

A Kids' Comprehensive Guide To Speaking Dog!

A fun, interactive, educational resource to help the whole family understand canine communication.

*Keep future generations
safe by learning to
"speak dog!"*



-  Real-life situations explained with photos and fun cartoons.
-  Complete toolbox to help children stay safe around just about any dog.
-  Featuring the renowned Be a Tree® international dog bite safety program.
-  Written and contributed to by qualified canine training and behavior specialists.

Niki Tudge



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How to Use This Book

This book is designed for parents, guardians and educators. It is an interactive work designed to be read together with children

while the children have fun with the exercises. The material is broken down into several chapters with each chapter featuring individual learning goals and engaging activities.

The introduction is geared towards the adult reader. It will help give you some background, so as you take your students through the program you have some basic information on dog behavior at your disposal, as well as knowledge of how the Be a Tree® program was developed and its intended use.

Disclaimer

Although the author and publisher have made every effort to ensure that the information in this work is accurate and correct at the time of going to press, the author and publisher do not assume and hereby disclaim any liability to any party for any loss, damage, or disruption caused by errors or omissions, whether such errors or omissions result from negligence, accident, or any other cause. Canine behavior is fluid and reliant on many factors in the environment. Always consult a qualified pet professional before attempting to intervene with your pet dog if you feel his behavior may be a safety risk to your family or the general public.

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Introduction

Doggone Safe is an independent non-profit organization specializing in educational initiatives for the purpose of dog bite prevention, and offers several highly effective resources to aid supporters of this effort. One of these resources is an in-depth online instructional course that teaches anyone who works around dogs about the nuances of canine body language and facial expression. Doggone Safe also offers the interactive, educational Be a Tree® program that focuses on teaching children how to be safe around dogs, both familiar and unfamiliar. In our experience, we have learned that:

- Recognizing the subtle signs that indicate a dog is feeling anxious, stressed or fearful can prevent people from being bitten.
- Educating the dog-owning community about canine body language, and how to know when their dog may be getting to the point where he feels he may need to bite, can save a child from being bitten.
- Being aware of, understanding and acknowledging the subtle signs in a dog's body language and facial expression that indicate an anxious, stressed or fearful emotional state will help family members to reassess and/or change their actions towards their pet.

Doggone Safe administers the aforementioned Be a Tree® dog bite prevention program that also teaches children how to read dog body language. Since its incorporation in 2004, more than 700,000

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children in more than 30 countries have attended a Be a Tree® educational session. The program, when delivered live, is supported by the Be a Tree® teacher kit, which contains everything required for the interactive session. As a parent, you can also purchase this presentation from Doggone Safe and help educate children in your local community, or simply enjoy the interactive program with your own family.

The dog bite safety educational program laid out in this book features not only the Be a Tree® program, but also much more information on how to keep future generations safe and prevent dog bites. The program will go from “nose to tail,” and discuss all the canine body parts and how a dog uses them to communicate. We will cover communication signals, ranging from the subtle “half-moon eye” to the very obvious “propeller tail wag,” using photos and illustrations to help educate your family.

The key messages of the Be a Tree® program to children are:

- If a strange dog comes near you, or if any dog is acting too frisky or bothering you in any way, “be a tree.” This means stand still, fold in your branches, watch your roots grow and count to the highest number you know over and over in your head until help comes or the dog goes away.
- Dogs communicate via their body language and, once we understand them properly, we can tell if they are happy and want to meet or interact with us, or they are feeling scared or anxious and want to be left alone.
- Always ask permission from your parent and the dog’s owner if you want to pet a dog.
- Meet and pet a dog properly. Only pet happy dogs.

- Respect a dog's toys, resting/sleeping place, toys and bones.
- Dogs don't like hugs and kisses.
- Don't be afraid of dogs.

Let's get started then! Welcome to this short book on how to stay safe around dogs. This work and its educational content is geared towards children on the premise that the information is delivered by parents, teachers or guardians.

The book is divided into several sections so each section can be delivered as a single subject or packaged together. It features an "experiential" learning style, whereby children get involved in the learning and can be engaged and have fun. This gives parents, teachers and guardians the perfect opportunity to share some valuable time with their learners while helping them gather and absorb invaluable information on how to stay safe around dogs.

The first chapter highlights some of the specifics to enable the parent or guardian to better explain some of the book's concepts in a simple and fun way. Without further ado then, let's learn to "speak dog!"

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Background for Parents, Guardians and Educators

All behaviors that dogs exhibit are designed either to access pleasurable situations and desirable objects or to avoid and escape unpleasant situations and undesirable objects. *(Note: this is based on what each individual dog considers to be pleasant or unpleasant, not the human. It is important to be aware that the canine and human opinions may differ in any given situation!)*

A dog's communication systems are greatly ritualized, and have evolved specifically to avoid or cut off conflict. This has made dogs, as a species, very successful in terms of their numbers, variety, and adaptability. Things, however, can go awry when we humans misread the signals dogs send us, leaving them helpless to effectively communicate their feelings to us no matter how hard they try.

We cannot know or understand what dogs think and vice-versa. What we can do, though, is understand their body language, observe them carefully as we interact with them, and then respond appropriately.

“Speaking dog” is simple if you remember a few important rules, and has the added bonus of making any interaction with dogs more fun and safe – not to mention, the dogs you come into contact with will really appreciate it.

Types of Social Behavior

The types of social behaviors dogs demonstrate can be broadly grouped into the following two possibilities:

Distance Decreasing.

A dog uses distance decreasing behaviors to promote approach, play and continued interaction. A lumbering soft gait, relaxed body, and a relaxed face, where the muscles are loose, indicate the dog is encouraging interaction, as does a dog who is moving towards you or leaning into you. The dog may also offer you a paw or rub against you. Dogs who want to engage in play will demonstrate the “play bow,” a posture where the dog literally bows the front of his body so the front legs are parallel to the ground while the hindquarters remain in the standing position.

Distance Increasing.

Distance increasing signals vary and can be easily misread. The signals many of us seem to have no trouble understanding are when a dog stands tall, making each part of his body appear as large as possible, with his weight on the front legs, displaying an upright tail and ears, and piloerection (i.e. the hair along the spine stands up/raised hackles). The dog may also vocalize (e.g. bark or growl). We seem to instinctively react to these signals and take them as the warnings they are intended to be. *(See also the upcoming section on anxiety and stress for more on distance increasing signals.)*

Misinterpreting Distance Increasing Signals

There are also a number of distance increasing signals we humans commonly misinterpret. These are the more appealing behaviors dogs demonstrate. Dogs use these appeasement behaviors to make friendly encounters more predictable and to help them diffuse what

they anticipate might be a hostile encounter if escape is impossible. These behaviors are a nonaggressive way to “cut off” conflict. When dogs display these behaviors, we need to recognize that this is their way of showing us they are unsure and a little scared.

Appeasement Signals

You may see appeasement signals in one of two ways:

Passive Appeasement.

Passive appeasement behaviors are commonly misunderstood and are often labeled as “submissive.” Dogs displaying passive appeasement will present themselves in a recumbent position exposing the underside of their body. The dog’s ears are typically back and down against the head and the tail is often tucked between the upper legs. Sometimes the dog will expel a small amount of urine while he waits for the attention or the situation he perceives to be hostile to cease.

Active Appeasement.

Dogs displaying active appeasement gestures are often incorrectly labeled as “excited,” “overly friendly,” or even “pushy.” They will often approach you with their whole rear-end wagging in a “U” shape allowing both their face and genital area to be inspected. They may be desperate to jump up and get “in your face.”

For humans, then, it is important when meeting and greeting dogs to be able to recognize if a dog is genuinely friendly and wanting to greet you, or if he is experiencing stress, anxiety or fear.

Conflicted Dogs

A dog in conflict will want to approach but at the same time is too scared or unsure of the outcome. His body language will vacillate

between displays of distance decreasing behaviors and distance increasing behaviors. Interacting with a dog that is conflicted can be risky. If you make a wrong move and the dog cannot avoid the approach, then he may become aggressive. This is often the case with a “fear biter.” Many dogs who bite, bite out of fear. Our appearance and movement towards them is scary, and they bite as a last resort to encourage us to leave. Dogs whose bite is motivated from fear often display ambivalent, mixed signals. This means they are conflicted. They are torn between approaching and being scared so they will move back and forth in their communication. This conflict can be displayed very quickly and can result in nips and bites. When dogs are showing fear it is advisable to avoid sudden movements, and to allow the dog an escape route. Do not force the meet and greet by moving toward the dog, having the dog’s owner manipulate the dog into moving toward you, or trying to touch the dog in any way.

