



Playing with Your Dog

The types of games you play with your dog can often cause misunderstandings and accidents. Playing rough games like wrestling, tug of war or just running around and screaming might make the dog think it is okay to play rough. Making the dog overly excited can result in accidents. Setting up obstacle courses, playing games like fetch, or hide and seek teach you and your dog to work together instead of in opposition. Teach your dog to run with you, not after you.

How to Handle Encounters with Stray Dogs

- Don't approach a dog that has no owner, or is not on a leash. You can't tell how long the dog has been loose, and therefore don't know its history.
- Don't look into a stray dog's eyes. This may be perceived as a challenge.
- If the dog approaches, stand still and use your peripheral vision to monitor the dog's movements.
- Don't jump or yell. You could excite, anger or even scare the dog.
- Don't try to outrun a dog. Dogs can run very fast, some as fast as cars! Dogs like to chase things, so if you are running, stop.
- Try to walk away slowly and ask someone you know to call animal control. Animal control can come and get the dog and try to find its owner.
- Don't run if the dog starts to jump on you. Instead, put your hands behind your neck, get down on your knees and try to touch your chin to your knees. Pretend to be a turtle.
- Call for help.



Encounters with Leashed Dogs

- Always ask your parent or guardian if it is okay to approach the owner. NEVER approach a stranger unless you are with your parent or guardian. NEVER go with someone who asks you to find a lost puppy. Get your parent or guardian to help you.
- Use your best manners to ask the owner if you may pat the dog.
- If the owner says yes, make sure the dog is calm before you approach it. A good owner may even ask the dog to sit first.
- Once the dog is calm, make a fist and let it smell you. This will help the dog become familiar with your scent, and lets it know you are friendly.
- Once you've become acquainted, pat the dog gently on the shoulder or back. Do not reach over the dog's head because this could scare the dog.
- If the dog becomes agitated, politely thank the owner and walk away.

Familiar Dogs

The dogs we live with can sometimes pose as much of a challenge as strange dogs. Because dogs are often part of the family, there can be competing interests. Just like people dogs have their favourite toys, beds and food dishes. If your dog is happily chewing a bone or toy, eating or sleeping leave it alone. Just like people dogs may not want to share all the time. Also, dogs can get cranky when they are woken by surprise. If your dog has something you need or you have to wake your dog, get an adult to help you.



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Parent's Corner

Encounters with dogs can be difficult to negotiate. The combination of owner abandonment and enclosures can greatly increase the number of dogs on the loose. Considering most dog bite injuries occur during play with a known dog, familiar dogs pose an even greater risk. Children especially must be mindful during their encounters with dogs because their small size, willingness to play and unpredictability can sometimes confuse animals. A few guidelines can help make your child's interactions with dogs safe and enjoyable.

Always be mindful that your dog looks to you as a role model. They learn acceptable behaviour from you, so be sure to set a good example. Try to enroll your dog in an approved obedience school and participate as much as possible. It is your job to keep your dog safe and make sure it is safe for others to be around.



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Safe Kids, Safe Dogs