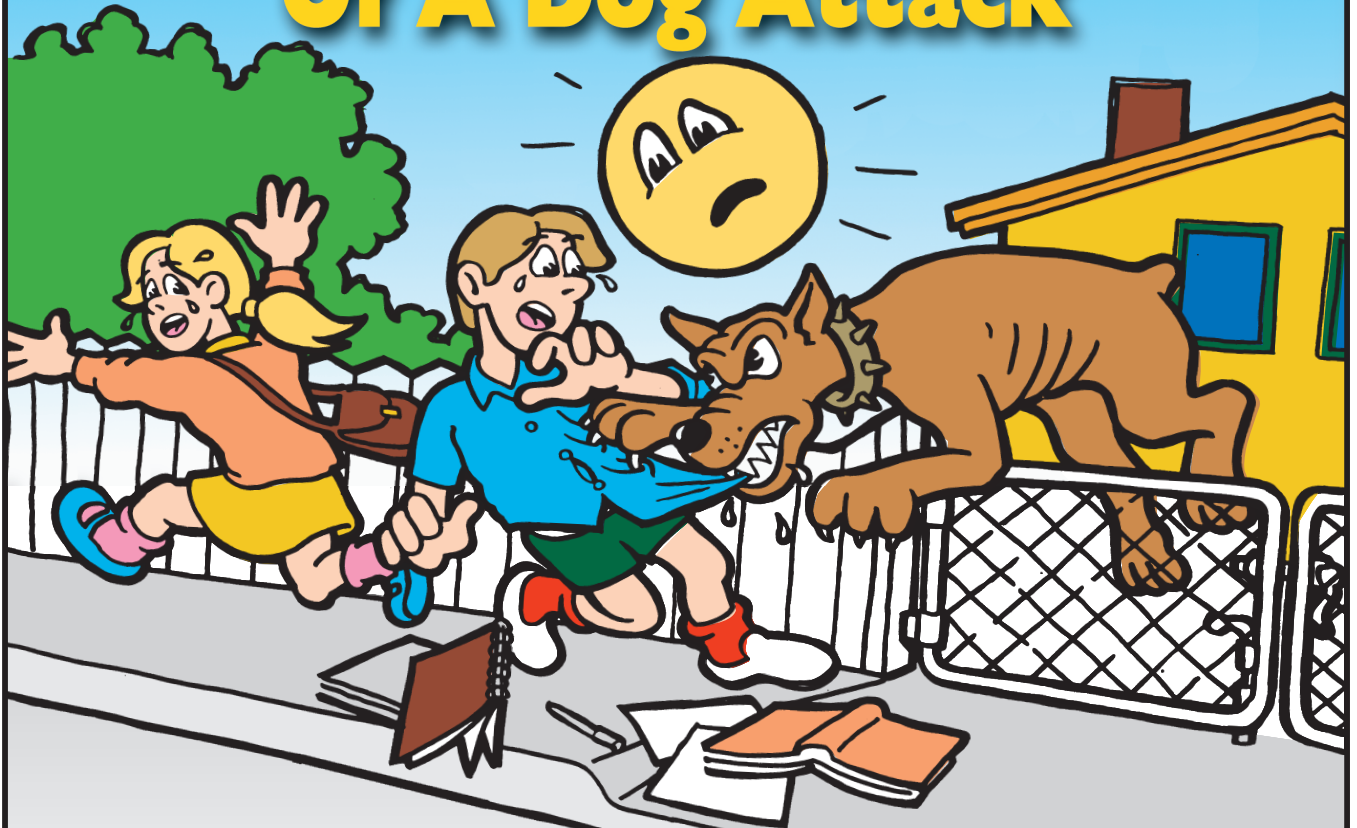


Avoid Being The Victim Of A Dog Attack



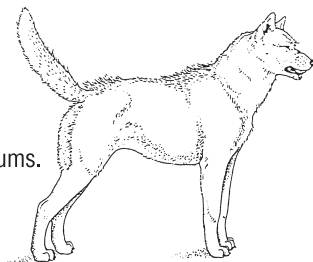
How to recognise aggressive behaviour:

The most unacceptable behaviour from dogs is their aggression towards humans. Although some guarding aspects of the dog are desirable, we can never eliminate situations such as children entering a property to retrieve a ball. Unfortunately dogs cannot be taught to distinguish between a lawful and unlawful intruder.