Cut-Off Behaviors

It is important that we recognize a dog’s cut-off behaviors. These are designed to end social contact. If, when greeting a dog, you do not recognize that he is scared or stressed, or you choose to ignore his signals and push forward with your approach, you are unfairly pushing him into a situation where he may feel he is only left with one option, and that is not a favorable option either to dog or human. In other words, he may feel he has no other choice but to bite.

When we get a little irritated we may tell somebody to "push off" or "cut it out." If they don’t respond, then we may speak a little more firmly and we may even shout at them. Our dogs cannot do this. They cannot explain or plead with us in English, or whichever language we speak. They can only use their canine communication system. It is up to us to understand and respond to this system so the dog does not feel threatened to the point where he escalates his warnings to a bite!

Canine Warnings

Dogs will typically give plenty of warning if they are uncomfortable with something that another dog or a person is doing. These warning signs may include a direct stare, a rigid face or body, a growl, a curled lip (this can be minimal and hard to spot) or “whale eye” (i.e. flashing the whites of his eyes, also known as half-moon eye). His ears may be flat against his head and he may have a closed, tense mouth. If you see any of these signals, stop what you are doing immediately and allow the dog to slowly back away. Be aware that dogs can make these signals extremely quickly, within mere seconds, and because of this it is not always easy to spot them.

Dogs are wonderful, social animals that love and need to be a part of our lives. But, like people, their personalities range from being social butterflies to wallflowers. Tailor your approach and greeting style based on whatever communications the dog gives you. Dogs are very clear with their intentions and emotions and respond accordingly to ours. Remember, our body language and approach speak much louder than our words as far as dogs are concerned. They are expert readers of our body language and nonverbal communication.

Specific Signs of Stress or Anxiety

Dogs often feel stressed or anxious in certain situations, and will give signs to indicate their discomfort. In such cases, there is a need for intervention to prevent pushing a dog to the point of biting, and to make sure your canine friend is happy and not feeling anxious. Some of the behaviors and signals in this section may also be mentioned in other areas of the book, but we feel they are too important to not speak to in more detail.

Please remember: It is a **GOOD THING** that a dog shows you that he is anxious or uncomfortable and gives you the chance to change the situation, rather than go straight to a bite. Here are some of

the more subtle or commonly misinterpreted signs a dog may give when feeling stressed or anxious:

- **One Paw Raised** – This looks very cute but the dog who raises his paw is not happy and does not want to be petted or bothered. A raised paw is a sign that the dog is worried.
- **Half-Moon Eye** – Also known as whale eye, this is when the whites of the dog's eye are visible. Watch for this one when kids are playing too rough with the dog, or are too noisy or close to him. It is a common expression in dogs that are being hugged. If you see the half-moon eye when children approach the dog or are interacting with the dog, it's time to intervene and give them all something else to do. The dog just wants to be left alone.

A dog may also vocalize his anxiety in the form of a growl, a tongue flick, looking away, yawning or by licking his lips. Never punish a dog for showing that he wants to be left alone by growling, leaving the area or demonstrating any of the more subtle signs highlighted above. If you punish a dog for growling, then you risk suppressing his warning system. If you punish a dog for not staying in a set place when he feels threatened by a child's proximity, then you risk suppressing his warning system. When a dog's efforts to communicate are ignored and he starts to feel more and more stressed, he may get to the point where he feels he can no longer rely on his warning system. In such cases, he may simply resort to biting without any of the initial warning signals.

Now if a dog is punished for trying to communicate his discomfort with any given situation, he will still feel exactly the same way about a child bothering him. However, he may now also feel he has no way to show it and no way out of the situation because he does not want to risk being punished. Be glad if your dog gives a warning and take steps to modify the behavior of the child, condition the dog to enjoy

the child, and create private and safe spaces for both dog and child.

Other Signs of Anxiety:

- Tail between the legs.
- Tail low and only the end is wagging.
- Tail between the legs and wagging.
- Tail down or straight for curly-tailed dogs (husky, malamute, pug, chow, spitz-type dogs etc.)
- Ears sideways for an erect-eared dog.
- Ears back and very rapid panting.
- The dog goes into another room away from you and urinates or defecates. (*Please find a force-free professional behavior consultant for help with this.*)

Displacement Behaviors

These are all things that dogs do in other contexts. It is important to look at the whole situation to determine whether the dog is feeling anxious.

For example:

- If it is bedtime and the dog gets up, stretches, yawns and goes to her bed, then that yawn was not a displacement behavior.
- If the kids are hugging the dog or lying on her and she yawns or starts licking at them over and over, then this is a displacement behavior. She wants to get up and leave or even to bite, but she displaces that with yawning or licking them or herself. In this context, the licking or yawning behavior tells you that the dog is uncomfortable with whatever the kids are doing and it is time

for you to intervene. You must then either prevent the kids from doing this in the future, or use positive training techniques to teach the dog to enjoy (not just tolerate) these actions from the kids. *(Note: Children should never lie on, sit on, or stand on any dog.)*

Displacement behaviors are normal behaviors that are displayed out of context. They also indicate conflict and anxiety, i.e. the dog wants to do something, but he is suppressing the urge to do it. He may, then, displace the suppressed behavior with something else such as a lick or a yawn. For example, you are getting ready to go out and the dog hopes to go too. He is not sure what will happen next. He wants to jump on you or run out the door, but instead he yawns. The uncertainty of the situation causes conflict for the dog, and the displacement behaviors are a manifestation of that conflict. Another example: The dog may want to bite a child who takes his bone, but instead he bites furiously at his own foot.

Some examples of displacement behaviors include:

- Yawning when not tired.
- Licking chops without the presence of food.
- Sudden scratching when not itchy.
- Sudden biting at paws or other body part.
- Sudden sniffing the ground or other object.
- All over body shake when not wet or dirty.

Avoidance Behaviors

Sometimes dogs are more overt when they feel anxious and want to remove themselves from a situation. Here are some examples:

- Getting up and leaving an uncomfortable situation.
- Turning the head away.

- Hiding behind a person or object.
- Barking and retreating.
- Rolling over on his back in a submissive way. (He is saying, “Please don’t hurt me!”)

Please don’t force a dog to stay in situation where he feels anxious, especially if children are the source of his anxiety. All dogs should have a safe place, such as a crate or mat, which they can go to when they want to be left alone. All family members and guests should be taught not to bother the dog when he is in his safe place.

Tails Tell a Story

One of the biggest misconceptions about canine body language is that a dog wagging his tail is a happy dog. A dog’s tail can indeed indicate that he feels happy and relaxed. When looked at in isolation, however, the tail is one of *least* reliable indicators of how a dog is feeling. When looking at the topography of a dog’s body and his communication signals, you must look at the entire package, i.e. all of the body parts. A wagging tail does not always mean that a dog wants to be friends and is safe to approach. Because of this, we need to teach children much clearer indications in terms of whether a dog is ready for them to approach or not. Often, we hear children being told, “Oh, he is friendly, his tail is wagging,” when, in fact, the tail is communicating a completely different story. Yes, the tail may well be moving but not because the dog feels friendly or wants to be approached.

We have included some nice graphics of dogs’ tails in Appendix A. These can be used with your older child to support your dog bite safety education initiatives.

General Meeting and Greeting

In general, when you meet and greet a dog, make sure you have a

relaxed posture. Let the dog approach you and turn slightly to the side, as this is less threatening for a dog than when you are standing in a full-frontal position, leaning over him and/or staring directly at him. Always ask permission from the dog's owner to pet their dog. If the owner says "yes," talk gently to the dog without making eye contact. But remember, not all owners will be aware if their dog is stressed or fearful so always use your own new knowledge of how dogs speak!

When meeting a new dog who is happy to meet you, it helps to crouch down and keep your hands by your side without making any sudden movements. When you have determined the dog is not showing any signs of stress or fear and his body language is relaxed and happy, then you can slowly move your hand to the side of his body, just below the neck, and stroke him gently across his chest and side. (*See also the upcoming section on signs of anxiety and stress*). If the dog is showing passive appeasement signals (i.e. signs of unease or fear) as described above, give him space and allow him to approach you on his terms and in his preferred timing. If he chooses not to, then respect that and accept that he is not ready to interact at that moment.

Canine-Canine Communication

Dogs are very social animals and are expert communicators with one another. Their evolution required this over the millennia to ensure the pack's smooth functioning and successful hunting. It would be better for all concerned if we were able to speak and understand their language, but, sadly, our understanding of canine communication is stunningly limited. It is often hard for us to know what another dog is saying to our dog, so we may have no idea why our dog responds in a certain way and may label his behavior as "unpredictable." Our dog, however, would disagree.

