

Avoiding Dog Bites

Canine Body Language

Dog Bite Statistics

- According to the Centers for Disease Control:
 - Each year about 4.7 million people are victims of dog bites; of these, 800,000 people receive medical treatment and 6,000 are hospitalized.
 - 10-20 people a year die as a result of dog bites.
 - Between 1979 and 1998, there were 238 reported fatalities where breed of dog involved was noted.
 - 58% involved unrestrained dogs on the owner's property.
 - 24% involved unrestrained dogs off the owner's property.
 - 25 different breeds and mixes were involved in these attacks.
 - Pits and Pit mixes were responsible for 76 deaths.
 - Rotts and Rott mixes were responsible for 44 deaths.
 - Pits and Rotts were responsible for 67% of all fatal dog attacks.

Can you read dog body language?

- Dog's speak but not with words!
- Canine body language will tell you what the dog is thinking.
- If you can read the dog, you lessen the chances of being bitten.
- The key is to be proactive. By the time the dog is ready to bite, it may be too late.

What Dogs' Body Language Can Tell Us

- Friendly/Playful
- Fearful
- Submissive
- Dominant
- Aggressive
- Predatory

Friendly/Playful

- Eyes: Wide but relaxed.
- Ears: Raised and forward.
- Mouth: Relaxed and open, panting; tongue lolling; "smiling."
- Body: Relaxed looking; front end may be lowered (play-bow); excited bouncing, and jumping; acting silly.
- Tail: Vigorous wagging; medium to low position.
- Vocalization: Excited barking, soft playful growl.



Fearful

- Eyes: Narrowed and averted; may be rolled back with the whites showing.
- Ears: Laid back flat against head.
- Mouth: Lips tight; may be drawn back exposing teeth.
- Body: Crouched, tense; body compacted; shivering/trembling.
- Tail: Low, tucked between legs or flat against belly.
- Vocalization: Whine, yelp or low growl.



Defensive Aggression

- Eyes: Narrowed and averted; may be rolled back; may be looking out of corner of eyes.
- Ears: Laid back.
- Mouth: Teeth slightly showing; lips may be alternately raised and lowered.
- Body: Slinking; may quickly approach when your back is turned; "snappy."
- Vocalization: Whine, moan.



Submissive

- Eyes: Narrowed and averted or wide with whites showing.
- Ears: Down and back.
- Mouth: Lips pulled back; nuzzling or licking.
- Body: Low to the ground; rolled on back, exposing belly; "submissive urination."
- Vocalization: Whine, whimpering, yelping.



Dominant

- Eyes: Wide open; staring
- Ears: High and aiming forward
- Mouth: May be open or closed
- Body: Standing tall (tiptoes); hackles may be raised
- Tail: Stiff and high
- Vocalization: Confident growl, grunting



Offensive Aggression

- Eyes: Narrowed or staring; challenging
- Ears: Close to head; alert
- Mouth: Snarling; teeth bared
- Body: Alert, tense; very tall and forward
- Tail: Stiff and high
- Vocalization: Snarl, growl or bark

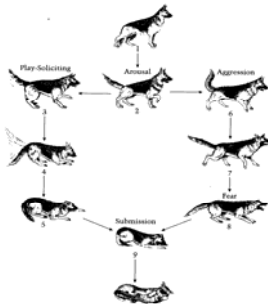


Predatory

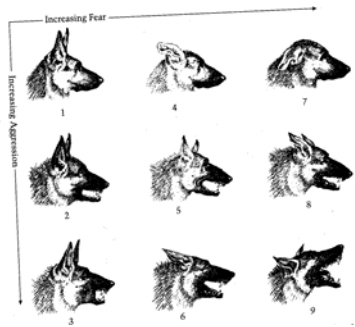
- Eyes: Wide and staring.
- Ears: Alert, alternately facing front and back listening.
- Mouth: Tense.
- Body: Rigid, crouching; tensed to allow movement in any direction; nostrils flaring to catch scent.
- Vocalization: Silent.



Recognizing Canine Body Language: Tail/Body



Recognizing Canine Body Language: Ears/Head



What can we do to prevent being bitten?

- Don't surprise a dog.
 - When approaching an area where a dog may be, make some noise. Slam car doors or whistle or announce yourself loudly.
 - Check the area for signs that a dog lives there: doghouse, chain, rope or cable tie-out.
 - BEWARE OF DOG SIGN!
- Try to look less threatening.
 - Turn sideways to the dog.
 - Don't reach out and don't lean over the dog.
 - Don't make direct eye contact.

What can we do to prevent being bitten

- Try giving the dog a command.
 - In a calm, firm voice try saying go or sit.
- If the dog loses interest, back away slowly until you are at a safe distance.
 - Never put yourself between the dog and its escape route.

If The Dog Attacks

- If the dog does attack, try “feeding” it anything you have handy: jacket, clipboard, catch-pole.
- Don't yell and don't run.
- Stay on your feet.
 - Try not to struggle.
 - Back away and look for a safe place to retreat.
- If you do get knocked to the ground, curl into a ball and protect you face and head.
 - Try to remain as motionless as possible until the dog loses interest.

**BE
CAREFUL!**
