



**NOTICE:**  
To fly at this site, you must  
contact Palouse Soaring  
Hang Gliding Club, a  
Partner of Golden Gate  
National Recreation Area.  
More information:  
[www.flyhanson.org](http://www.flyhanson.org)



(b) (6)



NOTICE  
To help the city you must  
contact before making  
any other club or  
Partner of Golden Gate  
National Recreation Area  
More information  
www.sfgov.org





# Dog-Dog Aggression: Off Leash



## Why Dogs Are Aggressive toward Other Dogs

Some aggression may be a normal, adaptive behavior in virtually all animal species and domestic dogs are no exception. Luckily, there are a number of things you can do to minimize both the frequency and intensity of dog-dog aggression.

## Dog Park Fighting

Dogs can be bullies, protective about toys or food, or socially uncomfortable, and any of these issues can make for regular excitement at the dog park. Dogs don't automatically get along with every dog they meet, just like we don't get along with every single person we come across.

Most importantly, keep in mind that dog parks don't suit every dog. Many dogs thrive on social time with other dogs, but some need their personal space and that's okay, too. If that's your dog, bypass the dog park and instead use hiking trails, beaches, or other less-crowded spaces for your dog's exercise.

## What You Can Do

Be honest with yourself: is your dog truly a good dog park candidate? Is he socially versed and friendly with dogs of all sizes, breeds, and temperament, and loves to play and wrestle?

Not sure if your dog is right for the dog park? Here's what to look out for:

**Bullying behavior** includes jumping on top of, pinning down, or continually chasing and nipping other dogs. If your dog usually plays well but seems to target certain dogs for bullying, give him a time-out whenever it happens. I.e. leash him up for a couple of minutes or, if he does it again, take him home.

**Protectiveness of toys.** If your dog fights over toys, you can manage the problem with good situational awareness. Actively supervise your dog's playtime and look out for balls or Frisbees so you can call him away from those.

**Social discomfort.** If your dog is socially uncomfortable, he can possibly learn to love the dog park with carefully planned exposure. Take your dog there at times when you know it will be less crowded and keep the sessions short. If your dog ever seems uncomfortable or scared, engage him in some solitary play with a toy and leave the park when he is happy.

If the behavior in any of these situations continues despite your careful supervision and active management, or your dog gets into serious fights or inflicts real damage, he's obviously not a good dog park candidate.

## Tips

- Spay or neuter your dog. This is very important, especially with intact male dogs, who are at higher risk of fighting with other males.
- If a fight breaks out, keep your hands away from the dogs' heads and mouths. Don't grab collars, instead try interrupting the dogs by making noise, using water, or covering the dogs' heads with a blanket or jacket to distract them.
- Make sure your dog is up-to-date on vaccinations, flea prevention, and deworming treatment.
- The SF SPCA offers off-leash classes – check our website for availability.
- If you can't take a class and your own efforts aren't successful, contact SF SPCA's board-certified veterinary behavior specialist. Don't live in the Bay Area? Search locally for a veterinary behavior specialist (Dip ACVB), a Certified Applied Animal Behaviorist (CAAB or ACAAB), or a Certified Professional Dog Trainer (CPDT).

# Dog: Fearful Behavior



## How to Recognize Fearful Behavior

The body language of a shy, anxious, or afraid dog is sometimes obvious—and other times it isn't. Here are some examples of behavior that could be signs of fear:

- Panting, licking lips, whining, drooling
- Shaking, cowering, tucking tail, ears back or flat
- Not accepting a treat
- Yawning, panting, pacing
- Moving slowly or stalling in walks
- Hypervigilance: looking in many directions (checking for an escape route)
- Hiding or trying to escape
- Submissive urination or defecation
- Snarling, growling, or barking
- Avoiding hands or other contact
- Destroying things, self-mutilation

If you see any of these behaviors, first consult your veterinarian to rule out medical causes.

## The Big 'Why' Question

Fear is a common and perfectly normal, innate, and adaptive behavior in all animals. However, if fear isn't addressed, it can develop into serious behavioral and health problems, so if your dog is showing fear or shyness, you should always deal with it proactively.

Although it's possible that a fearful dog has suffered abuse or bad experiences, most of the time fears result from a combination of a genetic predisposition and some lack of exposure with positive experiences, especially in the first months of life. For instance, a dog may have missed out on becoming socialized to certain kinds of people simply by not being around them enough when he was a puppy.

For severe shyness and fear disorders, get help from SF SPCA's board-certified veterinary behavior specialist. Don't live in the Bay Area? Search locally for a veterinary behavior specialist (Dip ACVB), a Certified Applied Animal Behaviorist (CAAB or ACAAB), or a Certified Professional Dog Trainer (CPDT). Or check our website for shy dog seminars and group classes. If your dog shows mild to moderate shyness or fear, here are some pointers:

## Different Kinds of Shyness

The most common kinds of shyness in dogs are:

**Social shyness**, where the dog is fearful of unfamiliar people or certain kinds of people. Dogs like this are sometimes described as "taking a while to warm up," or "one-man dogs." They are usually fine with certain people once they get to know them. Examples are dogs that are afraid of men or men with beards, dogs that are uncomfortable around children, and dogs that bark at the sight of people with unusual gaits. Dogs can also be shy with other dogs.

