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May 2021

Dog Body Language

Center for Urban Resilience

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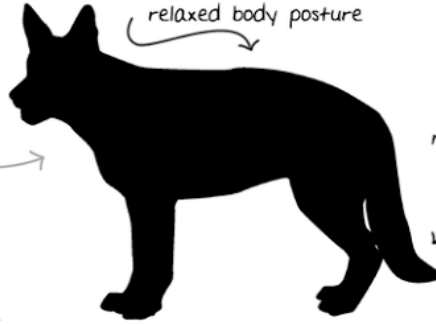
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DOG TO ENGLISH TRANSLATION CHART

This is the dog you'll want to pet. He's calm, neutral, and relaxed. There is no tension in his body and he's probably panting happily and waiting for you to come over and just say "hi".



relaxed body posture

relaxed tail, may be wagging

CALM & NEUTRAL

This dog is uncomfortable or doesn't know what's going on. It's best not to pet him.

It's usually safe to pet a relaxed dog, but make sure he hasn't fallen asleep!



ready to just fall asleep

RELAXED

He may just be really interested in what's going on.

ears are forward, mouth may close



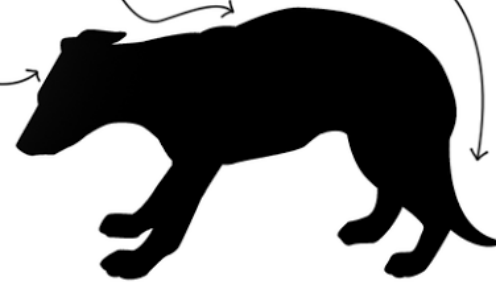
leaning forward

ALERT

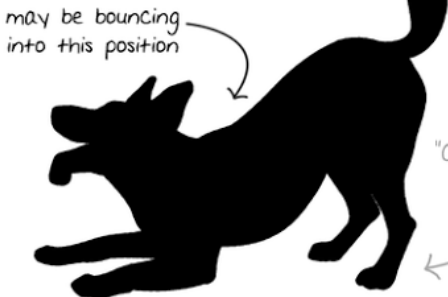
leaning back or turning the body

ears back

tail low, tip may wag



ANXIOUS & NERVOUS



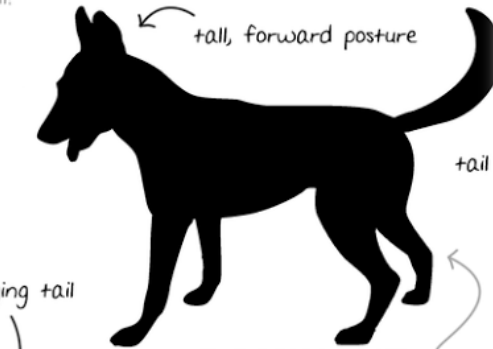
may be bouncing into this position

PLAYFUL

The Play Bow

tail wagging

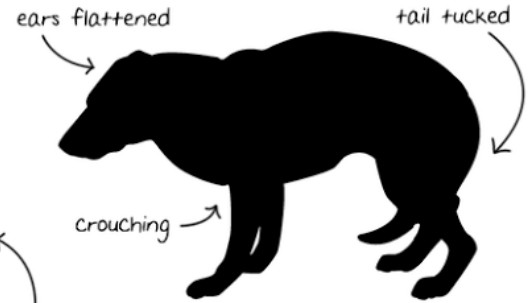
"Oh, please, throw the ball!"



tall, forward posture

DOMINANT

Toward another dog: "I'm in charge!"



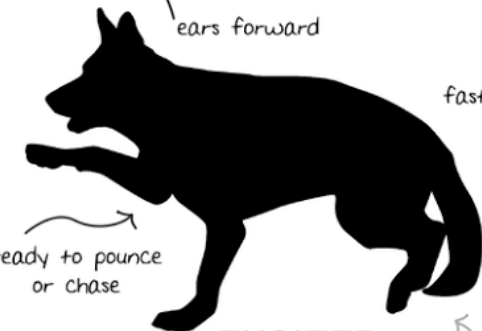
ears flattened

tail tucked

crouching

FRIGHTENED

This dog may bite to "defend" himself.



ears forward

fast wagging tail

EXCITED

An overly excited dog may jump up, knock you over, scratch you with his paws, or even nip you with his teeth.

stiff posture



no hackles

tail waves "like a flag"

AGGRESSIVE

Don't run away from an aggressive dog. Stand still ("be a tree") and look away.



paws tucked in

tail tucked in

SUBMISSIVE

"I give up, don't hurt me" pose

You'll mostly see this behavior when two dogs interact, but a dog that was abused or is really scared may do it as well.

