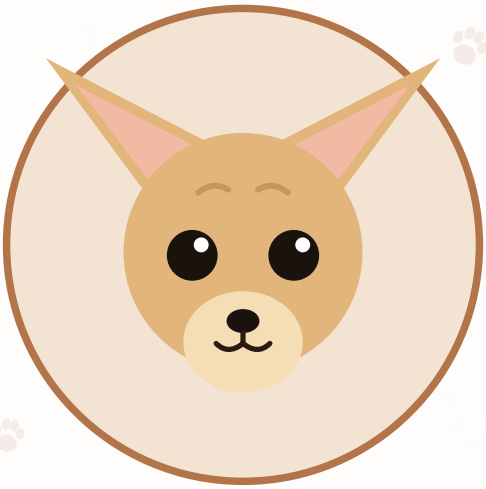


FREE BONUS GUIDE

The Calm Protocol

Teach your Chihuahua to switch off and feel safe.

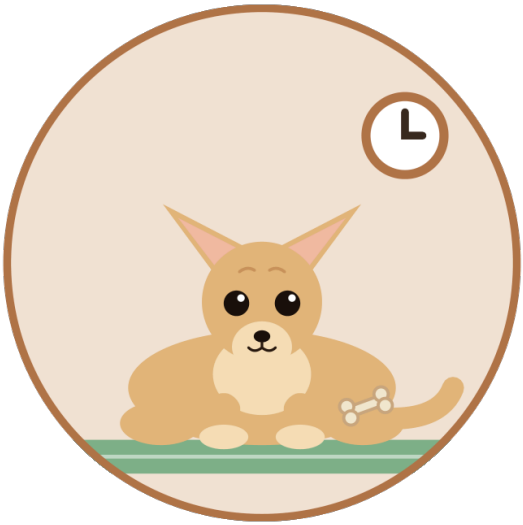
Bonus guide for The Complete Chihuahua Guide

Before We Begin

Chihuahuas are alert, sensitive and often a little worried about the big world. Many find it hard to switch off: they watch the door, follow you from room to room, shake when nothing seems wrong, and react to every sound.

A Chi who can't relax barks more, snaps more and struggles with being alone. A Chi who feels safe and rested is calmer, braver and happier.

This protocol gives you a step-by-step plan for calm: at home, when you leave, and out in the world.



The Three Pillars of Calm

1. **Safety:** a warm, cosy, predictable home where your Chi isn't constantly on guard.
2. **Satisfaction:** enough sniffing, play and brain work to meet their needs.
3. **Skill:** calm, taught step by step, just like any other cue.

Signs your Chi needs more calm

- constantly watching windows and doors
- following you everywhere
- shaking when they're warm and nothing is wrong
- barking at small noises
- struggling to settle when you're busy or out
- snappy or "grumpy" in the evenings



Pillar 1: A Safe, Cosy Home

Before training, reduce your Chi's overall stress.

- **More rest:** 16–18 hours a day in a quiet, cosy burrow.
- **Block the views:** window film, blinds, no window lookouts.
- **Background sound:** quiet music to soften outside noise.
- **Sniffing:** daily sniff walks and snuffle mats.
- **Predictable routines:** the same daily rhythm.
- **Quiet days** after busy or stressful days.

Many owners see a big difference from these changes alone.



The Little Security Guard

Chihuahuas are alert, watchful dogs. Many spend their day patrolling the windows, listening for the postman and barking at every sound. A Chi who is always on guard never truly rests, and a tired, stressed dog barks more, guards more and finds it harder to learn.

Adult dogs need around **16–18 hours of rest a day**, and puppies even more.

A Chihuahua-Friendly Day

- **Morning:** toilet trip, a sniffy walk, breakfast as a Nose Job.
- **Mid-morning:** rest in a covered bed or crate.
- **Midday:** toilet trip and a short training game.
- **Afternoon:** rest, then a chew in their bed.
- **Late afternoon:** a walk or a sniff game.
- **Evening:** dinner, a lick mat, cuddles, and the Burrow & Rest Routine.
- **Bedtime:** last toilet trip, then bed.