Although much of a dog's communication is indecipherable to the untrained eye, many people are aware of some of the methods dogs use to communicate:

Scent. This includes scent markers such as pheromones, urine, feces and anal gland secretions, and undoubtedly others we are unaware of.

Vocalizations. These include barking, whining, yelping, howling, growling, grumbling and general muttering.

Visual Signals. These include body postures, appearance of facial features such as eyes, ears, and mouth, and appearance of other body features such as tail and hair. Each of these visual signals is an indication as to how a dog is feeling.

Body Movements. These can be fast or slow, face-to-face or indirect, closeness of physical contact, and use of the mouth for licking, snapping, or biting.

Of these, scent is probably the most important in terms of communication between dogs. A large part of the canine brain is devoted to the sense of smell (compared to the miniscule portion of the human brain which has this function). The first thing dogs do when they meet peacefully is give each other a thorough sniffing over, and the most important and enjoyable part of most dogs' daily walks is sniffing everything possible, and maybe leaving behind a few scent marks of their own. Unfortunately, this major aspect of canine communication is probably the least understood by humans, since it is completely outside the realm of our own experience. Who really knows what information dogs are picking up from sniffing one another? We can only take our best guess.

What we humans are good at is using our eyes. Although the very important world of scent communication experienced by our dogs is impenetrable to us at this point, our human visual skills allow us to develop an understanding of what we *can* see, i.e. our dog's body language. This is a rich language in itself. While we do not yet have a full understanding of everything our dogs communicate visually,

many of us already have a pretty good grasp of the basics.

Three Important Factors

There are three factors to consider regarding the dog/child relationship:

- The opportunities the two parties have for interaction.
- The behavior of the dog.
- The behavior of the child.

As a parent and/or dog owner, you have the opportunity to influence these factors by managing the environment in which the dog and child interact, training the dog, and teaching the child how to behave around the dog.

Why Be a Tree®?

Dogs are stimulated by movement and noise, two things children are well known for! In spite of this, it is, of course, still possible to work toward and achieve positive and comfortable relationships between dogs and kids.

One of the most valuable skills children can learn is to stand still and “be a tree” if a strange dog comes near them, or if a dog is bothering them or becoming too frisky. This includes even their own dog. What does this mean exactly?

The Be a Tree® Model:

- Stop and hush.
- Fold in your branches (hands folded in front).
- Watch your roots grow (look at your feet).

- Count your breaths in your head until help comes or the dog goes away.
- “Trees” are boring to dogs and they will usually just sniff and then go away. No matter what the dog does, just stand still, avoid eye contact (by looking at your feet) and stay quiet.

It is not enough just to tell your kids about this. They need to practice it in a low stress environment so they have the best chance of being able to do it in a real life situation if they feel threatened by a dog in any way.

The Dog Bite Safety Education Program

Are you ready to learn about safety around dogs?

Yes? Then let's have some fun!

Section One

In this section, there are two learning goals:

- 1. Learning how to Be a Tree®.*
- 2. Understanding Your Tools.*

Learning to Be a Tree®

The very first thing we are going to do is to learn how to Be a Tree®. Then, if we are around a strange dog, a dog that is jumpy or boisterous, or a dog that just makes us feel frightened or scared, we can Be a Tree®.



Are you ready?

Now that we are ready, let's Be a Tree®!

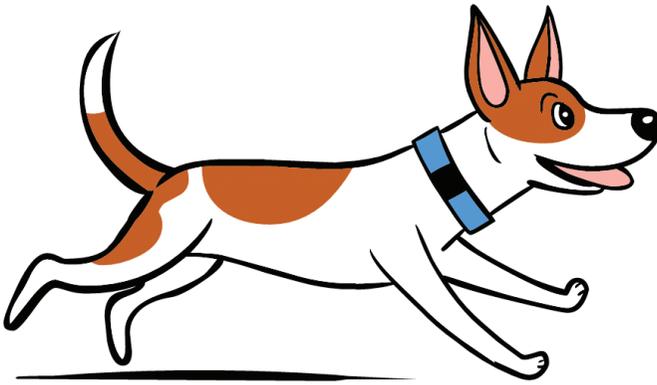
- Let's stand up and be quiet.
- Now, take your arms and fold them around your body. These are your branches.
- Now, look down at your feet, and watch your roots grow.
- Count in your head to the highest number you know, over and over again until help comes, or the

dog goes away.

Remember, trees are still, trees are quiet, and trees are boring to dogs.

Now that you know how to do this, from now on, when a strange dog approaches you or comes too close, you will Be a Tree®.

This is Benji. You have never seen Benji before. To you, Benji is a strange dog. This means that when you see Benji and you think he is being jumpy or boisterous, or you feel frightened or scared, all you have to do is Be a Tree®.



Let's practice being a tree for whenever you see Benji.

- Stop, hush.
- Fold your branches.
- Watch your roots grow.
- Count in your head to the highest number you know, over and over again until help comes, or Benji gets bored and goes away.

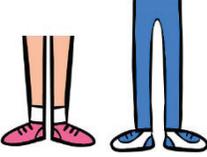
Understanding Your Tools

To stay safe around dogs you need a tool box. Like a toy box, a tool box is a place where you can store all your dog bite safety tools.



- Do you know that you carry your tool box around with you, wherever you go?
- Do you know what your tool box is and what tools you have to use?
- Can you guess?

Your Be a Tree® Tools

1	Your Body – to be a tree or a rock	
2	Your eyes – to look over the dog	
3	Your mouth – to ask for help or ask permission to approach the dog	
4	Your legs – to walk away from danger if the dog can't follow	
5	Your rolled-up hand – for the dog to sniff	

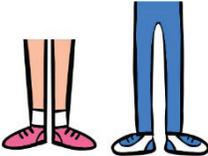
We will introduce the tools one by one.

You have your tools with you all the time and they will help keep you

safe. Your tool box is in your head. Let's look the tools one at a time.

Can you remember the names of each of your tools?

You can write the name of your tools in the right box!

1		
2		
3		
4		
5		

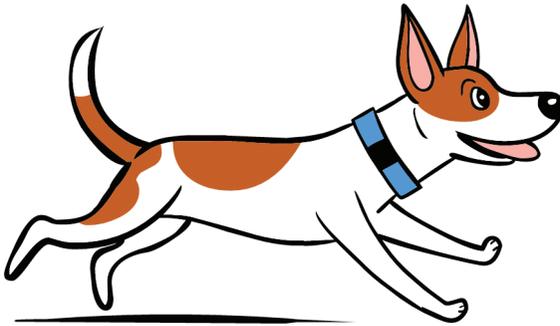
Tool #1 – Your Body

Your body is the first and most important tool you have. You can use your body to Be a Tree®. Fold your branches, watch your roots grow, count in your head to the highest number you know, over and over again until help comes, or the dog goes away.

Trees are still, trees are quiet, trees are boring to dogs.



What do you do when you see Benji?



Yes, “Be a Tree®.” Let’s Practice Now!

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If a dog knocks you down, or scares you while you are already playing on the ground, another way to use your body is to “be a rock.” How can you be a rock?

- Curl up on your tummy with your hands on the back of your neck and wait quietly for the dog to go away.



Let's practice now. Let's be a rock!

Tool #2 – Your Eyes

You can use your eyes to look a dog over to see if it is safe to approach him (you are going to learn how to do this a little later) BUT we are not going to stare into the dogs' eyes, because dogs don't like that.

Some dogs might growl or even bite if you stare at them, so just look very quickly and then look away again.



Tool #3 – Your Mouth



Use your mouth to:

- Ask your parents for permission to approach a dog.
- If your parents are not there to ask, then stay away. Do not talk to strangers even if they have a cute puppy or they have lost their puppy and are looking for him.
- A stranger with a dog is still a stranger.

Question: Do we talk to strangers?

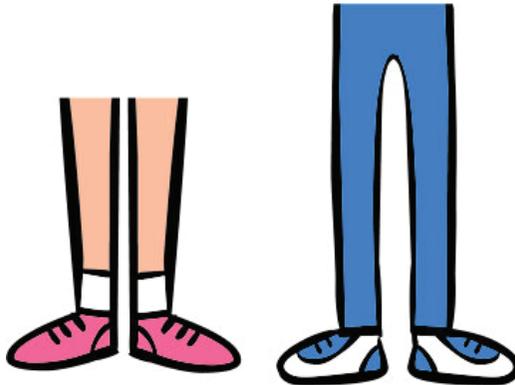
Answer: *NO. Use your mouth to shout “NO!”*

Tool #4 – Your Legs

You can use your legs to walk away from a situation that feels dangerous.

Any dog that is telling you with his body language that he does not like what you are doing, or wants to be left alone, is not safe to approach. We will explain more about a dog's body language in a few minutes.