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



Brow Furrowed, Ears to Side



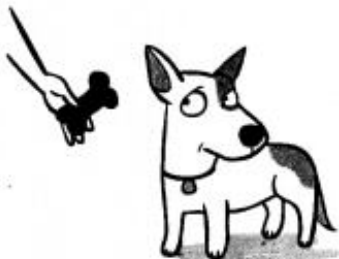
Moving in Slow Motion
walking slow on floor



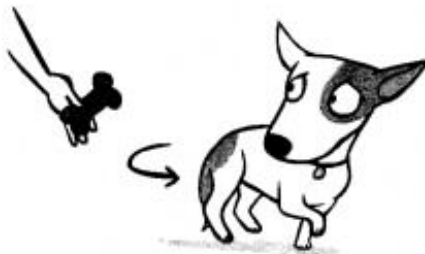
Acting Sleepy or Yawning
when they shouldn't be tired



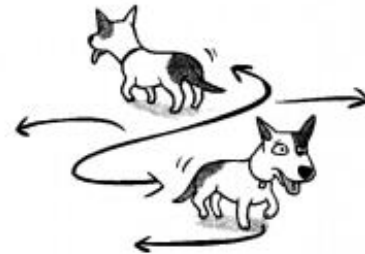
Hypervigilant
looking in many directions



Suddenly Won't Eat
but was hungry earlier



Moving Away



Pacing

TALKING DOG

Dogs communicate using body language more than they do vocally. Here's a quick guide to get a good idea of what your dog is telling you. Look at the whole of the dog: head, face, body and tail to get a more accurate idea of what the dog is saying.

FEARFUL / ANXIOUS / STRESSED

In all cases, respect the dogs need for space and offer signs of appeasement and peace: See the Doggy Dos and Don'ts poster

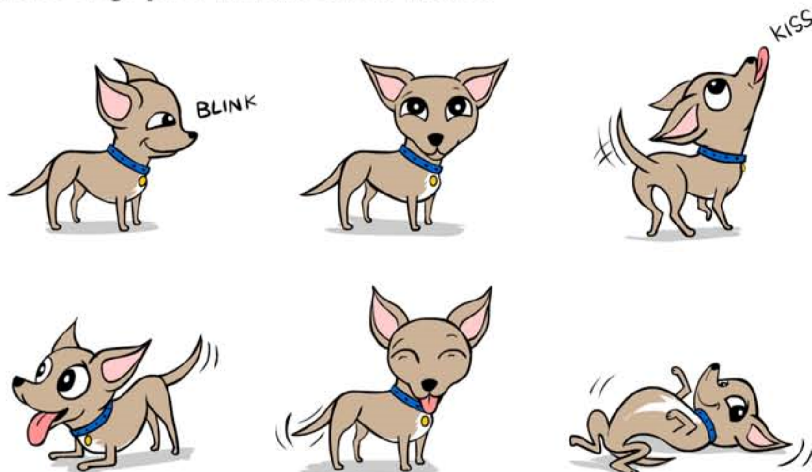


If not read correctly, stress, anxiety and fear often lead to behaviour commonly termed "aggressive", as the dog attempts to make it clearer that they are uncomfortable: raised hackles are a sign of fear:



CONTENT / HAPPY / SOCIAL

These dogs pose no immediate threat.



TAIL POSITIONS

tucked



in line with spine



high and rigid



low and wagging slowly



TAIL POSITIONS

relaxed



high and wagging quickly



casually at 45 degrees



Brought to you by **JezRose** canine behaviour specialist

For further resources and information on dog training and behaviour, see www.JezRose.co.uk

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HOW TO UNDERSTAND YOUR DOG'S BODY LANGUAGE



STARRING **RUSTY** THE DOG →



WHAT THE HECK WAS THAT?
(SUSPICIOUS)



LET'S GO!
(ALERT)



OH NO YOU DIDN'T!
(ANGRY)



I'M IN NEED OF A SPA DAY
(STRESSED)



HE SAID WHAAT?
(CURIOUS)



PUPPIES, KITTENS AND RAINBOWS!
(OVERJOYED)



I'M TRYING TO SHAKE IT OFF
(STRESS RELEASE)



BECAUSE I'M HAPPY
(HAPPY)



YOU ARE MY QUEEN
(RESPECT)



I AM NOT VIBING WITH THIS
(THREATENED)



I NEED MY MOMMY
(ANXIOUS)



STAY OUT OF MY BUBBLE
(NEED SPACE)



I'M IN CHILL MODE
(RELAXED)



LET'S BE BFFs
(FRIENDLY & POLITE)



YEAH, YOU'RE PRETTY COOL
(FRIENDLY)



I'VE ONLY GOT PUPPY EYES FOR YOU
(PRETTY PLEASE)



GOOD MORNING, MY WONDERFUL MAMA
(HELLO, I LOVE YOU)



GIRL, WHERE'S MY CHOW?
(FEED ME)



YOU'RE PRETTY MUCH THE BEST HUMAN EVER
(CONTENT)



OH MY GOSH, I LOVE YOU. OH MY GOSH, LIKE SO MUCH!
(I LOVE YOU, DON'T STOP)

BROUGHT TO YOU BY

sheknows

DOGGIE LANGUAGE

starring Boogie the Boston Terrier



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 LOVE BUG"
belly rub pose



"HELLO I LOVE YOU!"
greeting stretches



"I'M FRIENDLY!"
play bow



"READY!"
prey bow



"YOU WILL FEED ME"



CURIOUS
head tilt



HAPPY
(or hot)



OVERJOYED
wiggly



"MMMM..."



"I LOVE YOU
DON'T STOP"