



Comet



Dog Profile

Name: Comet

Breed: Dalmatian / Blue Heeler / Pitbull Mix

Age: 1 year

Sex: Male

Neuter Status: Neutered

Owned For: 1 year

Acquired From: Family (3rd owners)

Living Setup: Sleeps in crate at night

Crate Use: Yes, for sleep

House Training: Presumed complete; not flagged as a concern



BETTERDOG IN-HOME DOG TRAINING

Jon Wells & Nancy Corriveau

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Ottawa-Gatineau | In-Home Dog Training & Behavioural Support

Email: ottawa@betterdog.ca | Phone: (819) 593-3040 (613) 316-6473

Breed Snapshot

Trait	Dalmatian	Blue Heeler (Australian Cattle Dog)	Pitbull-type
Temperament	Energetic, alert, friendly	Loyal, highly intelligent, alert	Affectionate, confident
Working Group	Non-sporting (coach dog origin)	Herding	Terrier (working)
Common Challenges	High energy, can be aloof	Mouthy, herding behaviours	Reactivity if under-socialized
Health Risks	Deafness, urinary stones	Hip dysplasia, progressive blindness	Skin allergies, joint issues
Fun Fact	Disney's <i>101 Dalmatians</i> star	Known for "heeling" cattle	Often misunderstood; loyal companions

⚠ Mixed breed implications: Potential layering of guarding/herding instincts with high drive and social sensitivity. Requires precise balance of stimulation and boundary-setting.



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Food & Medical

Brand: Kirkland Lamb, Rice & Vegetables (Costco)

Vet-Approved: Yes

Allergies or Conditions: None

Food Analysis (*from DogFoodAdvisor.com*):

- **Rating:** ★★★★★☆ (4 stars)
- **Protein:** ~24%
- **Fat:** ~14%
- **Carbs:** ~43%
- **Top 5 Ingredients:** Lamb, lamb meal, **whole grain brown rice, rice flour, barley**
 - ✓ **Pros:** Real meat protein, decent price-point, vet-approved
 - ⚠ **Consider:** Carbohydrates high; monitor weight and energy output

Diet–Behaviour Link: Diet unlikely to be contributing to anxiety or fear issues. Continue monitoring for any food-related GI or energy-level fluctuations.

Behavioral History

Training Background: Puppy & Manners Level 1

Commands Reliable: Sit, Down, Touch, Stay, Recall, Loose Leash Walking

Control Hierarchy: Karina has primary handling control

Secondary Handler: Stephen (partner)

Behavioral Concerns

Issue	Context
Separation Anxiety	Cannot be left alone for long durations. Likely emotionally bonded and lacks independence.
Fear of Men	Displays avoidance and quiet growling when cornered—fear-based, not aggressive.



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Trainer Red Flags ●

Red Flag	Description	Recommendation
Separation Anxiety	Emotionally dependent on primary guardian; 3rd home. Crate used only for sleep—could benefit from emotional independence protocols.	Monitor Closely — Introduce confidence-building routines, crate conditioning for independence.
Fear-based reactivity to men	Quiet growling if cornered = early warning. Deferential, not dominant. May respond well to slow desensitization with Emotional Marking.	Monitor Closely — Create positive male-handler associations via play/feeding. Ensure no pressure-based greetings.

Breed Comparison Table

Trait	Same / Different	Notes
Barking	Same	Blue Heeler and Dalmatian lines tend to alert bark. Not flagged as excessive yet.
Guarding	Different	Pitbull lineage may add territorial layer. Watch for possible escalation if fear reactivity isn't managed.
Sociability	Different	Fear of men suggests breed-predisposed sociability is being disrupted by past experience.
Energy Level	Same	High energy across all three breeds; enrichment needed.
Trainability	Same	High intelligence + success with commands indicates solid cognitive base for EM-based work.



Environmental Observations

Major Contextual Clues:

- **Third ownership** may contribute to attachment insecurity
- **Current crate use only at night** = lack of structured alone-time conditioning
- **Fear toward men** = could stem from prior owner interactions

BetterDog Lens:

- Use **Consent-Based Training** to re-establish trust in human interactions
- Expand **Emotional Marking** for building independence and safe association with male energy
- Implement **Balanced Engagement** to reframe "being alone" as rewarding, not distressing

Suggested Trainer Prompts:

- Ask about Comet's vocalizations or stress signs when left alone
- Observe response to Stephen—does fear generalize to all male energy or only specific contexts?
- Clarify current routines when leaving the house—are there rituals or patterns?



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CLIENT REPORT – MEET COMET

Meet Comet

Comet is a one-year-old **Dalmatian / Blue Heeler / Pitbull mix**, which means you've got a superstar combo of smarts, athleticism, and loyalty. Dalmatians are famous for their “coach dog” stamina (ever watched *101 Dalmatians?*), Heelers are total brainiacs with a strong work ethic, and Pitbulls are some of the most affectionate, people-loving dogs out there. That said, this mix needs a lot of clarity, structure, and emotional support—which you're already offering him.

What We've Learned So Far

You are Comet's third family—and it's clear you're committed to making this his *forever* home. He's crate-trained at night and has already had a great training start. Commands like “sit,” “down,” “touch,” and “recall” are working well. You've stepped up as the main handler, and it shows.

His main struggle right now? Being left alone. Totally fair—he's had a few transitions, and he's still figuring out if the world is safe without you in it. He's also a little wary around men, but that fear shows up as gentle avoidance or quiet growling—not aggression. That tells us he's communicating and wants space, not conflict. Smart boy.

Food Talk

Comet's on **Kirkland Lamb, Rice & Vegetables**, which your vet has approved. It's a solid option (rated 4 out of 5 stars on DogFoodAdvisor), with real lamb and good overall nutrition. The only flag is a higher carb level than ideal—but if his energy and weight are balanced, no need to worry just yet. We'll keep it in mind as we monitor his behaviour and digestion.



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Behaviour Themes We'll Explore

- **Separation Anxiety:** Comet's biggest hurdle right now is being left alone without stress.
- **Fear of Men:** He's not aggressive—he's communicating discomfort. That's a strength we'll build on. We will bring out Jon and let him be a test target to see how he adapts.

Both behaviours are common in dogs with big hearts and sensitive wiring—especially when they've been rehomed more than once.

Why This Might Be Happening

At BetterDog, we believe **behaviour is communication**. Comet's fear and clinginess aren't signs of disobedience—they're signs of emotional uncertainty. He's saying, "I'm not sure I'm safe yet."

That's where our **Consent-Based Training** and **Emotional Marking** come in. We'll teach Comet how to trust again, help him feel safe even when you're not home, and show him that gentle male energy can be a great thing. By using repetition, clear emotional cues, and lots of choice-based praise, we'll rebuild his confidence—one cue at a time.

You're Not Alone

We've helped hundreds of dogs like Comet—sensitive, smart, and just a little unsure—step into calmer, happier lives. This is totally doable. You've already taken the biggest step by asking for help. We'll guide you the rest of the way.

Next Steps

Your trainer will work with you to:

- Build a desensitization plan for alone time
- Create safe, positive exposure to male handlers
- Use Emotional Marking to reinforce every little win

And you? You just get to show up, try things out, and ask questions. You don't have to do this alone—BetterDog is in your corner.



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