity if left unmanaged.

Any resource that is considered valuable to the dog might be guarded, regardless of if it makes sense to us. They might guard a piece of chicken they stole from the table, or a paper clip they found on the ground, or even a favorite resting spot.

What does Resource Guarding look like?



Management and Prevention:

The most important thing is to be safe. Preventing situations where a dog will choose to guard something is vital.

- Identify all items and situations that result in resource guarding. Record in a journal.
 - When it occurs (dinner time, bed time, first thing in the morning, etc.)
 - Who is the dog guarding from? (children, other dogs, all people, etc.)
 - What is the dog guarding? (Toys, a favorite toy, bones, bed, people, etc.)
 - What behaviors are you seeing from the dog?
- Once you identify the context of the guarding, it is much easier to prevent it from occurring.
- Prevent access to valued items. Put toys away until they are in use. Keep food out of reach and off counters. Avoid all scenarios that your dog has shown resource guarding.
- Separate pets from other pets and people when giving a dog an item that they guard. Use crates, baby gates, or separate rooms.
- Listen to your dog's warnings, if you ignore a mild signal, they learn that doesn't work and can escalate towards aggression. Do NOT punish a dog for guarding, they will likely escalate to more severe aggression like biting, and damage your relationship with your dog.
- Teach cues like "Drop it" with non-valuable items.
- If you Must get an item away from a dog, Trade for something extremely valuable, like a piece of cooked chicken.