

# CANINE BODY LANGUAGE

While your dog cannot speak as you do, she does relay her feelings and emotions through a series of body postures, gestures and vocalizations. Her body language can be subtle and wide-ranging, but with a little practice you can learn and understand it. Your dog will use her ears, eyes, ears, mouth, tail and general body movement/postures to communicate to you. She may also use vocalizations.

Learning to read your dog's body language will help keep you, your dog and other people and their dogs safe. It will also allow you to recognize when she is stressed so you can act accordingly to do what you can to make her feel better. Being able to communicate with your dog will strengthen your relationship and bond with her as well.

There are four common groups of canine communication - fearful/anxious, arousal, aggressive and relaxed. Keep in mind that your dog can display body language from more than one group at a time and because all dogs are individuals, there is not a hard and fast rule for interpreting body language. The important thing to remember is to look at the entire body of your dog - not just one part - and take note of the current context/situation in which the body language occurs.

## FEARFUL/ANXIOUS BODY LANGUAGE INDICATORS

- Lip licking
- Yawning
- Closed mouth
- Lowered head
- Ears back, toward head or planed to the side
- Tucked or lowered tail
- Whale eye (whites of eyes showing)
- Trembling or shaking
- Looks away (to avoid eye contact)
- Crouched down
- Furrowed brow
- Sweaty Paws
- Drooling
- One paw up
- Presenting belly
- Wet dog shake (when not wet)
- Sneezing
- Smile (only front teeth exposed)
- Spatula tongue

## AROUSAL BODY LANGUAGE INDICATORS

- Jumping up
- Mouthing (with or without teeth)
- Piloerection (hair standing up)
- Bloodshot eyes
- Red mucous membranes
- Inability to calm or settle
- Ears forward and straight up
- Tail stiff & high above spine
- Heavy panting
- Vocalizing
- Focused eyes
- Closed mouth
- Tense body
- Dilated pupils
- Spatula tongue



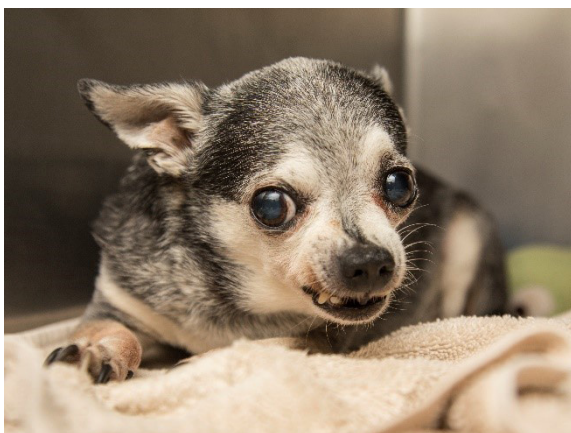
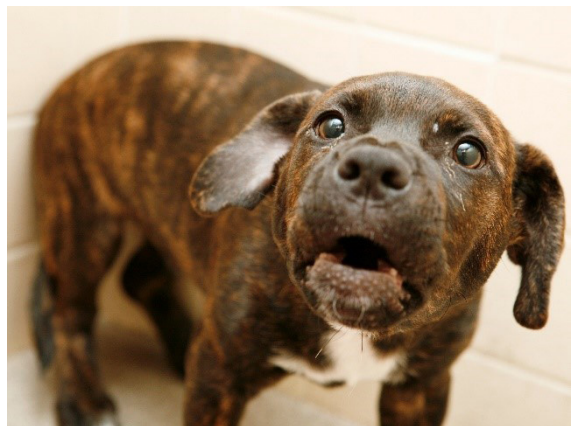
## AGGRESSIVE BODY LANGUAGE INDICATORS

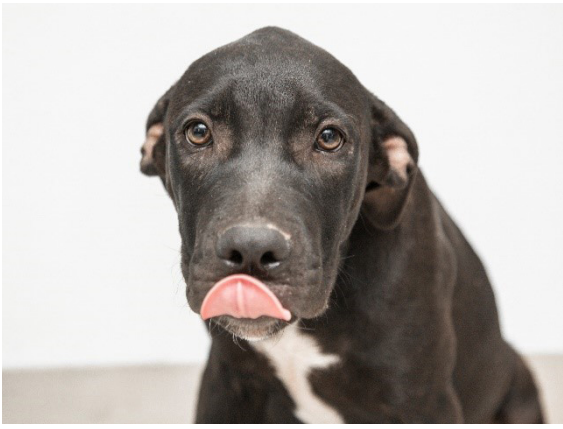
- Growling
- Snarling (growling while showing teeth)
- Snap (bite without contact)
- Lip Curling
- Stiffening/freezing of body
- Hard, intense stare
- Tight, closed mouth
- Curled lips
- Lunging
- Bite
- High, stiff, fast wagging tail
- Squared off body
- Baring teeth

## RELAXED BODY LANGUAGE INDICATORS

- Loose, wiggly body
- Open mouth
- Wagging tail with wiggly rear end
- Play bow (front end down, back end up)
- Relaxed body (no muscle tensing)
- Relaxed face (no muscle tensing)
- Tongue hanging out (straight)
- Tail down (but not between legs)
- Laying with one paw tucked under
- Light panting

**THE DOGS PICTURED BELOW ALL HAVE BODY LANGUAGE INDICATING THEY ARE CONCERNED ABOUT THE CURRENT SITUATION.**





**THE DOGS BELOW ALL HAVE BODY LANGUAGE INDICATING  
THEY ARE RELAXED AND COMFORTABLE.**

