

my dog is regressing in potty training

My Dog Is Regressing in Potty Training: Understanding and Overcoming Setbacks

my dog is regressing in potty training – it's a frustrating and confusing situation for many pet owners. You may have spent weeks or even months establishing a solid routine, only to find your furry friend suddenly having accidents indoors again. This setback can feel like a step backward, but it's actually a common part of the training journey. Understanding why regression happens and how to respond effectively is key to getting back on track with your dog's potty habits.

Why Is My Dog Regressing in Potty Training?

When a dog starts to have accidents after being housebroken, it's natural to wonder what went wrong. Potty training regression can stem from a variety of factors, and identifying the root cause will help you address it thoughtfully.

Changes in the Dog's Environment

Dogs thrive on routine and consistency. Any disruption – such as moving to a new home, rearranging furniture, or even changes in the household like a new family member or pet – can unsettle your dog. This stress or confusion may cause your dog to forget their potty training temporarily.

Health Issues Affecting Bathroom Habits

Physical health problems are a common reason for potty accidents. Urinary tract infections (UTIs), gastrointestinal issues, or age-related challenges like incontinence can cause your dog to lose control or feel the urgent need to go more frequently. If you notice sudden regression, a vet checkup is a wise step to rule out medical causes.

Inconsistent Training or Lapses in Routine

Sometimes, owners unintentionally relax their vigilance once the dog seems fully trained. Skipping regular potty breaks, not praising proper behavior, or allowing your dog access to areas previously off-limits can lead to confusion. Dogs may test boundaries or forget what they've learned if the structure isn't maintained.

Stress and Anxiety

Emotional factors like separation anxiety, loud noises (fireworks, thunderstorms), or changes in the household dynamic can trigger potty accidents. Dogs experiencing stress may lose control or have accidents as a coping mechanism.

Recognizing Signs Your Dog Is Struggling With Potty Training

Noticing the early signs of regression can help you intervene quickly, preventing bad habits from becoming ingrained.

- **Frequent accidents indoors:** Pay attention if your dog starts having accidents in places they previously avoided.
- **Sniffing and circling:** These behaviors often indicate your dog is looking for a spot to relieve themselves.
- **Restlessness:** If your dog seems unsettled or pacing, it might be a sign they need to go out.
- **Changes in urination frequency:** More frequent or urgent urination could signal a medical issue or anxiety.

How to Handle Potty Training Regression

Finding yourself saying, “my dog is regressing in potty training,” doesn’t mean you need to start from square one, but you might need to revisit some basics and adjust your approach.

Return to Consistent Scheduling

Dogs do best when they know what to expect. Reinstate a strict schedule for bathroom breaks, ideally taking your dog outside first thing in the morning, after meals, playtime, and before bedtime. Consistency helps rebuild good habits.

Reinforce Positive Behavior

Positive reinforcement remains one of the most effective training tools. Reward your dog immediately when they potty outside with treats, praise, or playtime. This helps your dog associate going outside with positive outcomes.

Limit Access and Supervise Indoors

To prevent accidents, restrict your dog's access to certain areas until their training improves. Crate training can be a useful management tool, as dogs generally avoid soiling their sleeping space. Make sure the crate is comfortable and never used for punishment.

Clean Up Accidents Thoroughly

Use enzymatic cleaners designed to remove pet urine odors completely. Lingering smells can encourage your dog to mark or go in the same spot again.

Be Patient and Avoid Punishment

Getting upset or punishing your dog for accidents can increase anxiety and worsen the problem. Instead, stay calm and focus on guiding your dog back to the right behavior.

Additional Tips to Prevent Future Regression

Even after your dog's potty training improves, maintaining good habits is essential to prevent future setbacks.

Maintain Routine Even During Life Changes

Try to keep your dog's potty schedule consistent during vacations, new jobs, or household changes. If routine disruptions are unavoidable, increase bathroom breaks and supervision.

Address Anxiety Proactively

If your dog shows signs of stress or separation anxiety, consider calming aids or consult a trainer or veterinarian for anxiety management strategies.

Continue Training and Reinforcement

Potty training isn't just a one-time event; it's an ongoing process. Periodically reinforce good habits with praise and treats to keep your dog motivated.