Even your own dog may tolerate things he doesn't like for a long time, and then one day decide not to put up with it any more – and then he may growl or even bite.



Walk away from danger when the dog can't follow. This means you can walk away when the dog is:

- Tied up.
- In a crate or kennel with the door closed.
- Behind a fence.
- In a car.

There are other times when you need to walk away and stay away.

These include when the dog is:

- On his bed.
- On the sofa or in an armchair.
- Sleeping.
- On a special resting place.
- With puppies.
- Eating.
- Has a bone or a toy.

Tool #5 – Your Rolled-Up Hand

When you meet a dog that is safe and when you have asked permission of the handler (that means the person who is with the dog) and your parents, then stand sideways to the dog and show him your rolled-up hand to let him sniff and say hello if he wants to.



Let him choose if he wants to reach his nose out to you rather than stick your hand into his face.

- Dogs like to get to know you by sniffing.
- If the dog sniffs and still seems friendly and is wagging his tail, you can pet him. Pet him gently on the side of neck – dogs usually enjoy this.

A Kids' Comprehensive Guide to Speaking Dog!

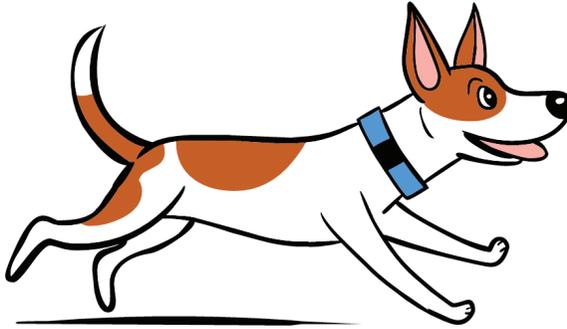
- If the dog does not reach out to sniff your hand, he is not ready to be friendly and so you will need to leave him alone.

We are also going to talk about some things that dogs don't like and how they tell us when they are uncomfortable.

Here's one example: If you approach or start to pet a dog and he stiffens up and stops panting, then it's better to leave him alone.

Question: How do dogs pant? Can you do a happy dog pant?

Oh look, here's Benji again! What do you do when you see a strange dog?



That's Right, "Be a Tree®." Let's Practice Now!



How to Be a Tree®

- Stop, hush.
- Fold your branches.
- Watch your roots grow,
- Count in your head to the highest number you know, over and over again until help comes, or the dog goes away.

Your “Be a Tree” Tool Box



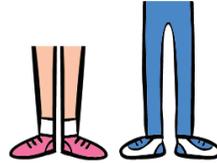
1. Your body to be a tree or a rock



2. Your eyes to look the dog over



3. Your mouth to ask for help or ask permission to approach the dog



4. Your legs to walk away from danger if the dog can't follow

5. Your rolled-up hand for the dog to sniff you



Section Two

In this section, there are two learning goals:

- 1. Learn how to greet a dog.*
 - 2. Learn what to avoid and when not to greet a dog. Always remember, dogs do not like hugs and kisses!*
-

Learning How to Greet a Dog

We are going to look at the correct way to greet a dog and learn that dogs do not like hugs and kisses.



Note to Parents: There are, of course, exceptions to every rule, but for safety reasons it is best to teach children not to hug and kiss dogs. There are far more appropriate ways a child can express their love for their dog!

The Situation

Question: Let's say you are out and about with your parents and you see a nice dog approaching you. Which of your tools do you use and in what order?



Check which tool you will use and in which order

-  Your body to be a tree or a rock
-  Your eyes to look the dog over
-  Your mouth to ask for help or ask permission to approach the dog
-  Your legs to walk away from danger if the dog can't follow
-  Your rolled-up hand - for the dog to sniff you

The Correct Answer

- First, you use your eyes to look over the dog and read his body language.
- Then, if you feel the dog is friendly, you ask your parents for permission to ask the dog's owner if you may pet the dog.



Even if you feel the dog is friendly, you must always ask your parents for permission.

And always ask the person with the dog for permission. This person is called the dog's handler.

AFTER GETTING PERMISSION

- If your parents and the dog's handler say it's okay, then there is another way to use your mouth. You can say to the dog's handler, "Please can you ask your dog to sit." If you feel shy, ask your parents to ask.

This is a good test that anyone can use to see if the dog handler has proper control over the dog. If the dog will not listen to his handler, then you don't want to pet that dog. If the dog sits and he still looks happy, then you can go on to the next tool.

Next, we are going to look at a few more things that are important to remember when greeting a dog:

Question: Can you remember what tool #5 is?

That's right, tool #5 is your rolled-up hand!



If a dog is acting friendly and you have asked permission to stroke or pet him from both your parents and the dog's handler, then this is how you stroke him so he enjoys it and feels safe:

- Stand sideways to the dog and show him your rolled-up hand. Let the dog sniff your hand and say hello.
- Let the dog reach out his nose to you instead of sticking your hand into his face.
- ALWAYS let the dog approach you. You can wait and see if he is ready to do this. If he is not, then stay where you are and do not try to approach him.
- Dogs like to get to know people by sniffing them.
- If the dog sniffs you, and seems friendly, then you can pet him. Pet him gently on the side of his neck. Dogs usually enjoy this – but there are also some things that dogs don't like.

We are going to talk about some things that dogs don't like in a minute, so you can find clues that tell you when a dog feels uncomfortable.

IMPORTANT: If you approach a dog or start to pet a dog and

he stiffens up and stops panting, then it's better to leave him alone and move slowly away.

When Not to Greet or Approach a Dog!

Just because some dogs look cute and cuddly does not mean we should treat them like teddy bears and greet them with hugs and cuddles. They are not toys! Dogs are living beings who have feelings just like we do. Some dogs have learned to tolerate hugs and teddy bear types of greetings, but they are NOT recommended as they can intimidate, scare and create anxiety. At best, this can leave a dog feeling unsafe and, at worst, can trigger a snap, growl or bite. Dogs have no other way of communicating, especially if they cannot remove themselves from a situation – or even if they feel they cannot. Try to imagine how the dog is feeling. Here are some general rules:

- Never rush up to a dog or lean over him. Dogs do not like this and it can make them feel scared.
- Research shows that, as a general rule, dogs do not like being patted on the top of the head or on their backs.
- Never stare at dogs. This makes them very uncomfortable and in “Dog Speak” this is considered very rude and confrontational. If you stare at a dog he may feel threatened and respond accordingly.
- Children should be educated to be quiet and predictable around dogs and not to shout or squeal. This is very unnerving for dogs.
- Never kiss dogs.
- Never hug dogs.
- Don't grab a dog's head or face.

- Don't suddenly reach out to a dog to pet, grab or stroke him.
- Never attempt to pet, approach or greet a dog who is eating, sleeping or enjoying quiet time in his safe place. Never stare at a dog directly in the eyes or put your face up to a dog's face.
- Never try to take an object (e.g. chewy, toy) or food away from a dog.
- Never approach a dog that is on a bed or furniture.
- Never approach a dog that is tied up or in a vehicle.
- Never try to pet a dog through a fence or a crate.
- Never climb over a fence into a dog's yard, even if the dog is usually friendly.
- Never try to break up a dog fight or interact with dogs that are play fighting.
- Leave dogs alone that are sleeping, resting, injured, very old, or with puppies.

Question: Who is enjoying this hug? Does Boo the dog look happy?

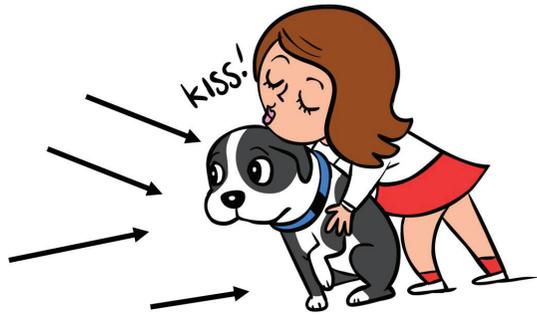


Answer: The girl is enjoying the hug, but the dog is not. Boo is not happy.

Dogs do not like hugs and kisses!

How do we know that Boo isn't happy? Can you identify the four clues that show he is not comfortable? Write the number of each clue on the correct arrow or draw a line from the clue to the correct arrow:

1. Half-moon eye (also known as “whale eye”).
2. Ears flat.
3. Mouth closed.
4. Paw raised.



Note to Parents: If a dog displays a half-moon of white in his eye, it means he is uncomfortable and wants to be left alone. This is also called “whale eye.” Teach this concept to your children.

Question: Who is enjoying this hug? Does Clipper look happy?



Answer: The boy is enjoying the hug, but Clipper is not.

Dogs do not like hugs and kisses!