Step 1: Set Up a Burrow (Day 1)

Choose a covered bed, a cave bed, or a bed with a blanket your Chi can tunnel under. Place it somewhere quiet, away from windows and the front door.

Step 2: Reward Going In (Days 1–3)

Toss a treat into the bed. When your Chi goes in, say "bed" and give another treat. Ten times, twice a day.

Step 3: Reward Lying Down (Days 3–6)

Wait for your dog to lie down in the bed. Reward between their paws. Keep sessions short.

Step 4: Reward Calm (Days 6–10)

Reward signs of relaxation: a sigh, curling up, head down, eyes closing. Place the treat quietly and say nothing.

Step 5: Use It Every Day (Days 10+)

Use the burrow while you cook, eat and work. Give a chew or lick mat there. Over time, your Chi learns that the bed means "off duty."

Block the Lookout Posts

Chihuahuas often climb onto sofas or window sills to watch the street. This keeps them on alert and risks injuries from jumping down. Block access to window lookouts, use frosted window film, and play quiet background sound.

If This Happens

"My Chi won't stay in their bed." Make it extra cosy, add a chew, and sit nearby at first.

"My dog only settles on my lap." That's fine sometimes, but practise the burrow too, so your dog can relax without you.

"My dog barks at the window all day." Block the view (Chapter 9 of your main guide).

Practice Games

Game 1: Treats for Nothing

Whenever your Chi is lying calmly, quietly place a treat by their nose and walk away.

Game 2: Blanket Burrito

Teach your Chi to go under a blanket on cue. Lift a corner, say "burrow," and reward when they tunnel in. A great way to settle.

Game 3: Lick and Relax

After dinner, give a lick mat in the burrow.

Why Chis Shake

- **Cold:** tiny bodies lose heat quickly.
- **Fear or worry:** loud noises, strangers, new places.
- **Excitement:** some Chis shake when happy and excited.
- **Low blood sugar:** especially in tiny puppies.
- **Pain or illness.**

Cold or Fear?

- **Cold:** shaking stops when your Chi is warmed up with a coat or blanket.
- **Fear:** shaking comes with other signs, like a tucked tail, ears back, hiding, lip licking, or trying to get away.

> **See your vet** if your Chi shakes a lot for no obvious reason, or if shaking comes with weakness, wobbliness, vomiting or not eating. Very young puppies who are weak and shaky may have low blood sugar and need help quickly.



Pillar 3: The Brave Steps Plan

Step 1: Keep Them Warm

Coats for walks, warm beds away from draughts, and blankets to burrow in.

Step 2: Find the Safe Distance

When your Chi is worried by something, move away until they can look at it and still take a treat.

Step 3: Pair It With Good Things

Each time your Chi looks at the scary thing calmly, say "yes" and reward.

Step 4: Let Them Choose

Let your Chi decide whether to move closer. Never push, carry or drag them towards something scary.

Step 5: Short and Sweet

Keep sessions short and end on a good note.

Comfort Is OK

It's fine to comfort a frightened dog. Calm words, a gentle hand or a safe place to hide won't "reward fear." What matters most is helping your dog feel safe.

Common Chi Fears

- **Loud noises:** play recorded sounds very quietly during meals, and build up slowly.
- **Strangers:** let your Chi watch from a distance; never let strangers reach for them.
- **Big dogs:** keep a safe distance; avoid busy dog parks.
- **The vet:** practise handling at home and visit for treats only.

Practice Games

Game 1: Brave Box

Put a cardboard box on its side with a treat inside. Reward your Chi for exploring it. Build confidence with new objects.

Game 2: Sound Party

Play everyday sounds quietly while your Chi eats.

Game 3: Hand Target Walk

On walks, ask your Chi to touch your hand as you pass something new. It gives them a job and builds confidence.

Calm When You Leave

Why Chis Find Being Alone Hard

Chihuahuas often bond intensely with one person. Being close to their person is everything to them. That's what makes them loyal, and it's also why a Chi left alone can feel like something has gone very wrong.

