



Maleea Acker



Fiona Percy

Why Do Dogs Bite?

The vast majority of dogs are safe, reliable companions. But even a friendly dog may bite if threatened, angry, afraid or hurt. Play can occasionally excite dogs to the point where they will bite. Some dogs can also be described as dangerous—these dogs are bred or trained to be aggressive, with predatory instincts.

Protective Dogs

Similarly to humans, dogs protect things they care about, be this food, puppies or favourite toys. They also protect spaces—their own and their guardians'. Eating and sleeping areas, yards, porches and parked cars are all commonly defended by dogs. A child reaching through a fence or arriving unannounced at the door can turn a neighbour's warm, loyal pet into a growling, aggressive protector. Dogs provide us with protection. Ensure that children understand this and remain aware of situations that may frighten or anger a dog.

Other Reasons Dogs May Bite

- Cornering, crowding or standing over a dog, particularly a small one, may make it feel defensive. Children should stand back and never put their faces close to a dog's mouth. The face is the most common site of serious dog bite injuries.
- Stray dogs are in danger and may be dangerous. Any dog that is loose may be lost, frightened or injured—and thus more likely to bite.
- Sick or injured dogs may be afraid or irritable and should be avoided by children.
- Elderly dogs may have impaired vision or hearing, or be more sensitive to touch.
- Some dogs are inadequately socialized. Dogs living with or around children need to be able to tolerate a degree of rough treatment without resorting to biting. Choose your dog carefully and discourage even play-biting by puppies, to avoid problems

later.

- Most children's dog bite injuries occur during play with a dog they know. A dog that is excited or nervous can bite by mistake. Children should be taught not to play fight, tease, yell at or chase dogs.
- Dogs can feel left out, especially when a new baby or pet joins the household. Give your dog extra love and attention at these times.

Practice Good Dog Etiquette

- Ask permission before petting someone else's dog.
- Teach children not to hug dogs, as some dogs don't tolerate this behaviour well.
- Leave mother dogs and their puppies alone.
- Don't try to pet dogs that are tied up, sleeping, eating, behind fences or in vehicles.
- Don't chase or tease dogs, pull their ears or tails, grab their food, bones or toys.
- Don't try to stop a dog fight.
- Always act kindly and gently; dogs are our companions and have feelings.
- Report the details of injured, stray or threatening dogs to animal control authorities.



Paul Moody

Dog Guardian Responsibilities

Under the law, guardians can be held liable for their dogs' actions—including bites. You can take steps to reduce the likelihood of your dog biting.

- Socialize and train your dog. It's best to start while your dog is a puppy, but most dogs can be socialized at any age to behave without aggression.
- Don't let your dog run loose. Fence your yard and leash your dog when you go for a walk. Avoid having young children walk dogs they can't control.
- When you meet children while out for a walk, be sure they approach your dog properly. This ensures their safety and protects your dog.
- Teach children to observe simple rules of safe and considerate behaviour around dogs. A dog is a family member and should be treated with care and respect.
- Choose your dog carefully. Puppies should be evaluated in light of the parent dogs' behaviour. Select dogs that have been bred to be non-aggressive family dogs.
- The importance of sterilizing your animal cannot be overemphasized. Spaying and neutering your dog tends to reduce aggressive tendencies significantly. A US survey of over 200 fatal dog attacks showed that in all but two cases the attacks were carried out by unneutered or unspayed dogs.
- Don't leave babies or very young children alone with a dog.
- Include your dog in your family's life—a well loved dog will be better socialized, happier and much less likely to bite.



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Petiquette

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Bite Wise

Preventing Dog Bites



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