Many people are bitten because they “trigger” the bite. Dogs go through a series of displays and postures when they feel threatened. These displays are an early warning signal so that a confrontation is **not** required. If you recognise those early “aggression signals” you may minimise the chance of a very unpleasant encounter.

Dominant Aggression:

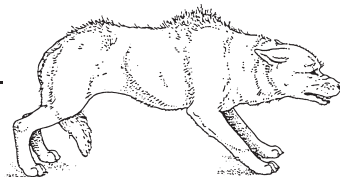
- **Eyes** directly staring at you.
- **Ears** erect and forward.
- **Lips** curled.
- **Snarling**, growling and exposing the teeth and gums.
- **Head** rigid and held high.
- **Hair** raised on its neck and back.
- **Tail** raised (sometimes wagging).



- **Standing** its ground (stiff front legs).
- **Barking**.
- **Scratching** the ground.
- **Stiffened** body (walking as if on tiptoes).
- **Leaning** forward (often with one paw raised).
- **Very** confident

Fear Aggression:

- **Eye** contact avoided.
- **Ears** back.
- **Lips** slightly curled or mouth tightly closed.
- **Snarling** and growling.
- **Head** lowered.
- **Hair** raised on its neck and back.



- **Backing** away.
- **Tail** tucked between its legs.
- **Alarm** barking.
- **Constantly** moving and appearing stressed.
- **Hiding** or trying to appear smaller by crouching.
- **Peeing** uncontrollably.
- **Very** stressed and agitated.

Two reasons why a dog may react at this stage are:

- The distance between the dog and the intruder (always allow the dog plenty of room to escape), and
- The speed at which the dog is approached.

How to defuse aggressive behaviour:

There are no foolproof rules when it comes to determining the actions of a dog. Treat every encounter with a strange dog, regardless of breed, as a potentially dangerous situation. There can be numerous reasons for motivating a dog's aggression. The last thing you want to do is make it angrier. Try to relax as much as possible otherwise your body language may send a message to the dog that you are the aggressor and this may cause the dog to act in self-defence.

If the dog indicates that it is uncomfortable with your presence you should **"stop and stand still"**. Ensure that the dog stays in front of you. If the dog tries to go behind you, slowly circle with it. You should do nothing else until the dog displays friendly behaviour. If, after 20-30 seconds, the dog is still behaving aggressively you should slowly and fluidly back away, being careful not to trip over or make any sudden movements.

Evaluate the **"aggression signals"** and the dog's **"body language"**. If you miss or ignore the signals, the dog may feel the need to reinforce them by biting you.

Most dogs try and bite you from behind. This may be because you are not in a position to defend yourself if you don't see it coming.

- **Always** allow the dog room to escape.
- **Stay** calm, **DON'T RUN** you may trigger a "chase response".
- **Don't** scream or squeal. (High pitched sounds may startle the dog and cause it to respond.)
- **Don't** make any sudden movements. (dogs have an instinctive reflex to chase moving objects.)
- **Try** to ignore the dog.
- **Avoid** eye contact; however don't lose sight of the dog. (Dogs use eye contact to "size you up".)
- **Use** anything in your hand as a shield not as a weapon.
- **Don't** yell at the dog or act dominantly. (Imagine if the dog is acting aggressively because she has puppies to protect.)
- **Don't** act submissively. (This may be a signal to the dog to act dominantly.)
- **Act** confidently. (Fear or anxiety may increase the probability of you being bitten.)
- **Don't** push your friendship on the dog. (Some dogs take offence at being touched.)
- **Don't** be fooled by a wagging tail.
- **Be** cautious when the owner appears. (When your attention has been distracted, this is a prime time to bite you.)
- **Be** cautious of a bitch with puppies.
- **Never** approach a dog that is eating.
- **Stay** back from a dog that is sleeping.

Facial expressions of a dog from normal to attack stage



1. Peacefulness and relaxation.
2. Attention, interest. The ears are pricked up.
3. Uncertainty and fear. The ears are flat and the lips raised.
4. Fear and rising anger. The ears are flat and the teeth are showing.
5. Readiness for attack. The ears are raised and the lips drawn way back.
6. About to attack. The ears point forward and the muzzle is open.

Note: Not all dogs will show facial expressions. In fact some dogs may give no warnings at all.