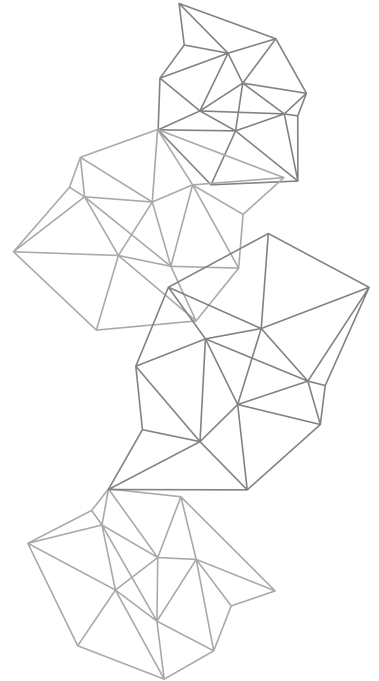


# Pro-Social Behaviours

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How can you tell if a dog wants to get close to another dog? Look for what's called pro-social (A.K.A. "friendly") behavior:  
The dog approaches with a combination of these:

- Wags tail
- Has loose, often wiggly, body movements
- Has a loose face with relaxed mouth and ears
- Curves around to sniff butt vs straight to face
- Does freeze for more than 3 seconds
- Isn't pushy with sniffing
- Turns head away to avoid hard staring
- Is slow with their approach
- Shows flexibility in body



The absence of these friendly signals should be seen as a red flag. The dog might be trying to figure out if he feels comfortable; he might be okay around the other dog, but only from a certain distance away; or he might simply prefer to be left to his own business.

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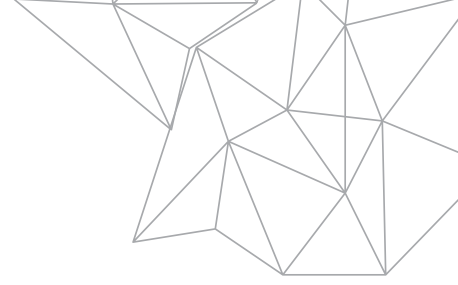
## Cut Off Signals

Polite Ways your Dog is Defusing any Conflict

- Sniffing the ground
  - Turning Away
  - Yawning
  - Giving Space to the Dog
  - Leaving the Area
  - Licking lips
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# Playing or Fighting?

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## 1 What is the Dog Doing?

One reason dogs play is to practice important behaviors in their lives: fighting, fleeing, feeding, and courting. This means that when they play, they do things such as pretending to fight, chasing each other around, and, yes, even humping.

But, if you looked at a snapshot of two dogs playing, without any other context, you likely couldn't tell if they were playing or fighting. So we have to dig deeper for more clues.

## 2 What is the Body Language?

We're looking for the **three play indicators**:

- 1. Self-handicapping** — Are they pulling their punches or fake biting? They keep their mouths open when they "bite," and they are faking body slamming like in a WWE ring.
- 2. Role reversals** — Are they switching up? One chases and then he gets chased. One is on top, and then he's on the bottom. One "bites," and then he gets "bitten."
- 3. Meta-signals** — Play bow? Play-face? Yes! Running with a bouncy gait? Side body posture vs forward and pushy?

## 2 What is the Answer?

If they are showing appropriate social skills, allow them to play for 30 seconds before ensuring both dogs take a break to catch their breath. After the break see if both parties are interested in playing before you allow them to go again.

If you don't see self-handicapping, role reversals, or meta-signals, it's a good idea to give them a break and see if both parties are still interested in engaging. If they aren't they it's time to end the play.

*Contact your trainer if you are ever unsure! We have lots of classes and experience in this topic!*

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