How do we know that Clipper isn't happy? Can you identify the four clues that show he is not comfortable? Write the number of each clue on the correct arrow or draw a line from the clue to the correct arrow:

- 1. Ears flat.
- 2. Paw Raised.
- 3. Half-moon eye.
- 4. Lip licking.

Clipper is not happy!



Section Three

Learning How to Speak to a Dog

In this section, we are going to learn how to read canine facial expressions, and how to begin to speak dog!

Question: Can you tell when your family is happy and sad?

Answer: You can? Then you can easily tell if a dog is happy, sad, or grumpy. You just have to learn to read the signs.

Let's first practice what human emotions look like. Let's see some funny faces. Can you make each of these faces?

- Give me scared!
- Give me surprised!
- Give me happy!
- Give me disgusted (yuk)!
- Give me angry!
- Give me sad!

Reading Faces

Face #1 Roxy



Let's look now at this man and Roxy the dog.

Question: How do they feel?

- Look at the man. How does he feel?
- Is he happy? No.

Question: What about Roxy the dog, how does she feel? Is she happy or relaxed? No, she looks very angry.

They both look angry. How do you know the man and the dog are angry? What are the signs? Would you approach Roxy?

Question: Which tool would you use?

Answer: Your eyes to look over the dog and determine what she is communicating and how she feels.

Question: What other tools would you use?

Answer: Your feet to walk away.

Explanation: Roxy looks angry. She is snarling, you can see her teeth and her ears are down. She also has half-moon eyes and her body is tucked.

Face #2 Louis

Let's look now at this girl and Louis the dog.



Question: How do they feel?

- Look at the girl. How does she feel?
- Is she happy? No.

Question: What about Louis the dog, how does he feel? Is he happy or relaxed? No, he looks disgusted.

Questions: How do you know that the girl and Louis are not happy? What are the signs? Would you approach Louis?

Question: Which tool would you use?

Answer: Your eyes to look over the dog and determine what he is communicating.

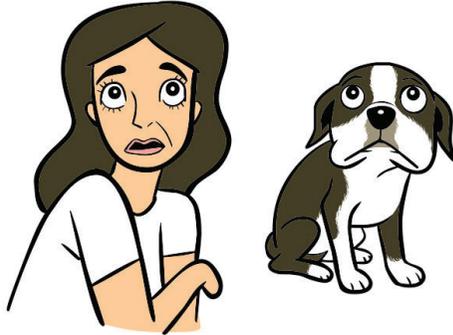
Question: What other tools would you use?

Answer: Your feet to walk away.

Explanation: Louis is not happy. Both he and the girl look disgusted. They look like they have lemon juice in their mouths!

Face #3 Daisy

Let's look now at this girl and this dog, whose name is Daisy.



Question: How do they feel?

- Look at the girl. How does she feel?
- Is she happy? No.

Question: What about Daisy the dog, how does she feel? Is she happy or relaxed? No, she looks fearful.

Question: How do you know the girl and Daisy are fearful? What are the signs? Would you approach Daisy?

Question: Which tool would you use here?

Answer: Your eyes to look over the dog and determine what she is communicating.

Question: What other tools would you use?

Answer: Your feet to walk away.

Section Three

Explanation: Daisy looks scared. She has half-moon eyes and her tail and body are tucked.

Face #4 Maggie

Let's look now at this boy and this dog, whose name is Maggie.



Question: How do they feel?

- Look at the boy. How does he feel?
- Does he look happy?

Question: What about Maggie, how does she feel? Is she happy and relaxed? Yes, she looks very happy!

Question: How do you know the boy and Maggie are happy? What are the signs? Would you approach Maggie?

Question: Which tool would you use?

Answer: Your eyes to look over the dog and determine what she is communicating.

Question: What other tools would you use?

Answer: Your mouth to ask permission from your parents and then

from the dog's owner to approach Maggie.

Question: What else?

Answer: Your rolled-up hand so Maggie can sniff you and get to know you better.

Explanation: Maggie looks happy. She has a soft open mouth and her facial muscles are relaxed. Her eyes are soft and her tongue is gently drooped.

Face #5 Sammy

Now we can meet this boy and Sammy the dog.



Question: How do they feel?

- Look at the boy. How does he feel?
- Does he look happy?

Question: What about Sammy the dog, how does he feel? Is he happy? No, he looks sad.

Question: How do you know the boy and Sammy are sad? What are the signs? Would you approach Sammy?

Question: Which tool would you use?

Answer: Your eyes to look over the dog and determine what he is communicating.

Question: What other tools would you use?

Answer: Your feet to walk away.

Section Three

Explanation: Sammy looks very sad. His head and shoulders are drooped. He has half-moon eyes and his tail is tucked. He is looking down toward the floor.

Face #6 Orlando

Wow, here is a lady! And here is Orlando the dog!



Question: How do they feel?

- Look at the lady. How does she feel?
- Does she look happy?

Question: What about Orlando, how does he feel? Is he happy? No, but yowzah, they both look surprised!

Question: How do you know the lady and Orlando look surprised? What are the signs? Would you approach Orlando?

Question: Which tool would you use?

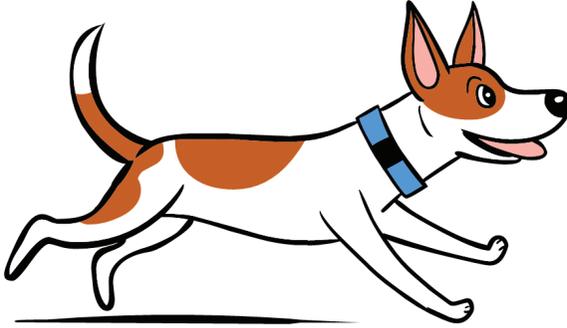
Answer: Your eyes to look over the dog and determine what he is communicating.

Question: What else?

Answer: Your feet to walk away.

Explanation: Orlando looks alert and shocked. He has wide eyes, a wide-open mouth and is focused elsewhere.

Oh look, Benji's back again! What do you do when you see Benji?



That's Right, Be a Tree®. Let's Practice Now!

Now Be a Rock!



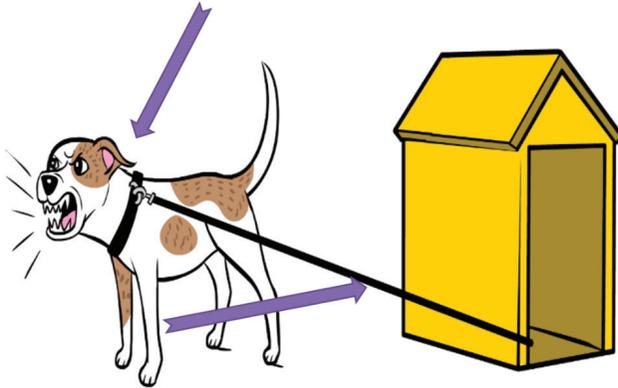
Section Four – Being a Dog Detective



Learn to look for the clues and keep yourself safe! Now that you know how to Be a Tree®, and you know how to look for clues in a dog's face to know how he is feeling, are you ready for a fun quiz? We are going to look at some everyday situations involving dogs and you are going to look at the dog and the situation and decide what you would do in the same situation. Ask yourself if you would you pet the dog in each case. You are going to learn to be a Dog Detective!

Case #1 Bertie

How would you greet Bertie?



What clues can you find, what do the arrows point to?

Clues:

- Bertie is chained up.
- Bertie is growling and looks angry.

Tools:

Question: Which tools would you use with Bertie?

Answer:

- Eyes – to look over the dog.
- Legs – to walk away.

Explanation: Bertie is growling and barking. His body language is stiff and not relaxed. We never approach a dog who is chained, tethered, or fastened up as it can be dangerous. The dog may feel scared or threatened because he cannot move away if he wants to.

Case #2 Bertie

How would you greet Bertie now?



What clues can you find and where do the arrows point to?

Clues:

Bertie is still chained up but is panting happily with a relaxed face.

Tools:

Question: Which tools would you use with Bertie?

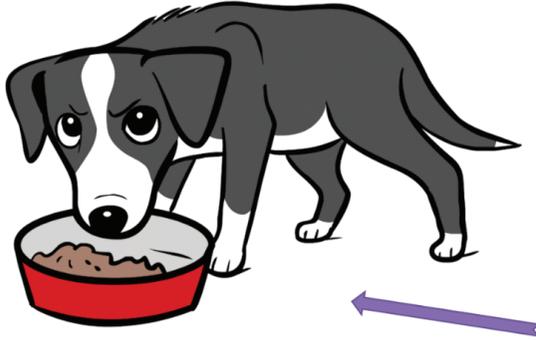
Answer:

- Eyes – to look over the dog.
- Legs – to look walk away.