Monitor Health Regularly

Regular vet visits can catch health issues early, preventing accidents caused by medical problems.

When to Seek Professional Help

If you've tried multiple strategies and find yourself still thinking, "my dog is regressing in potty training," it may be time to consult a professional. Certified dog trainers or animal behaviorists can observe your dog's behavior, identify underlying causes, and develop a tailored training plan. Likewise, persistent health concerns warrant a thorough veterinary evaluation.

Potty training regression can feel like a frustrating detour, but it's often temporary and fixable. With patience, consistency, and a little detective work to uncover the cause, you can help your dog regain confidence and return to good potty habits. Remember, every dog learns at their own pace, and setbacks are just part of the journey toward a happy, well-trained companion.

Frequently Asked Questions

Why is my dog suddenly regressing in potty training?

Regression in potty training can be caused by stress, changes in routine, health issues, or lack of consistent training. Identifying and addressing these factors can help your dog get back on track.

How can I help my dog stop regressing in potty training?

Maintain a consistent schedule, reinforce positive behavior with treats and praise, clean accidents thoroughly to remove odors, and be patient while retraining your dog.

Could medical issues cause my dog to regress in potty training?

Yes, medical problems such as urinary tract infections, gastrointestinal issues, or cognitive dysfunction can cause accidents. It's important to consult a vet to rule out health concerns.

Is it normal for adult dogs to regress in potty training?

While less common, adult dogs can regress due to stress, changes in environment, or health problems. Consistent training and addressing underlying causes can help.

How long does it take for a dog to recover from potty training regression?

Recovery time varies depending on the cause and consistency of retraining. With patience and proper techniques, many dogs improve within a few weeks.

What role does cleaning accidents play in preventing regression?

Thoroughly cleaning accidents with enzymatic cleaners removes odors that may attract your dog to eliminate in the same spot, helping prevent repeated accidents.

Can changes in my household cause my dog to regress in potty training?

Yes, changes like new pets, moving, or altered schedules can stress your dog, leading to regression. Providing stability and routine can help mitigate this.

Should I punish my dog for potty training regression?

No, punishment can increase anxiety and worsen the behavior. Instead, focus on positive reinforcement and patience to encourage proper potty habits.

Are there specific training techniques useful for dogs regressing in potty training?

Techniques such as crate training, frequent bathroom breaks, positive reinforcement, and supervising your dog closely can be effective during retraining.

When should I consult a professional about my dog's potty training regression?

If regression persists despite consistent training, or if you suspect medical or behavioral issues, consulting a veterinarian or professional dog trainer is recommended.

Additional Resources

My Dog Is Regressing in Potty Training: Understanding and Addressing the Setbacks

my dog is regressing in potty training—a statement that many pet owners find both frustrating and puzzling. Potty training is a significant milestone in a dog's early development, often seen as a foundation for good behavior and a clean household. When a previously well-trained dog begins to have accidents indoors or ignores established cues, it raises questions about the causes and solutions. This article delves into why regression in potty training occurs, explores potential underlying factors, and offers insights into effective strategies for managing this challenging phase.

Understanding Regression in Potty Training

Potty training regression is the phenomenon where a dog that has successfully learned to eliminate outside suddenly starts having accidents inside the home again. Importantly, this is not an uncommon issue; many owners encounter setbacks even after weeks or months of consistent training. Recognizing that regression is a part of the learning curve rather than a permanent failure is essential for maintaining patience and a positive approach.

Regression might manifest as occasional urination in the house, defecation in inappropriate spots, or a reluctance to signal the need to go outside. The severity can vary from isolated incidents to frequent accidents, significantly impacting household cleanliness and owner satisfaction.

Common Causes of Potty Training Regression

Identifying the root cause behind why my dog is regressing in potty training is a critical step. Several factors—ranging from medical to behavioral—can contribute to this setback:

- **Medical Issues:** Urinary tract infections, gastrointestinal problems, or age-related conditions such as incontinence can cause sudden changes in elimination habits.

- **Stress and Anxiety:** Changes in the household, new pets, loud noises, or separations can increase stress, leading to accidents.
- **Changes in Routine:** Alterations in walking schedules, feeding times, or living environments may confuse dogs and disrupt their bathroom habits.
- **Lack of Reinforcement:** Inconsistent praise or failure to reward proper elimination can weaken the learned behavior.
- **Developmental Phases:** Puppies and adolescent dogs sometimes experience setbacks as they mature and test boundaries.