**Environmental or context fears**, where the dog is afraid in certain environments or situations. Examples are dogs that are afraid of going to the vet, panic during car rides, or are uncomfortable in new places.

## Dog: Fearful Behavior *(continued)*

**Sound sensitivities**, where the dog is afraid of sudden loud noises. These dogs flatten and try to escape when a car backfires, or pace and salivate during thunderstorms or fireworks.

### Helping the Shy Dog

**Avoid coercion.** Never force your dog into scary situations. As tempting as it might be to soothe him with hugs, scrub him in the bath, or take him to people's houses, let him go at his own pace. Wait for him to come to you, walk him on quiet streets, allow him to decide when he's ready to greet your friends or strangers on the street. Provide a safe environment so your dog can get more comfortable.

**Hand-feed your dog.** If your dog is fearful of reaching hands, hand-feeding treats and meals can help. At first, talk to your dog while you feed him piece by piece. After a session or two, try touching him with your other hand before each treat. If he moves away, go back to feeding him without touching him a few more times and then try a smaller touch before feeding. This way he learns that good things predictably come from your hands.

If your dog is extremely fearful and hides, you can toss treats near his hiding place and then leave him alone. Once he feels better, he'll venture out. In time, his forays out will happen sooner after you toss treats and your presence will become associated with the treats. Once he is out, switch to hand feeding.

**Find safe distances.** Take walks around the neighborhood and let your dog sniff and check things out. Sudden noises or changes in the environment will likely make him flatten or try to run for cover. Your best policy is to let him hide or to take him farther away from the scary situation. If he settles down, encourage him to approach as close as he is comfortable to what frightened him. Feed him a few treats and then leave.

Be careful of people who think they are "good with dogs" and try to approach him too quickly or too closely. Being forced into more than he can handle is never therapeutic and can make him worse. Coach people on how to remain passive and let your dog set the pace of contact. A good idea is to carry treats for people to toss to him—if he won't eat, it's a sign that he needs even more distance. Get him far enough away that he's relaxed enough to eat as this helps him develop a positive association to new people.

**Most importantly: Build confidence.** Environmental enrichment, practicing new skills and having positive experiences with what frightens your dog at an intensity he can handle is the best way to build confidence in a shy dog. A few suggestions that often help: Free-shaping tricks and new behaviors using a clicker, dog-dog play, and agility training. We offer clicker, tricks, agility, nose works, and many other classes to help provide structure and support for people working with shy dogs.

### Tip

- Patience and compassion are key. Helping a shy dog is a long, slow process in most cases. If the dog seems fearful in most live situations he might suffer from anxiety and distress which is harmful to the body and might require medication to help with any behavior modification plans.

# Dog: Recall Command



## Benefit

Coming when called is one of the most important commands your dog can learn from both a usefulness and safety standpoint. Dogs don't automatically come when called—regardless of how much they love and respect you. The only way to get a dog to come reliably when called is to train him to do it.

## What You Need

- Treats or a toy that gets your dog's attention.
- Outdoor exercises: a yard or long line/leash.
- Friends to help out, when possible.
- Ten minutes 2-3 times daily.

## The 4 Rules of Recall

1. Never call your dog for anything he won't like.
2. Never call your dog if you don't think your dog will come.
3. If you call your dog and he doesn't come, don't repeat the command. Say it only once, and then make yourself interesting with a cheerful voice, clapping, squatting, etc. that encourages coming.
4. Always give your dog a huge payoff for coming when called, such as treats, attention, and/or something new and special.

## TRAINING RECALL, PHASE 1: INDOOR EXERCISES

**Exercise 1.** Say your dog's name, wait till he looks at you, say "come" in a cheerful voice, and then back away, clapping and praising as your dog approaches you. Stop and reward, and then ask him to sit and reward again. Repeat this several times.

Note: It's best to have two different commands for calling your dog. Use "here" or "let's go" for everyday situations and reserve "come" for times when you need a bulletproof recall, for example when your dog sees a squirrel and runs headlong into a busy street.

**Exercise 2.** Call your dog from 8–10 feet away. Praise as he comes toward you. When he arrives, ask him to sit, touch his collar, and then give him a treat. If he doesn't come, immediately go to where he is and get him to follow you a few steps back toward your calling location without grabbing his collar (use happy talk, clapping, etc.). Then ask him to sit and praise warmly. Repeat this until he comes on his own to earn a treat. Once he reliably comes from 10 feet, increase your distance gradually.

**Exercise 3.** Send your dog back and forth between two or more people in a room. Each person takes turns calling your dog, getting him to sit, and giving him a small treat. If he chooses not to come, the person who did not call goes and gets him and repeats.

**Exercise 4.** Call your dog from different rooms in the house when he isn't expecting it. When he comes and sits, give him a treat or initiate something he likes such as a walk or play session. The important thing is to make your dog associate "come" with good things.

