

Threatening Behavior in Dogs

Please visit www.squidoo.com/readyerdog for pictures and descriptions of dog behavior.

Learn how to read body language in dogs. Is the dog's body stiff/tense or loose/happy. Is he looking at you intensely? Tail wagging isn't always friendly. A stiff, straight in the air wag can signal arousal/aggression.

What to do if a loose dog appears to be threatening you:

1 Avoid Eye Contact

2 Be a Tree or a Turtle

3 Do not scream or run. All dogs can outrun you and this may stimulate them to attack. You may try saying "Good boy", "Good dog" in a happy, sing song voice. If that does not change the dog's body language, try number 5.

4 Avoid eye contact (It bears repeating)

5 You may tell the dog "NO" or "GO" in a deep growly voice.

6 Climb a tree if possible.

7 Yell for help only if being attacked.

If dogs are owned, try to talk to the owner. See if you can "make friends". Take a plate of cookies over for the owner and some treats for the dogs. See if you can find some common ground. Let the owner know how frightened you are. Ask nicely first.

If you aren't making any progress, it's time to contact animal control. You may try contacting the police if there is a particularly dangerous situation. Keep contacting animal control until they are able to do something about the situation. Typically, several reports must be on file before any action will be taken.

Keep pepper spray handy and use it if you feel your life is in danger.