

How to approach and greet a dog

You're walking down the street and see a man taking a stroll with his charming puppy. Do you know the proper greeting etiquette?



First things first – you should ask the dog's human companion if it is okay to approach. Once you're given the clear:

1. Get on the dog's level and extend your hand palm down to be sniffed.
2. Scratch the pup under the chin or stroke the dog gently on the chest and shoulders. Work your way to the top of the dogs head.
3. With some dogs, it is best to remain standing and use the same method described above.
4. Do not hover over the dog leaning over their head and encroaching on their space.
5. Do not put your face directly into the dogs as this can cause a negative reaction and it is a sure fire way to get bit if you make the dog feel threatened.

Most often, people's natural instinct is to reach in and pat dogs on the head – often while leaning over the dog and even staring into its eyes. This is a very unnatural act for a dog. Have you ever seen a dog pat another dog on the head? Probably not unless it was a trained behavior. We have to refer to the rule of do not do anything to your dog that another dog would not do to them.

This does not mean that you should not teach your pup to find

this behavior to be pleasurable, it just means that you should strive to make it enjoyable.

People greeting your dog

Suppose that someone comes up to greet your dog without *your* permission. It is best to train your dog to accept this kind of behavior, but greeters do not always know the best way to behave around animals. Your best response is to calmly step in front of your dog to block access.