

Tips for approaching a strange dog

Always give your dog the option of approaching a stranger. Don't force your dog to have contact with a stranger particularly if he is frightened. If you take away the opportunity for your dog to retreat, he may bite. If the dog approaches on his own, here are few simple rules to follow. Tell the person to turn sideways and not to stare at the dog head on. Dogs find it very threatening when you stare at them. Beaming with that big Colgate smile is not a good idea either. From a dog's perspective, you're not smiling but showing your teeth in an aggressive manner. The most common mistake people make is petting a strange dog on the head. Although, the person's intentions are good, many dogs find it unsettling. Again if the dog is comfortable and approaches, ask the person to extend their arm with a closed fist under the dogs' nose and allow the dog to sniff their hand. At that point, they can very slowly pet the dogs' chest. Always move slowly around a strange dog, quick and sudden movements are risky as well. Be particularly mindful when children are present. And no matter how well behaved a strange dog may look to you, never allow a child to run up and hug or put their face near the dogs face.

If you have any reservations about your dogs' ability to socialize with strangers or other dogs get help from a dog trainer who specializes in animal behavior issues. If the problem is severe you may need to consult with a Certified Applied Animal Behaviorist.



Woofs, Purrs & Twitters