

Understanding the body language of a dog



Dogs do not communicate in the same way as people - they cannot talk to us by use of speech - this often leads to misunderstandings and confusion in our relationship with dogs. Dogs use their bodies, their faces and the noises they make to communicate and we need to try and learn how to understand these signals and be safe around dogs.



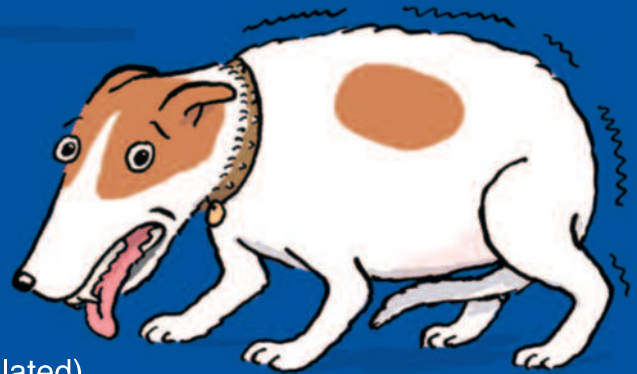
The angry dog

Dogs can get angry in all sorts of situations - just like people. Look at the signals this dog is giving that show he is not happy and try to remember what they mean.

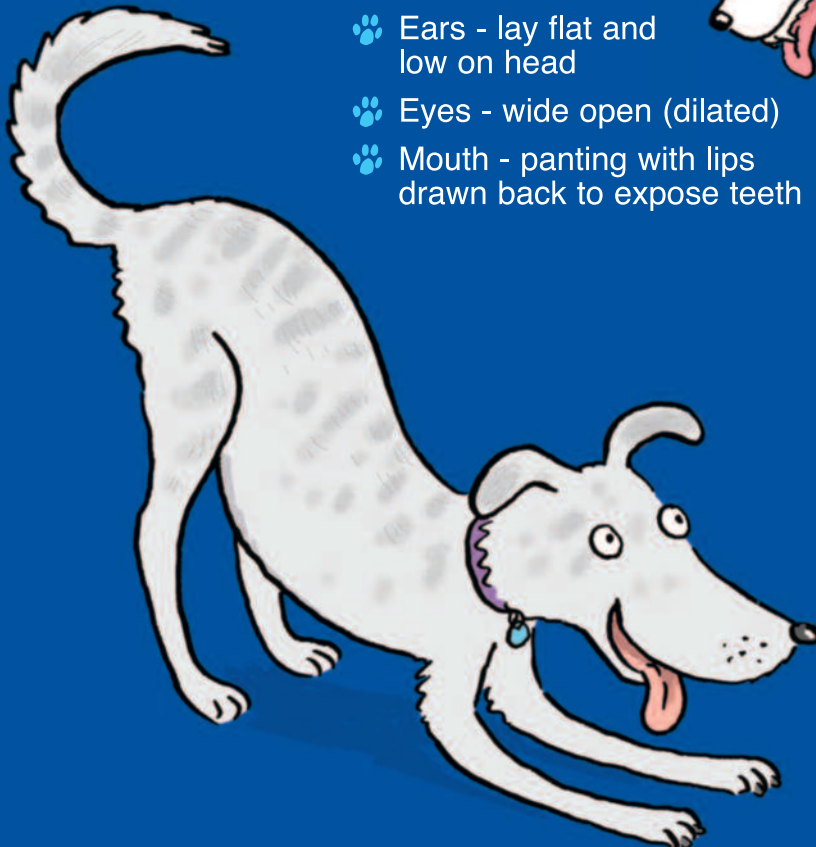
- 🐾 Eyes - narrow and maintaining eye to eye contact
- 🐾 Mouth - lips open and drawn back to expose a snarl
- 🐾 Body - tense and stiff
- 🐾 Tail - straight forward and often fluffed up
- 🐾 Hair on back (hackles) standing up
- 🐾 Ears forward

The afraid dog

Dogs can find new situations and new people scary, just like us. Look at the signals this dog is giving and try to remember them just in case you ever meet a scared dog.



- 🐾 Ears - lay flat and low on head
- 🐾 Eyes - wide open (dilated)
- 🐾 Mouth - panting with lips drawn back to expose teeth



The playful dog

Most dogs enjoy playing with people but there will be times that they may want to sleep instead or not to be disturbed. Look at the body language of a playful dog so that the signs become clearer when a dog wants to play.

- 🐾 Eyes - extremely wide open (widely dilated)
- 🐾 Ears - relaxed
- 🐾 Body - front end lowered with rear end up in the air (playbow stance)
- 🐾 Tail - often wagging furiously