Many owners accidentally make it harder:

- the dog is with them every moment at weekends, then alone for 8 hours on Monday
- goodbyes are emotional and drawn out
- the keys, coat and bag always mean "they're leaving now"

Boredom or Worry?

It helps to know which problem you have. Set up a phone or pet camera and record the first 30 minutes after you leave.

- **Boredom:** your dog settles for a while, then gets into mischief later. They're relaxed when you return. They need more exercise, brain work and things to do.
- **Worry (separation distress):** pacing, panting, whining, howling or scratching at doors within the first few minutes. They may drool, have accidents, or not touch food left for them. They need a gradual plan.

Many Chis are a mix of both.

Calm When You Leave

Little Exits

The idea is simple: your dog only ever experiences absences they can cope with. Each success builds confidence for the next, slightly longer one.

Step 1: Independence at Home (Week 1)

Use your Chi's burrow bed (Part 3). Ask your dog to settle, then take one step away and come back. Build to walking across the room, then into the next room for a few seconds. Reward calm staying.

Also use baby gates: let your dog be on the other side of a gate from you for short periods while they have a chew.

Step 2: Break the Departure Cues (Week 1–2)

Several times a day, pick up your keys, put on your shoes or your coat, then sit down and watch TV. Do this 5–10 times a day until these things stop causing your dog to follow you or get up.

Step 3: The First Real Exits (Week 2)

Give your dog a special food toy that they *only* get when you leave (a frozen stuffed rubber toy is ideal). Walk out of the front door, close it, and come straight back in after **10–30 seconds**. Come in calmly. Ignore your dog for a moment until they're calm, then say hello quietly.

Step 4: Build Up Slowly (Weeks 3–6)

Slowly increase the time, watching your camera:

- 30 seconds, then 1 minute, then 2, 5, 10 minutes

- then 15, 20, 30 minutes
- then 45 minutes, 1 hour and beyond

Only move up when your dog is calm at the current time. If they show signs of worry, go back to the last time that was easy.

Step 5: Mix It Up

Not every exit should be longer. Mix short and long absences: 5 minutes, 2 minutes, 15 minutes, 1 minute. This keeps your dog from bracing for a long absence every time you go.



Calm When You Leave

While You're Training

During the weeks you're building this skill, try to avoid leaving your dog alone for longer than they can currently handle. A dog walker, a friend, doggy daycare, or taking your dog with you all help. One long, stressful day can undo weeks of progress.

> **Severe panic:** if your Chi injures themselves, destroys doors or crates trying to escape, or is in obvious distress for the whole time you're gone, please speak to your vet. Some dogs need medical support alongside training, and that's okay.

If This Happens

"My dog won't touch the food toy when I leave." That's a sign of worry, not lack of interest. Your absences are too long. Go back to 10–30 seconds.

"My dog is fine for 20 minutes, then howls." Stay at 15 minutes for another week, then build up more slowly, in 2–3 minute steps.

"My dog destroys things only when I'm out." Check the camera. If it starts straight after you leave, it's worry; follow Little Exits. If it's much later, increase exercise and brain work before you go.

Calm When You Leave

Practice Games

Game 1: Door Peekaboo

While your dog is on their mat with a chew, step behind a door and close it for 2 seconds. Open it and calmly reward if they stayed settled. Build to 10, 20, then 60 seconds.

Game 2: The Fake-Out

Pick up your keys and jingle them. Then put them down and sit on the sofa. Put your coat on, walk to the door, and take it off again. The goal is total boredom with your departure routine.

Game 3: Scatter and Go

As you leave, scatter a handful of kibble on the floor or in a snuffle mat. Your dog is busy sniffing as the door closes, so the first, hardest moments pass without noticing.



A Calm Day Plan

- **Morning:** toilet trip, sniffy walk in a coat if it's cold, snuffle mat breakfast, nap in a covered bed.
- **Midday:** toilet trip, a find-it game, nap.
- **Afternoon:** burrow time with a chew while you work.
- **Evening:** short walk, dinner, lick mat, calm cuddles on your Chi's terms.
- **Night:** last toilet trip, then a warm bed in a quiet room.