Explanation: Bertie looks very friendly but he is still fastened up. We never approach a dog who is chained, or tethered or fastened up.

Case #3 Tilly

This is Tilly. How would you greet Tilly?



What clues can you find and where do the arrows point to?

Clues:

Tilly is eating a meal.

Tools:

Question: Which tools would you use with Tilly?

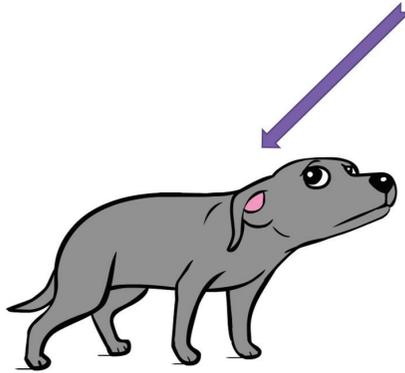
Answer:

- Eyes – to look over the dog.
- Legs – to look walk away.

Explanation: *We always walk away from a dog who is eating, or has a bone or any other food item. We would walk away from Tilly.*

Case #4 Bailey

This is Bailey. How would you greet Bailey?



What clues can you find and where do the arrows point to?

Clues:

Bailey is crouched over and has a closed mouth, and his ears are down.

Tools:

Question: Which tools would you use with Bailey?

Answer:

Eyes – to look over the dog.

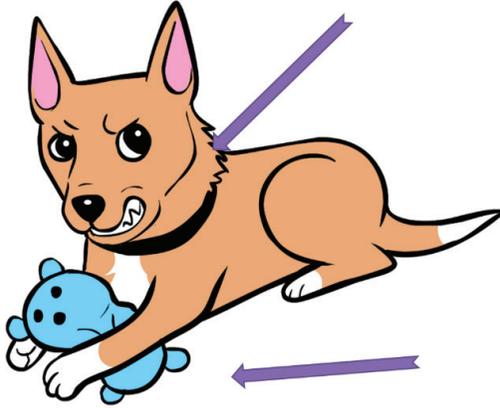
Legs – to look walk away.

Explanation: Bailey is a very cute dog but he is not happy with you being so close or placing your hand over his head. Even if Bailey's handler says you can pet him, if Bailey crouches like this when you go near him, then he is saying,

“Please leave me alone.” Sometimes handlers do not read their dogs’ signals clearly but as you are now learning to “speak dog,” you will know when this happens and what to do.

Case #5 Tiger

Meet Tiger. How would you greet Tiger?



What clues can you find and where do the arrows point to?

Clues:

Tiger has a toy. Look at his mouth and his ears.

Tools:

Question: Which tools would you use with Tiger?

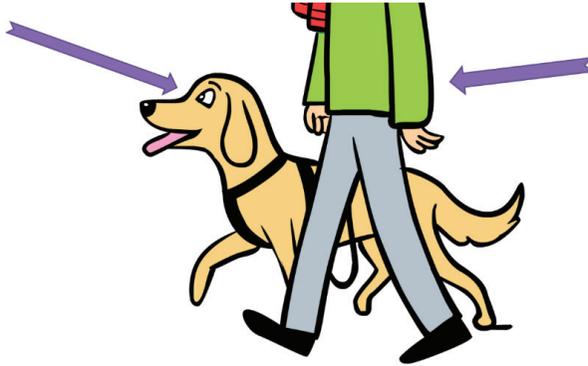
Answer:

- Eyes – to look over the dog.
- Legs – to look walk away.

Explanation: We always walk away from a dog who has a toy or who has a snarly mouth. This means when his lips are curled up and his teeth are showing. Tiger also has straight-up, rigid ears. Let Tiger play with his belongings on his own.

Case #6 Max

Max is out for a walk with his family. How would you greet Max?



What clues can you find and where do the arrows point to?

Clues:

Max has a nice happy face, he is panting and his tongue is loose. He is also with his owner.

Tools:

Question: Which tools would you use with Max?

Answer:

- Eyes – to look over the dog.
- Mouth – to ask permission to approach.
- Mouth – to ask for the dog to sit.
- Rolled-up hand – to let the dog sniff you.

Explanation: *We can look over Max and see that his body looks soft and that*

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he is happy. We can ask our parents for permission and then ask the handler if Max can sit. If Max can sit we can then present our rolled-up hand for him to sniff. If Max looks happy and stays relaxed, we can gently pet him on the side of his neck.

Case #7 Jemma

This is Jemma. How would you greet Jemma?



What clues can you find and where do the arrows point to?

Clues:

Jemma is licking her lips when you get near her or try to pet her.

Tools:

Question: Which tools would you use with Jemma?

Answer:

- Eyes – to look over the dog.
- Legs – to look walk away.

Explanation: Jemma is licking her chops, but she is not hungry and she has not just eaten. This is another way dogs have of telling us they are uncomfortable. If a dog licks her chops while you are near her or petting or playing with her, this means she has had enough and wants to be left alone. Also, dogs do not like being patted on top of their heads as it can make them feel unsafe or unsure.

Case #8 Gidget

Here is very cute Gidget. How would you greet Gidget?



What clues can you find and where do the arrows point to?

Clues:

Gidget is yawning but she is not tired.

Tools:

Question: Which tools would you use with Gidget?

Answer:

- Eyes – to look over the dog.
- Legs – to look walk away.

Explanation: Gidget is yawning but she is not tired. Yawning can often be a sign of stress or fear. You don't want to pet a dog that is telling you, "Please leave me alone."

Section Five – Which Dog Would You Pet?

We are now going to meet a few dogs who are experiencing different moods and emotions. You know how sometimes we feel happy and full of energy and then other days we feel tired and a little grumpy. Well, dogs are the same. See if you can identify how a dog is feeling from his body language!

You will be looking at the following:

- The dog's head and facial expression:
 - Facial muscles (are they hard, soft/stiff or relaxed?)
 - Facial direction (i.e. where is the dog looking?)
 - Eyes
 - Ears
 - Mouth
- The position of the dogs' mouth:
 - Open, closed or lip curled
 - Tongue showing
 - Panting
 - Growling

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- The position of the dog's ears:
 - Forward
 - Backwards in direction or pinned to the head
 - Tense
 - Relaxed
- The dog's eyes:
 - Relaxed or staring
 - Whale eye/half-moon eye
- The dog's body:
 - Tense
 - Loose
 - Position
 - Weight bearing

#1 Pete – Which Pete Would You Pet?

Meet Pete Version A



How does Pete feel in this picture? What are the clues you can see?

Meet Pete Version B



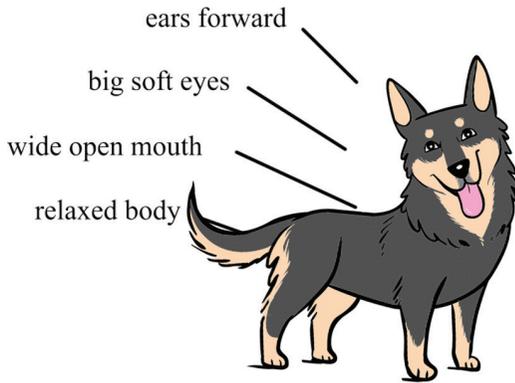
How does Pete feel in this picture? What are the clues you can see?

Are you ready to learn more? Turn over to see each of the pictures with some clues identified.

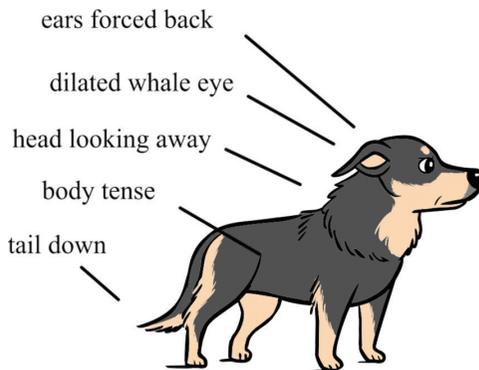
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Version A Pete is Happy - Use Your Tools to Meet and Greet This Dog.



Version B Pete is Distracted - Use Your Tools and Walk Away



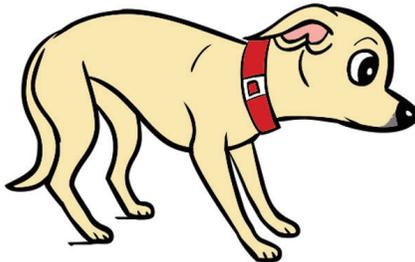
#2 Joey - Which Joey Would You Pet?

Meet Joey Version A



How does Joey feel in this picture? What are the clues you can see?