Investigating Behavioral and Environmental Factors

When a dog is regressing in potty training, environmental influences often play a significant role. Dogs thrive on routine and predictability; disruptions can lead to confusion and accidents. For instance, moving to a new home or introducing a new family member can unsettle even a well-trained dog. Similarly, if the owner's schedule changes—leading to fewer bathroom breaks or altered feeding times—the dog may struggle to adjust.

Behavioral factors like anxiety or excitement can also cause regression. Dogs experiencing separation anxiety may urinate indoors when left alone, while excitement-induced urination is common in younger dogs. Recognizing these patterns helps owners tailor their response appropriately.

The Role of Age and Physical Health

Age is an important consideration in potty training regression. Puppies, who are still mastering bladder and bowel control, can have accidents frequently. Conversely, older dogs may develop medical conditions affecting their ability to hold urine or stool.

For example, senior dogs often face cognitive decline or mobility issues that hinder their ability to communicate bathroom needs or reach the outdoor area in time. Equally, underlying health conditions like bladder infections or digestive issues require veterinary diagnosis and treatment, as they directly impact potty training success.

Strategies to Address Regression in Potty

Training

Understanding the causes guides the implementation of effective strategies to manage and reverse potty training regression. Owners must adopt a patient and consistent approach, blending behavioral modification with environmental adjustments.

Reestablishing a Routine

Consistency is paramount. Setting and maintaining regular feeding and walking schedules helps regulate a dog's elimination patterns. Increasing the frequency of bathroom breaks, especially for puppies and older dogs, reduces the risk of indoor accidents.

Positive Reinforcement Techniques

Reinforcing desired behavior through rewards remains a cornerstone of successful potty training. When the dog eliminates outdoors, immediate praise, treats, or playtime strengthens the association between the action and positive outcomes.

Avoid punishment for accidents indoors, as this may increase anxiety and worsen the problem. Instead, gently redirect the dog to the appropriate spot and reward successful elimination.

Environmental Management

In some cases, temporarily confining the dog to a smaller, easily cleaned area or using crate training helps manage accidents. Crates, when used correctly, capitalize on a dog's natural desire to keep their sleeping area clean, encouraging better bladder control.

Additionally, thoroughly cleaning accident spots with enzymatic cleaners eliminates odors that might otherwise attract repeat elimination in the same place.

Seeking Veterinary Advice

If accidents persist despite behavioral interventions, consulting a veterinarian is crucial. Medical conditions can easily be overlooked but may be the primary cause of regression. A thorough examination, including urine analysis and blood tests, can identify infections or other physiological

problems.

Comparing Potty Training Regression Across Dog Breeds and Ages

Some breeds exhibit tendencies that influence potty training durability. For instance, small breeds like Chihuahuas and Dachshunds may have smaller bladders and higher accident rates, especially if their owners do not adjust bathroom schedules accordingly. Conversely, larger breeds like Labradors often have more robust control but may face challenges during adolescence when hormonal changes affect behavior.

Age-related differences also matter. Puppies generally require more frequent reinforcement and patience, whereas older dogs may need medical evaluation and gentle accommodation for physical limitations.

Pros and Cons of Common Potty Training Methods During Regression

- **Crate Training:**

- *Pros:* Helps prevent accidents, provides a safe space, promotes bladder control.
- *Cons:* Can cause stress if used improperly, requires supervision and gradual introduction.

- **Outdoor Training Consistency:**

- *Pros:* Reinforces natural elimination behavior, strengthens owner-dog communication.
- *Cons:* Weather and scheduling challenges, may be difficult for aging or disabled dogs.

- **Use of Puppy Pads or Indoor Toilets:**

- *Pros:* Convenient for indoor use, useful during inclement weather or mobility issues.
- *Cons:* Can confuse dogs about appropriate elimination spots, may

prolong training.

Maintaining Patience and Adjusting Expectations

Understanding that regression in potty training is often a temporary hurdle helps maintain a balanced perspective. Dogs, like humans, can experience setbacks due to health, emotional state, or environmental changes. Rather than viewing accidents as failures, framing them as opportunities for reassessment and reinforcement can promote more effective training.

