

# Body Language of Fear in Dogs

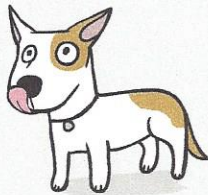


**Slight Cowering**

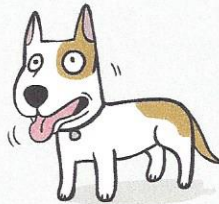


**Major Cowering**

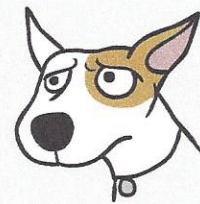
## More Subtle Signs of Fear & Anxiety



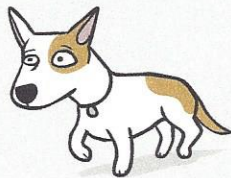
**Licking Lips**  
when no food nearby



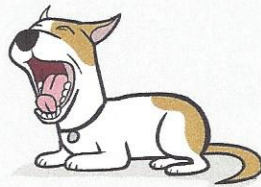
**Panting**  
when not hot or thirsty



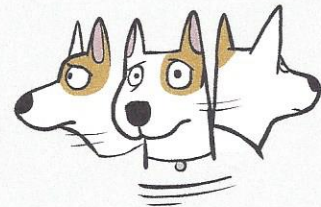
**Brows Furrowed, Ears to Side**



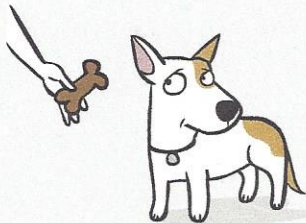
**Moving in Slow Motion**  
walking slow on floor



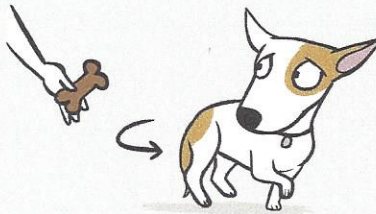
**Acting Sleepy or Yawning**  
when they shouldn't be tired



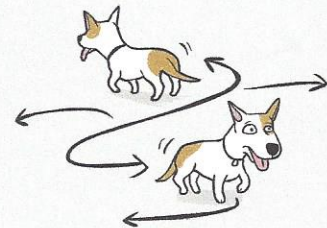
**Hypervigilant**  
looking in many directions



**Suddenly Won't Eat**  
but was hungry earlier



**Moving Away**



**Pacing**

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**Dr. Sophia Yin, DVM, MS**  
*The Art and Science of Animal Behavior*

For additional free dog bite prevention resources and more dog behavior books and products, visit [www.drSophiaYin.com](http://www.drSophiaYin.com).





# How to Greet a Dog (and What to Avoid)

Appropriate greetings are common sense. Imagine if someone greeted you the way many people greet dogs!

## Human to Human INCORRECT



Avoid reaching into their safety zone.



Avoid rushing up.



Avoid interactions without asking.



Avoid staring at people. This is scary.



Avoid looming over.



Avoid reaching into personal space.



Avoid close interaction if the person is afraid of you.



Avoid touching inappropriately.

## Human to Dog INCORRECT



Avoid reaching in or towards the dog's car.



Avoid rushing up.



Avoid interacting with unfamiliar dogs, especially if they're tied up.



Avoid staring at the dog or approaching head-on.



Avoid leaning over or towards dogs even when you change position to squat or get up.



Avoid reaching your hand out for the dog to sniff.

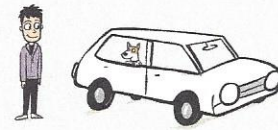


Avoid petting if the dog looks nervous or tense. Just admire him instead.



Avoid hugging, kissing, and patting roughly. This is too familiar and disliked by many dogs.

## Human to Dog CORRECT



Stand a safe distance away so that you are not a threat.



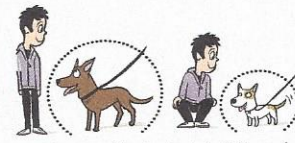
Approach slowly (at a relaxed walk).



Ask if you can interact first.



Approach sideways and look using your peripheral vision.



Stay outside the dog's bubble and present your side to the dog.



Let the dog approach at his own rate.



It's OK to pet the dog if he looks relaxed, comes up to you, and solicits your attention by rubbing against you.



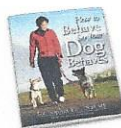
Pet gently.

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# CALMING SIGNALS



ALERT



SCARED



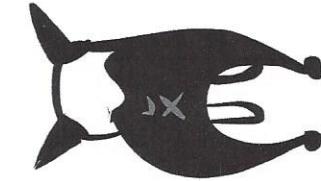
"PLEASE..."



"PEACE!"



"PEACE!"



I'LL BE NO THREAT



I'LL BE NO THREAT



I'LL BE NO THREAT



BEING FRIENDLY



SUBMISSION



CUTE HARMLESS PUPPY





**ALERT**



**SUSPICIOUS**



**ANXIOUS**



**THREATENED**



**ANGRY**



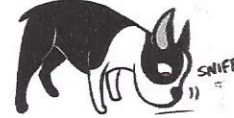
**"PEACE!"**  
look away/head turn



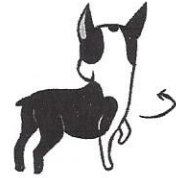
**STRESSED**  
yawn



**STRESSED**  
nose lick



**"PEACE!"**  
sniff ground



**"RESPECT!"**  
turn & walk away



**"NEED SPACE"**  
whale eye



**STALKING**



**STRESSED**  
scratching



**STRESS RELEASE**  
shake off



**RELAXED**  
soft ears, blinky eyes



**"RESPECT!"**  
offer his back



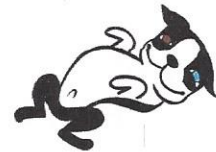
**FRIENDLY & POLITE**  
curved body



**FRIENDLY**



**"PRETTY PLEASE"**  
round puppy face



**"I'M YOUR LOVEBUG"**  
belly-rub pose



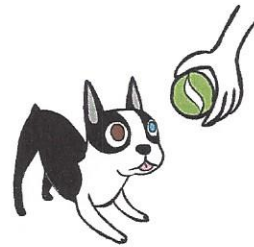
**"HELLO I LOVE YOU!"**  
greeting stretch



**"I'M FRIENDLY!"**  
play bow



**"READY!"**  
prey bow



**"YOU WILL FEED ME"**



**CURIOUS**  
head tilt



**HAPPY**  
(or hot)



**OVERJOYED**  
wiggles



**"MMMM...."**



**"I LOVE YOU,  
DON'T STOP"**