Calm before fun

Wait for a moment of calm before walks, meals and cuddles. Your Chi learns that calm makes good things happen.

Treats for doing nothing

Whenever you see your Chi relaxing, quietly place a treat by their nose and walk away.



Your 21-Day Calm Plan

- **Days 1–3:** lower the stress cup. Block views. Warm, covered bed.
- **Days 4–7:** Burrow & Rest Routine twice a day. Treats for doing nothing.
- **Days 8–10:** room hops and fake departures.
- **Days 11–14:** Brave Steps with one everyday worry.
- **Days 15–18:** first short real exits with a food toy.
- **Days 19–21:** review your Calm Day Plan. Keep going.



10 Popular Questions Answered

1. Why does my Chi shake? Cold, fear, excitement or illness. Warm them up first, and see your vet if it continues.

2. Is it OK to comfort my scared Chi? Yes. Comfort doesn't reward fear.

3. My Chi follows me everywhere. Practise room hops and reward staying settled.

4. My Chi won't stay in their bed. Make it warmer and cosier, with a chew, and start with short sessions.

5. Does my Chi need a crate? A covered crate or cave bed helps many Chis feel safe.



10 Popular Questions Answered

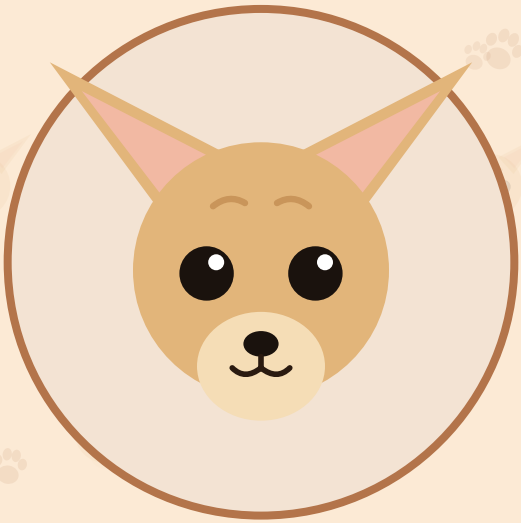
6. Why is my Chi worse in the evening? Over-tiredness. Add earlier brain work and a wind-down routine.

7. Can I leave my Chi alone? Build up slowly with Little Exits.

8. Should I get a second dog? Usually not; most worried Chis miss their person, not another dog.

9. My Chi panics when I leave. Speak to your vet, and go back to very short exits.

10. When should I get help? If your Chi is in distress, injuring themselves, or not improving.



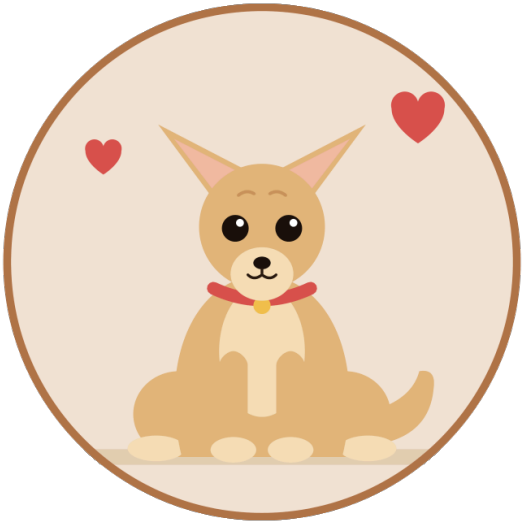
CHECKLIST

Your Calm Checklist

- ☐ Warm, covered den set up.
- ☐ Barking views blocked.
- ☐ Daily sniff walk and brain game.
- ☐ Burrow routine practised twice a day.
- ☐ Treats for doing nothing.
- ☐ Calm before fun.
- ☐ Room hops and fake departures.
- ☐ Brave Steps for everyday worries.



A Final Word



A calm Chihuahua is a Chihuahua who feels safe. Every quiet nap, every brave step and every calm goodbye builds that feeling.