In many cases, combining veterinary care, consistent behavioral strategies, and environmental management yields the best results. Owners who stay observant, flexible, and encouraging tend to navigate potty training regression more successfully, ultimately fostering a stronger bond with their dogs and a cleaner living environment.

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Navigating the world of puppy potty training can be daunting for new pet owners, but it's a critical step towards a harmonious home life. *Potty Train Your Puppy: Step-by-Step Plan to Stop Indoor Accidents Fast* offers a comprehensive guide filled with practical tips and insights. Inside, you'll learn: - Proven step-by-step techniques to effectively train your puppy and minimize indoor accidents. - How to recognize the signs when your puppy needs to go and establish a consistent routine. Understanding the science behind puppy behavior, and leveraging positive reinforcement, will empower you to build a strong bond with your furry friend. Whether you're transitioning from indoor to outdoor potty spots or troubleshooting common training issues, this book equips you with the knowledge you need. Transform your training challenges into successes and ensure a clean home and happy pet. Take the first step towards a peaceful life with your well-mannered companion.

my dog is regressing in potty training: *House Training 101: A Comprehensive Guide for Dog Owners* Samantha D. Thompson, 2023-01-01 House training your dog has never been easier with this step-by-step guide. Are you a new dog owner or struggling with a dog that just won't seem to get the hang of house training? Look no further! *House Training 101: A Comprehensive Guide for Dog Owners* is your go-to guide for all your house training questions and concerns. This book is specifically designed to help you teach your dog proper bathroom habits, whether you're dealing with a new puppy or an older dog that needs a refresher course. With easy-to-follow instructions,

practical tips, and expert advice, you'll be on your way to a fully house trained dog in no time. Inside this comprehensive guide, you'll discover:

- **The Importance of House Training:** Understand why it is essential to establish good bathroom habits for your dog.
- **Setting a House Training Schedule:** Learn how to create a routine that suits your dog's needs and your lifestyle.
- **Crate Training Basics:** Discover the benefits of crate training and how to use it effectively during the house training process.
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With **House Training 101: A Comprehensive Guide for Dog Owners**, you'll be well-equipped to tackle house training and create a happy, harmonious relationship between you and your furry friend. Grab your copy today and unlock the secrets to a well-trained, accident-free dog!

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my dog is regressing in potty training: Training the Best Dog Ever Larry Kay, Dawn Sylvia-Stasiewicz, 2012-09-25 Training the Best Dog Ever, originally published in hardcover as The Love That Dog Training Program, is a book based on love and kindness. It features a program of positive reinforcement and no-fail techniques that author Dawn Sylvia-Stasiewicz used to train the White House dog, Bo Obama, and each of Senator Ted Kennedy's dogs, among countless others. Training the Best Dog Ever relies on trust and treats, not choke collars; on bonding, not leash-yanking or reprimanding. The five-week training program takes only 10 to 20 minutes of practice a day and works both for puppies and for adult dogs that need to be trained out of bad habits. Illustrated with step-by-step photographs, the book covers hand-feeding; crate and potty training; and basic cues—sit, stay, come here—as well as more complex goals, such as bite inhibition and water safety. It shows how to avoid or correct typical behavior problems, including jumping, barking, and leash-pulling. Plus: how to make your dog comfortable in the world—a dog that knows how to behave in a vet's office, is at ease around strangers, and more. In other words, the best dog ever.

my dog is regressing in potty training: How To House-train Your Dog Pasquale De Marco, 2025-05-09 How To House-train Your Dog is the ultimate guide to house training your dog, written by renowned dog trainer Pasquale De Marco. With over 20 years of experience, Pasquale De Marco has helped countless dog owners successfully house train their furry friends. In this book, Pasquale De Marco shares his expert advice on how to housetrain dogs of all ages, from puppies to adult dogs. He covers a wide range of topics, from understanding your dog's instincts to solving common house training problems. He also provides tips on how to house train dogs in different environments, such as apartments and rural areas. Whether you're a first-time dog owner or you're looking for new ways to improve your dog's behavior, How To House-train Your Dog is the ultimate resource for house training your dog. Here's what you'll learn in How To House-train Your Dog: * The importance of understanding your dog's instincts * How to use crate training to your advantage * The basics of potty training * How to house train adult dogs * How to house train puppies * How to solve common house training problems * How to maintain house training With clear instructions and helpful tips, How To House-train Your Dog will help you housetrain your dog quickly and effectively. Don't let house training be a chore. With How To House-train Your Dog, you can make it a breeze! If you like this book, write a review on google books!