Meet Joey Version B

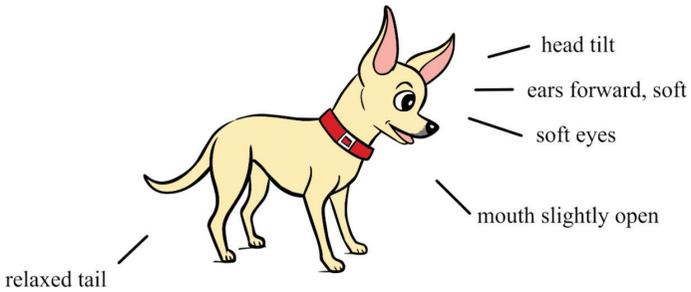


How does Joey feel in this picture? What are the clues you can see?

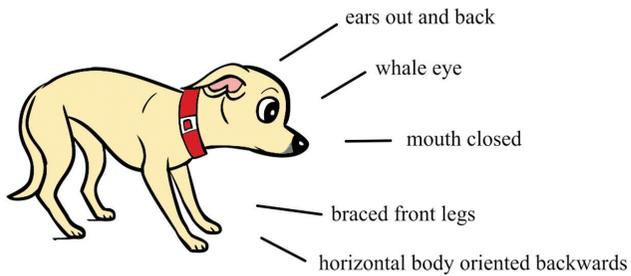
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Version A Joey is Happy – Use Your Tools to Meet This Dog

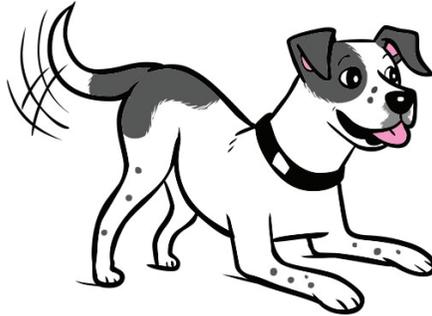


Version B Joey Is Fearful – Use Your Tools and Walk Away



#3 Max - Which Max Would You Pet?

Meet Max Version A



How does Max feel in this picture? What are the clues you can see?

Meet Max Version B

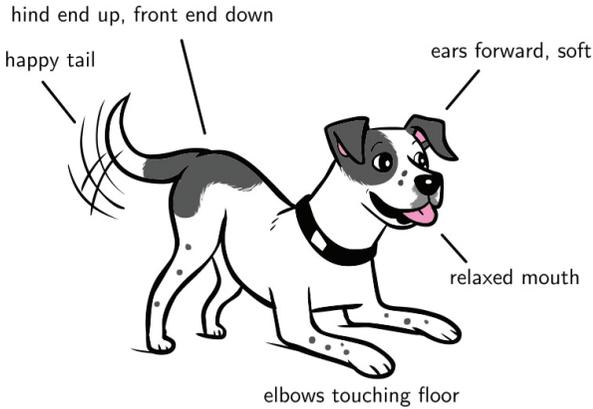


How does Max feel in this picture? What are the clues you can see?

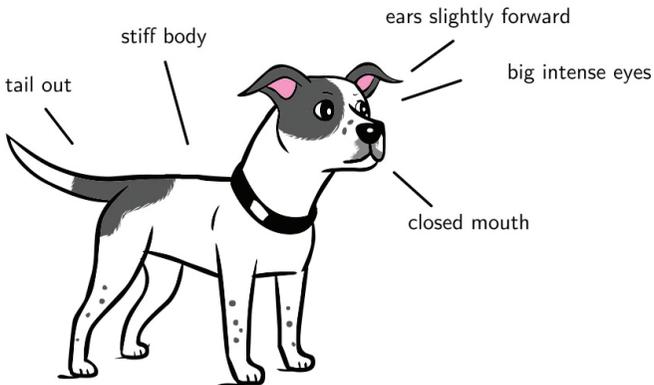
A Kids' Comprehensive Guide to Speaking Dog!



Version A Max Is Initiating Play Using a Play Bow – Use Your Tools to Meet this Dog



Version B Max is Alert – Use Your Tools to Walk Away



The Doggone Safe website (www.doggonesafe.com) has lots of **FREE** resources to help you educate the whole family on dog bite safety. Here are some highlights from the information that is featured there that can all be used as an educational resource.

Section Six – Important Information for Parents and Dog Bite Safety Educators

As mentioned above, the Doggone Safe website has some wonderful resources on dog bite safety education. The text reproduced below can be found there and is also available to members as a downloadable flyer.

The Three Most Important Things to Teach Your Kids:

- *Dogs Don't Like Hugs and Kisses.*

Teach your kids not to hug or kiss a dog on the face. Hugging the family dog or face-to-face contact are common causes of bites to the face. Instead, teach kids to gently scratch the dog on the chest or the side of the neck.

- *Be a Tree® if a Strange Dog Approaches.*

Teach kids to stay quiet and stand still, like a tree. Trees are boring and the dog will eventually give up and go away. This works for strange dogs and any time the family dog gets too frisky or becomes aggressive.

- *Never Tease a Dog.*

This means no prodding or poking, no pulling of ears or tail, and no riding the dog like a horse or standing on him – and never disturb a dog that is sleeping, eating, or protecting something like a toy, a chewy, his food bowl, his bed or his sleeping area.

The Two Most Important Things Parents Can Do:

- *Supervise.*

Don't assume your dog is good with kids. If a toddler must interact with your dog, you should have your hands on the dog too. Even if your dog is (apparently) great with kids and has never bitten previously, why take a chance?

- *Train the Dog.*

Take your dog to family manners classes where positive reinforcement methods only are used. Positive reinforcement means rewarding dogs for the behaviors we like or want. Research shows that behaviors that are rewarded are likely to be repeated, making this the ideal way to train a dog (or indeed any animal) and fun for the whole family. Never pin, shake, choke, hold a dog down or roll a dog over to “teach him a lesson.” Dogs treated this way are likely to turn their fear or frustration into aggression toward weaker family members (demonstrated by statistics to be children and the elderly). Involve older children in training the family dog while still supervising and don't allow them to punish the dog in any way. This includes shouting and hitting, or any other kind of unpleasant verbal or physical contact. If you are concerned about safety, then please contact a certified dog behavior consultant to help you so your dog can enjoy the presence and actions of your children using positive experiences.

The Three Most Important Things Dog Owners Can Do

- *Spay or Neuter Your Dog.*

Neutered pets can be calmer, healthier and less likely to behave aggressively in some situations. Neutering prevents there being even more unwanted dogs that may end up in shelters or in less than ideal conditions, where they may grow up to be poorly socialized or aggressive.

- *Condition Your Dog for the World.*

Give your puppy lots of new positive experiences. Train him using positive methods so he is encouraged and rewarded for behaving politely. You can find wonderful resources on the Pet Professional Guild website (www.petprofessionalguild.com/PuppyTrainingResources).

- *Supervise Your Dog.*

Supervise your dog at all times around children. Do not allow children to hug and kiss any dog. If visiting children are bothering your dog, put the dog in a separate room where he can feel safe and relaxed, or send the children home.

What to Do Rather Than What Not to Do!

Again, the Doggone Safe website has many excellent resources on dog bite safety education. The text below can be found there (<http://www.doggonesafe.com/To-Do-&-Not-To-Do>) and is also available to members as a downloadable flyer.

- **Do not** hug a dog, put your face close to his face or lie on him.
- **Do** sit beside your dog, rub his chest or scratch him on the side of the neck.

- **Do not** play “chase-me” games with a dog as he may get overexcited and become unintentionally aggressive or hurt you by mistake.
 - **Do** play hide and seek, where the dog has to find you or an object that you hide.
- **Do not** play tug-of-war games with a dog as they can make a dog become overly rowdy.
 - **Do** play fetch with the dog. Teach him to trade the object for a treat so he won’t try to tug.
- **Do not** lean over or step over a dog.
 - **Do** respect a dog’s resting place – quietly go around him or ask an adult to move him.
- **Do not** bother a dog who is sleeping, eating, has a toy or bone, is hurt, or has puppies.
 - **Do** wait for the dog to come to you for attention.
- **Do not** dress up a dog in play clothes or costumes.
 - **Do** dress up your stuffed animals.
- **Do not** hit a dog or poke him with a stick.
 - **Do** be gentle with dogs.
- **Do not** pull a dog’s ears, tail or fur.
 - **Do** scratch the dog’s chest or the side of her neck. Many dogs enjoy this.
- **Do not** stick fingers or hands into the dog’s crate.
 - **Do** ask an adult to let the dog out of the crate if you want to pet her.
- **Do not** play in the dog’s crate.
 - **Do** play “in and out of the crate” with the dog – toss a treat

in, the dog goes in to get it, the dog comes back out, toss another treat in etc. (with adult supervision).

