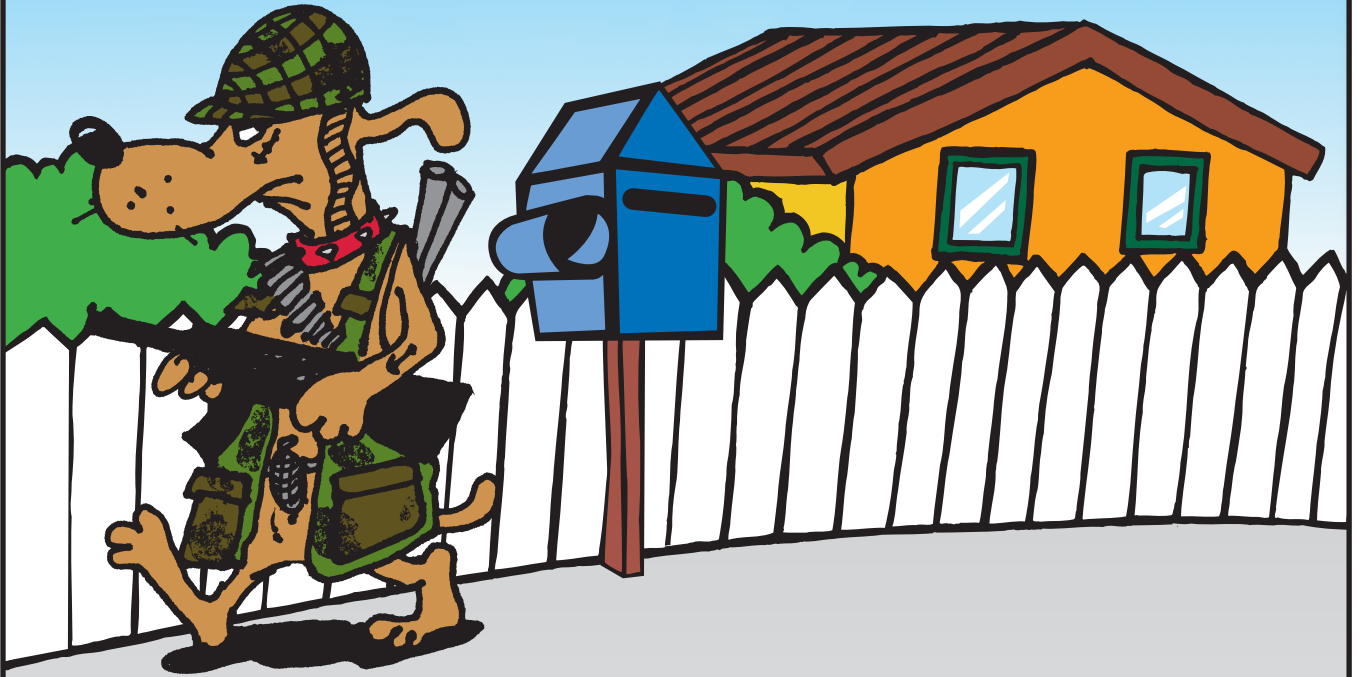


Territorial Aggression You The Victim



One of the reasons for domesticating dogs was for their guarding abilities. Dogs are famous for their territorial aggressive behaviour. They seem to treat strange people as they would strange dogs intruding on their territory.

Whilst territorial aggression can be a desirable trait if one wants a guard dog, it can also become a serious problem when dogs attack friends, meter readers, delivery persons, etc. Anyone having a dog like this is required, by law, to keep it under strict control at all times.

Territorial aggression also means the dog's territorial sensitivity region. Do not invade their most critical zone. Always leave them plenty of room to escape so that they don't feel the need to act in self-defence.

Threat Reduction:

Some helpful hints:

- If walking onto a property with fences and gates, look and listen, assess the situation before entering.
- If you are unsure there is a dog on the property, look

for signs like dog bones, chewed up articles, signs of dog faeces.