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rewarding, and—most of all—fun!

my dog is regressing in potty training: *The Complete Guide to Shorkies* Candace Darnforth, 2021-01-18 Written by author Candace Darnforth, *The Complete Guide to Shorkies* is a MUST HAVE for anyone considering bringing a new Shorkie puppy into their home. Shorkies are one of America's most popular designer dogs among dog lovers. If you are a new dog owner or planning on adopting a Shorkie, *The Complete Guide to Shorkies* is the only guidebook you will ever need in understanding and training your adorable dog. Designed to set you and your dog up for success! *The Complete Guide to Shorkies* will help you in every area related to your new Shorkie from the early puppy stage and different training methods to grooming and health issues and even how to train your new pup some basic commands. With this handbook you will have an obedient and loved companion in no time! *The Complete Guide to Shorkies* helps you to: Groom and care for your dog correctly Keep your pup healthy and monitor his diet Train your Shorkie to have good behavior Teach your dog to socialize with people and other pets

my dog is regressing in potty training: *The Scribbler's Assassination* Eric Johns, 2015-04 E.Rick Jones was a penniless author while Fred, his twin brother, was a successful inventor and entrepreneur. Fred's advice on how Rick could improve his life was never any use because Rick, although he dreamed of becoming like his brother, in reality was hobbled by his timidity. When Rick was accused of being a paedophile, he found himself being investigated by the police and hounded by the media. The evidence appeared conclusive. No one would believe him that he was being framed and everyone he knew (including his wife) seemed to have a reason for wanting him imprisoned or murdered. There was no one he could trust. The media were doing their best to stir up a lynch mob and the police weren't interested in offering him protection. His brother thought his predicament hilarious. One way or another it seemed that his sheltered life was about to come to a painful end.

my dog is regressing in potty training: *Hard to House Train* Peggy Swager, 2018 *Hard to House Train* by Peggy Swager is designed to be the go-to reference guide for trainers who encounter difficult house training cases.

my dog is regressing in potty training: *Canine and Feline Behavior for Veterinary Technicians and Nurses* Julie K. Shaw, Debbie Martin, 2014-10-10 *Canine and Feline Behavior for Veterinary Technicians and Nurses* provides the veterinary technician with a solid foundation in behavioral medicine. Designed as a daily resource for interacting with and educating pet owners, the book familiarizes readers with the behavioral, mental, and emotional needs of dogs and cats. *Canine and Feline Behavior for Veterinary Technicians and Nurses* offers a complete guide to the technician's role in behavioral preventive services and how to assist the veterinarian with behavioral intervention. Covering the roles of animal behavior professionals, normal development of dogs and cats, and the human-animal bond, the book includes correlations from human mental health care throughout. The book encompasses learning theory, preventive behavioral services, standardized behavior modification terms and techniques, and veterinary behavior pharmacology. *Canine and Feline Behavior for Veterinary Technicians and Nurses* is an essential resource for veterinary technicians to realize their full potential and become a pivotal component of the behavioral health care team for canine and feline patients.

my dog is regressing in potty training: *Just Give Me a Little Piece of Quiet* Lorilee Craker, 2011-07-01 Most moms with young children struggle to find a little peace and quiet for themselves in the midst of their hectic days, and setting aside time to spend with God can be even harder. They need devotions that fit their busy schedules and meet them where they are. Lorilee Craker's short readings are just right for these moms. She lends her engaging writing style to personal stories that moms will find encouraging, often funny, and oh-so-familiar. Each reflection is related to a biblical truth and bookended by a verse at the beginning and at the end. *Just Give Me a Little Piece of Quiet* invites moms to retreat from the day's pressures and be refreshed for tomorrow's possibilities.

my dog is regressing in potty training: *Puppy Training for Kids* Lily A. Parker, 2025-08-07

