



Doggie Body Language Translated for Humans
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You and your canine companion are so close, you know what every tail wag, eye squint, bark and head turn means, right? Before you answer, read this “translation guide” and discover the real meaning of your pet's posture, sounds and expressions.

Body Language

I'm standing as tall as possible, with raised hair on my neck and back. My tail is erect and my ears and chest are thrust forward.

I'm trying to make myself look small and puppy-like, staying low to the ground and rolling on my back. I may even pass a little urine.

I'm wagging my tail in a loose and carefree way.

My tail wag is stiff, slow and in line with my back.

My tail is clamped low over my backside.

Translation

I'm feeling aggressive or brave. Don't mess with me, stranger!

I'm feeling weak and submissive. Please don't hurt me.

I'm feeling frisky and friendly. Let's play!

I'm angry! Approach me with caution.

I'm afraid. Something has spooked me.

Body Language

Translation

My ears are pricked up high, like antenna.

I've heard, smelled or noticed something that demands my attention. I'm in "alert mode!"

My eyes are half-closed, like a squint.

I'm feeling pleasure ... or submissive.

My eyes are open wide, wide, wide!

Watch out, I may attack if provoked!

I'm intensely staring into the eyes of another dog.

I'm top dog here!

Look, I'm raising my front paw and barking to get your attention.

It's playtime! What are you waiting for? Let's grab a ball and hit the dog park!

This is just a general guide, of course. Canine body language is a complex and profound form of communication. Sometimes you have to look at more than one part of your dog's body to understand what he's really trying to tell you. But as you scrutinize your dog closely, remember not to stare at him in the eyes for too long. He may consider this a form of aggression on your part.

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