- Observe the dog from behind the gate. Analyse the behaviour and body language before you open the gate. Do not go in if you are at all concerned. Do not approach the dog. Let it approach you.
- When you first encounter a dog it will be in a state of alertness. The dog will have a high surge of adrenaline through its body and will be very sensitive to any movement. "STAND STILL". If the dog receives pleasant or familiar impressions it should exhibit friendliness after the adrenal reaction has ceased.
- Never reach over a dog with an open hand. Many dogs are punished with an open hand. Use a closed fist & bring it up from below the dog's chin. Dogs are not threatened by a fist. It merely represents an object which is harder and less attractive to bite. A common trigger to a bite is unnecessary patting. Do not pat the dog unless it shows you it really wants to be patted.
- Try to avoid the dog directly, turn side on to it. This will reduce your visual impact.

- Do not behave in a threatening or dominant manner towards the dog. This may cause a fearful dog to perceive you as a threat and therefore defend itself or it may be a signal to a dominant dog that it needs to defend its dominance. Also, aggression can be motivated for a number of reasons. If you act dominantly to a dog that is aggressive for maternal reasons (protecting pups), then you may find yourself in a very serious situation.
- Avoid direct eye contact, especially in the early stages of the meeting, but do not lose sight of the dog. You may find out very quickly that you missed some signal from the dog.
- At all times act confidently. Do not try and push your friendship onto the dog. If it wants to make friends, it will when it is ready.
- If the dog is "asking" for attention, avoid patting it on the top of the head and shoulders. Never lean over the dog; crouch down. Keep your face out of the way.
- Angle away from the corner of the house if you are walking around a property, so as not to startle the dog.
- Never think that a chained up dog cannot reach you. The chain may be longer than you think and chains have been known to snap.
- Do not stand square-on to doorways. Stand off centre or side on.

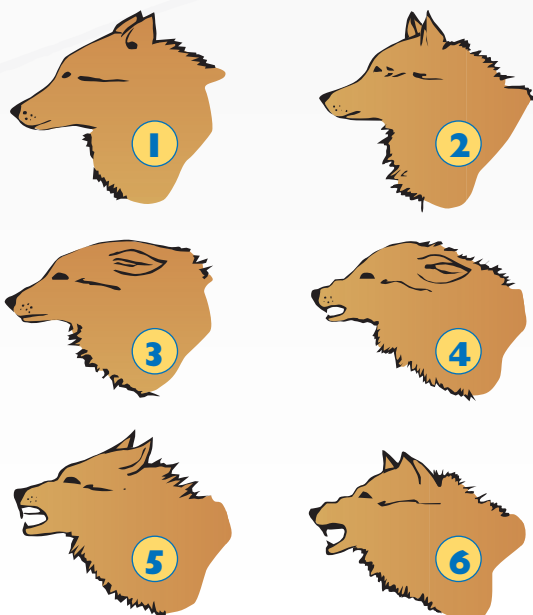
- Where possible, go into potentially dangerous situations by vehicle and park as close as possible to the door.

Leave the car door ajar - a quick escape route should you need it.

- If a dog is snoozing and does not notice your arrival, wake it up gently, from a distance.
- Dogs often consider their doorstep to be a "safe" place. Never approach the door if a dog is right up against it and barking. If you back off slowly and give the dog enough room to escape, it will probably run off the step and circle around you, giving you access to the door, but keep your eyes on the dog.
- Use this information to try to defuse the situation rather than aggravate it.
- Do not rush the process. Take as long as it takes. If you have anything in your hands, use it as a shield rather than a weapon.
- Depart from the property as slowly as you approached and, if necessary, to the point of backing out. Many dogs will attack you from behind.

The most effective way of reducing aggression in a dog is to reduce the threat (as the dog sees it). The objective is to find an action that will switch off the aggressive mode of the attacker. One way to effectively do this is to adopt a neutral but confident posture.

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.