The ultimate kid-friendly puppy training book that empowers young dog lovers to become confident, responsible trainers using gentle, proven methods. Is your child excited to help raise the new family puppy—but you're not sure where to start? Do you want a training book that's easy to follow, fun to read, and actually works for kids and beginners? *Puppy Training for Kids* is the perfect solution for families looking to teach children how to care for and train their furry best friend. Designed for readers ages 6-12, this step-by-step guide blends positive reinforcement techniques with age-appropriate lessons to build confidence, responsibility, and a lifelong bond between your child and their pup. Written by certified dog trainer and children's educator Lily A. Parker, this book makes training simple, effective, and joyful—from the very first "sit" to mastering daily routines and understanding dog behavior. Inside this book, kids will discover how to: Understand puppy body language and build trust from day one Choose the perfect name for training success Create a safe, puppy-proof home with a handy kid-friendly checklist Teach basic commands like "sit," "stay," and "come" using snacks and praise Set up potty training schedules with helpful reward charts Learn how to walk their puppy politely on a leash Play training games that make learning feel like fun Handle common problems like nipping, chewing, or jumping Care for their pup with brushing, bathing, and vet visits Celebrate progress with a Puppy Graduation Certificate Whether you're raising a golden retriever, a mixed breed rescue, or a tiny terrier, this guide gives children the tools they need to become patient, kind, and confident dog trainers. Unlike other books that are written only for adults, this one speaks directly to kids—encouraging them with clear instructions, engaging examples, and fun activities that make learning stick. Perfect for first-time dog owners, homeschoolers, and families who want to raise a well-mannered pup while teaching valuable life skills. Get ready to start your puppy adventure with a guide that makes training simple, joyful, and something your child will never forget.

my dog is regressing in potty training: *The Complete Guide to the Brittany* Candace Darnforth, 2021-11-10 Including interviews with 7 Top Brittany breeders, author Candace Darnforth has written the perfect guidebook for any new Brittany owner! This comprehensive and easy-to-read book will prove itself invaluable as it guides you in raising a happy and healthy Brittany from puppy to old age. Giving Brittany specific advice on topics like: Choosing the right Brittany from a breeder (or a rescue) Supplies that will make the first few months a breeze Foundational training strategies for a Brittany puppy Basic and advanced command training Introductory Field Work training Advice for living with the quirks of the Brittany breed Nutrition for a high-energy breed Basic grooming advice Preventative health care Brittany specific diseases and conditions (and how to spot them) Senior Brittany care Whether you are a long-time Brittany owner or considering bringing a Brittany into your home for the first time, this book will guide you through questions you may have. Learn the fascinating history of this breed and why they've been a favorite breed for so many years. You'll discover how to train your Brittany to interact with people and other animals, to offset bad habits, and why a good diet is essential. Use this book as your go-to guide for all things related to Brittannys. From choosing the right breeder, to grooming, to ear and eye care, it's all in this book. You'll find in-depth information about Brittannys from the moment you bring your dog home until you say your last goodbye. *The Complete Guide to the Brittany* is a must-read for new pet owners everywhere! It is a goldmine of practical information, plus tips and tricks that will enrich your life and that of your Brittany.

my dog is regressing in potty training: *My Old Dog* Laura T. Coffey, 2015-09-18 "No Dog Should Die Alone" was the attention-grabbing — and heart-stirring — headline of journalist Laura T. Coffey's TODAY show website story about photographer Lori Fusaro's work with senior shelter pets. While generally calm, easy, and already house-trained, these animals often represent the highest-risk population at shelters. With gorgeous, joyful photographs and sweet, funny, true tales of "old dogs learning new tricks," Coffey and Fusaro show that adopting a senior can be even more rewarding than choosing a younger dog. You'll meet endearing elders like Marnie, the irresistible shih tzu who has posed for selfies with Tina Fey, James Franco, and Betty White; Remy, a soulful nine-year-old dog adopted by elderly nuns; George Clooney's cocker spaniel, Einstein; and Bretagne,

the last known surviving search dog from Ground Zero. They may be slower moving and a tad less exuberant than puppies, but these pooches prove that adopting a senior brings immeasurable joy, earnest devotion, and unconditional love.

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