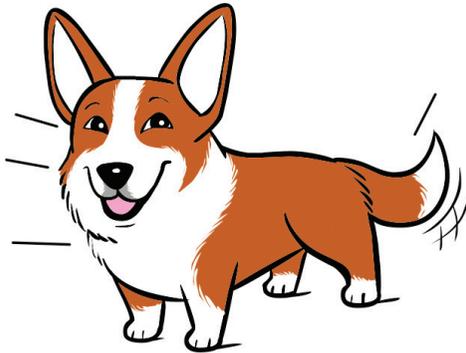
- **Do not** just directly approach your dog when you get home. If your dog does not welcome you with nice gently, relaxed, soft-gaited approach behaviors, then leave him alone.
 - **Do** wait for the dog to come to you for attention.
- If your dog gets too rough or excited, Be a Tree® until he gets bored and goes away.
- **Do not** run and shout around a dog.
 - **Do** be calm around dogs. Involve the dog in an activity such as chewing on a bone or playing fetch so he doesn't feel that he needs to chase you to have fun.

A Fun Quiz

1. Meet Cooper the corgi. Cooper is a nice relaxed dog.

In the graphic below can you match up the clues to the position on his body?

Draw a line or point to the correct location!

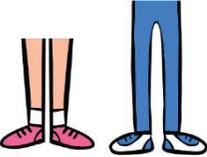


Here are the clues that show Cooper is relaxed:

- Relaxed body
- Soft squinty eyes
- Relaxed mouth
- Tail gently wagging

2. When you approach a dog, which tool do you use first? After that, if you think the dog can be approached safely, which tool do you use next? Put the numbers 1, 2 and 3 in the correct box to the left of the pictures.

Your Tool Options

1		
2		
3		
4		
5		

3. Have a good look at each of these dogs. On the following pages identify which dog you would be comfortable approaching, having asked permission from your parents and the dog's owner. Let us know what clues you can see.



A Kids' Comprehensive Guide to Speaking Dog!



Which of these two dogs you would be comfortable approaching? Why?

A Fun Quiz



Which of these two dogs you would be comfortable approaching? Why?

A Kids' Comprehensive Guide to Speaking Dog!



Which of these two dogs you would be comfortable approaching? Why?

A Fun Quiz



Which of these two dogs you would be comfortable approaching? Why?

Showing Your Dog Love

Look over the following graphics and see if you can see which ones are suitable ways to show a dog that you love them:

What is your pet's favorite way of sitting with you?



© Can Stock Photo / mandygodbehear

Which of these ways do you think is appropriate to sit with your dog?

Which of these ways to spend time with your dog is not recommended by Doggone Safe?



© Can Stock Photo / mandygodbehear

Do dogs like hugs and kisses? Look at the ears, eyes and body language of the dog who is being hugged.

Which is the most comfortable way (for the dog) to interact with your dog?



© Can Stock Photo / Lopolo



© Can Stock Photo / Lopolo

Which is more fun and educational for your pet?

Which one of these two shows a pet that is not really enjoying the attention?

Do dogs like hugs and kisses? Look at the ears, eyes and body language of the dog who is being hugged.

Which dog is enjoying time with their human?



© Can stock photo /Gurinaleksandr



© Can Stock Photo /vladacanon

Which of these ways do you think is appropriate to sit with your dog?

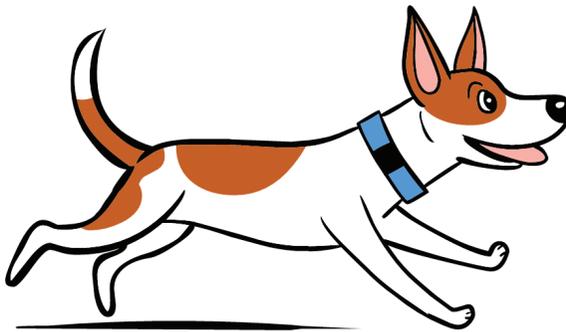
Which of these ways to spend time with your dog is not recommended by Doggone Safe?

Do dogs like hugs and kisses? Look at the ears, eyes and body language of the dog who is being hugged.

In Closing

Now you have read this book and know how to “Be a Tree®,” and understand what dogs are saying, make sure to practice what you have learned every time you meet a dog! Remember, not everyone is as clever as you and a lot of other children and adults don’t know how to speak dog, so even if an adult tells you it is okay to pet a dog, make sure you still use your eyes to look over the dog. If you see any of the signs that the dog is worried or unsure, use your legs to walk away!

Oh Look, Benji’s Back Again! What Do You Do When You See Benji?



That’s Right, Be A Tree®!

Well Done!

Appendix A – More of a Tail!

The Calm Wag



The calm wag is a loosely wagging tail, with the tail held below the level of the dog's back.

For breeds that naturally curl their tail over their backs, the tail will be held high, but the wag is loose.

The calm wag, accompanied by a smiling panting face.

The Slow Wag



The slow wag, if accompanied by a generally stiff body is also a sign of danger. This dog is making a decision and he may decide that he does not want to meet you.

The High Tail



If a dog holds his tail high over his back, whether wagging stiffly or held still, this is a warning to back off.

If your dog puts his tail up to you or your children, this could be a sign of impending trouble.

The Whole Body Wag



Sometimes a dog is so happy and excited that the whole dog wags in a frenzy of activity. Again a dog this excited should not be allowed to interact with children until he calms down.

Written by Niki Tudge on behalf of Doggone Safe © 2017. Contributed to by Susan Nilson and Louise Stapleton-Frappell. Proceeds from of this book will go to Doggone Safe and Doggone Safe's dog bite safety education initiatives.

About Niki Tudge

Along with Niki's business degree and MBA from Oxford Brookes University in the UK she is also a certified Six Sigma Black Belt, an International Training Board TS1, TS2 & TS3 certified people trainer and a certified facilitator and project manager.

Niki is currently the president and founder of The DogSmith, an international licensing company for pet trainers and pet care providers. Niki is the president and founder of The Pet Professional Guild, an industry association for science based, force-free, humane, pet professionals. Niki also founded and is a faculty member at DogNostics Career Center, an online school for pet trainers, behavior consultants and pet care providers. Niki currently serves as the president of Doggone Safe a nonprofit organization aimed at dog bite prevention through community education initiatives.

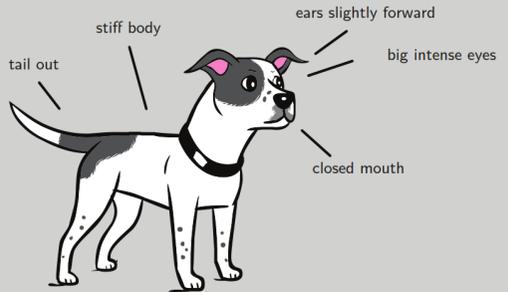
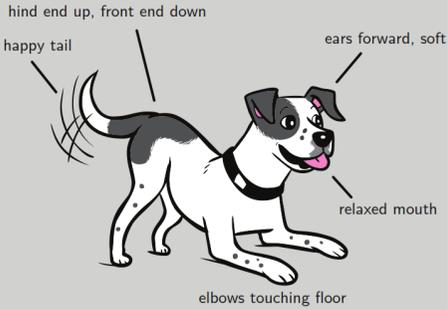
About Doggone Safe

Doggone Safe is a US-based 501(c)3 non-profit with over 1,400 members in more than 30 countries. Our goal is to educate the general public, both dog owning and non-dog owning, about safe human-canine interactions to prevent dog bites that can ultimately lead to serious and life altering ramifications for both people and their pets. There are several ways you can get involved in Doggone Safe and help educate your local community on dog bite safety. Visit our website (www.Doggonesafe.com) and join today!

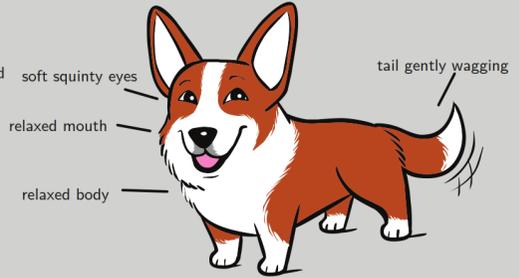
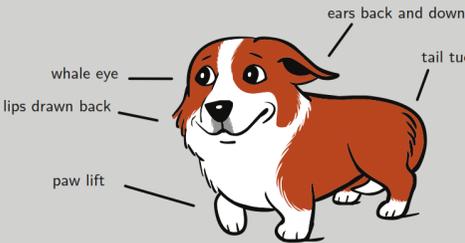
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Play Bow vs Alert



Fear vs Relaxed



Smiling vs Warning