**Exercise 5.** A more advanced exercise: Practice calling your dog away from something he's

## Dog: Recall Command *(continued)*

interested in but can't access. This may be the front door when he's eager to go for a walk, a bone or stuffed chew toy you're about to give him from the counter, his dinner, or the gate to the dog park. At first your dog may ignore you as he stares at or tries to get what he's after, but eventually he will realize this isn't working and will try coming to you. As soon as he does, give him what he wanted. Teach him that obedience is the way to get what he wants, even if it means moving in the opposite direction from one of these "magnets." (Food is not the only reward.)

**Exercise 6.** Once your dog can do these exercises reliably, practice at other people's homes. Dogs don't generalize well so the more places you practice, the better.

### TRAINING RECALL, PHASE 2: OUTDOOR EXERCISES

**Exercise 1.** If you have a fenced yard, practice the back-away recall exercise (#1 indoor), on leash at first. Give your dog a food reward from your pocket for good performances. When he is reliable on leash, practice with the leash off.

**Exercise 2.** While on a walk, give the "come" command and then back away from your dog in the direction you just came from. Use plenty of praise. When he arrives, ask for a sit, touch the collar, and give a food reward from your pocket.

**Exercise 3.** Take a long leash, a section of clothesline, or other rope and attach it firmly to your dog's collar. Go to an open area away from traffic and with few distractions. Call your dog and praise as he comes toward you. Ask for a sit and treat as usual if he complies. Repeat at random intervals.

If, when you call, your dog goes off course or ignores your command, go and get him and bring him back to the spot you were at when you called him. Praise, release him, and practice until he does solo efforts worthy of a food treat. Don't drag him in with the line: it is for insurance/emergency purposes only.

**Exercise 4.** Once your dog is reliable on the preceding exercises, go to places where there are distractions: dogs and/or people. Work on leash at first and then on the long line.

**Exercise 5.** Go to enclosed areas where you can safely practice off leash. Start off with low distraction and then gradually add more difficult temptations.

### Tips and Pitfalls

- The trick to successful recall training is to keep it at your dog's level so he can be successful every time. Don't try a harder exercise until the one you're working on is a piece of cake for your dog. If your dog has trouble getting a new exercise right, go back a step and work some more on the previous one.
- Never scold or punish your dog for not coming when called. He isn't trying to annoy or embarrass you; you simply haven't trained him enough yet. Plus, you make it less likely your dog will choose to come next time you call.
- Even if you are mad—try not to show it—always try to imagine how you look from your dog's perspective: Do you look like a person that can be safely approached?

# Dog: Body Language



Nonverbal communication fascinates most of us animal lovers, and who can blame us for wanting to understand our furry friends? But reading the body language of another species is quite a challenge. Most of us try to translate facial expressions, body postures, tail positions, and other details into signals that make sense in human terms—a strategy that often fails.

Here's an overview that can help you learn to read your dog's signals. Look for the clues provided by the look in her eyes, the tone of her voice, the position of her ears and body, and the motion of her tail.

And remember to take into account your dog's entire body and the situation she's in—context is everything.

## Vocalization

Bark	Territorial call, attention-seeking, anxiety, social needs, or aggression
Whine	Care soliciting, puppies, pain, or frustration
Howl	To Some breeds, this may be the vocal equivalent of marking
Growl	Aggression or distance-increasing signal

## Facial Expression

Eyes	Pupils dilated = Nervous, playful, aroused
Ears*	Forward = Alert, interested, happy, relaxed Flat, backward, sideways = Fearful, frightened, irritable Swiveling = Attentive, listening to every little sound, alert, vigilant
Mouth	Closed = Relaxed Open with relaxed lips = Happy, excited Open tight and showing teeth = Fearful, aggressive Lip curl or lifting, vertical or horizontal = Defensive aggression Submissive grin = Appeasement behavior

\*Depends on the breed's natural ear position

## Body Language (posture)

Happy and content dog = Approaching with relaxed body, sitting or lying down, eyes soft, pupils moderately dilated, tail softly wagging or straight, ears forward.

Playful dog = Bouncy body movements, might be bowing front body and sticking hind end up (called playbow).

Nervous, insecure, fearful dog = Ears sideways or back, pupils dilated, tail low or tucked between legs, low body posture, tense, wants to hide, turns away, does not accept treats, lip licking, yawning, hyper vigilant, moving slowly, stalling, panting, or pacing.

Frightened, startled dog = Stiff or lowered body posture, ears back and flat against head, fur standing straight on back, tail erect or low, hyper vigilant, may growl, bark, or snarl.

Fearful, aggressive dog = Stands stiff or crouches, leaning body position, ears flattened, tail between legs or up, pupils dilated, panting, lip licking, yawning, may loudly growl, bark, or snarl.

Aggressive dog on the offensive = Ears forward, forward-leaning body position, tail hair bristling or fur standing straight on back, hard stare or growl, bark and snarl or snap.