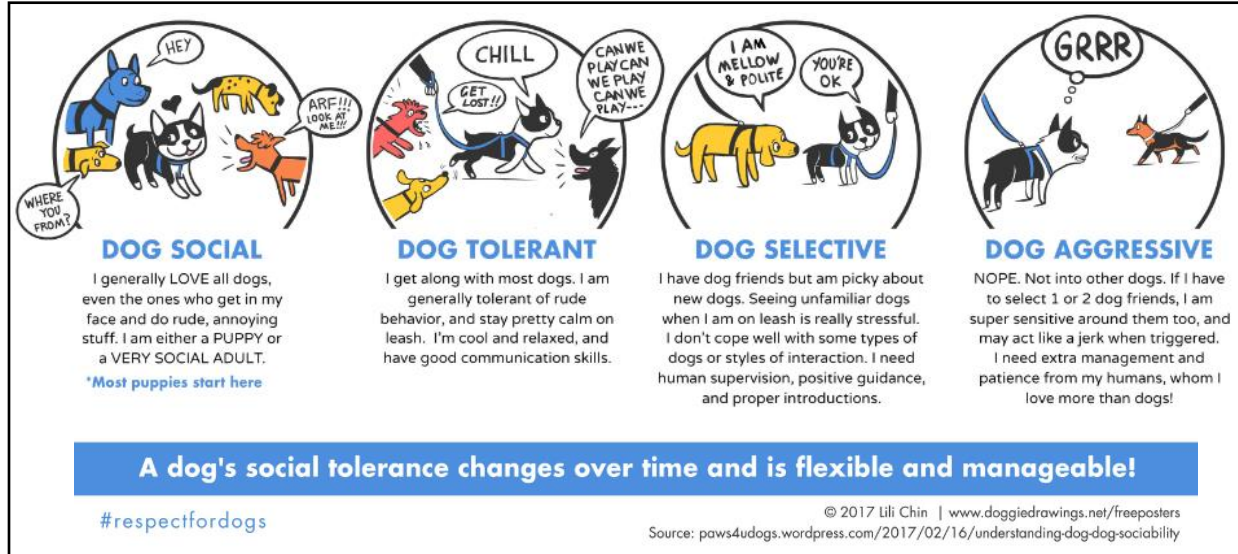
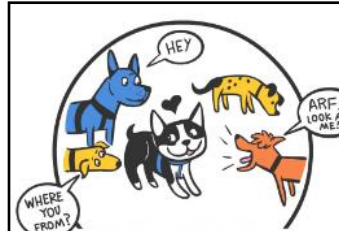


Does My Dog Want a Friend?


Does my dog love other dogs? Just like people, dogs have different levels of tolerance for other dogs. Often as a dog matures, they will naturally become less social and tolerant. There are many developmental changes that happen between sexual and social maturity, and most dogs will continue to display these changes until two to three years of age. Proper facilitation of dog-dog introductions and friendships can change your dog's sociability for the better over time, and bad experiences can quickly make things worse. Good leadership and direction is important to set your dog up for success.





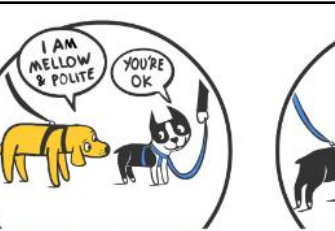
DOG SOCIAL

I generally LOVE all dogs, even the ones who get in my face and do rude, annoying stuff. I am either a PUPPY or a VERY SOCIAL ADULT.
*Most puppies start here



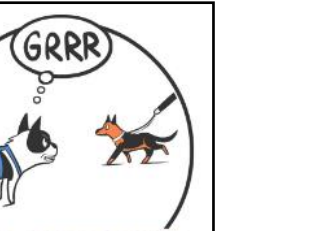
DOG TOLERANT

I get along with most dogs. I am generally tolerant of rude behavior, and stay pretty calm on leash. I'm cool and relaxed, and have good communication skills.



DOG SELECTIVE

I have dog friends but am picky about new dogs. Seeing unfamiliar dogs when I am on leash is really stressful. I don't cope well with some types of dogs or styles of interaction. I need human supervision, positive guidance, and proper introductions.



DOG AGGRESSIVE

NOPE. Not into other dogs. If I have to select 1 or 2 dog friends, I am super sensitive around them too, and may act like a jerk when triggered. I need extra management and patience from my humans, whom I love more than dogs!

A dog's social tolerance changes over time and is flexible and manageable!

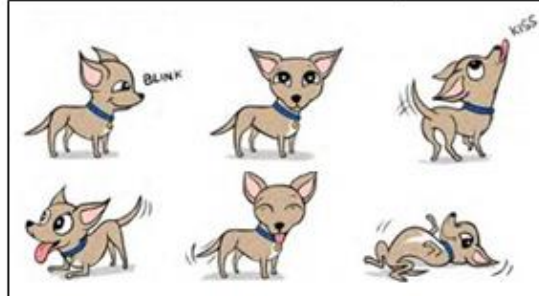
#respectfordogs

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Source: paws4udogs.wordpress.com/2017/02/16/understanding-dog-dog-sociability


Not all dogs enjoy the company of other dogs, and for those who do, having a multi-dog household is not always an option. However, helping your dog create friendships with other dogs out in the world can be a wonderful way to promote healthy, social behavior in your dog. When introduced properly and **slowly**, dogs can happily and safely interact together.

Pay close attention to the following body language of both dogs throughout the introduction process. These body signals will tell you how the dogs are feeling about the interaction and whether or not to proceed to the next step.


Comfortable/Social/Playful:



Fearful/Nervous/Stressed:



Aroused/Confrontational:



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Does My Dog Want a Friend?

Step 1: Introduce two new dogs for the first time in a neutral environment such as a field or park. If either dog is more worried or aroused than the other, you can try having them sniff each other through a chain link fence so that they are kept safe but allowed to move around as they please. It is important to keep each dog's leash as loose as possible whenever interacting with another dog. Tension on the leash can create tension in the dog, quickly escalating the situation. If either dog becomes tense, stiff or still, if the hair above the base of the tail or over the shoulders is raised, or if either dog growls or barks, call both dogs in opposite directions away from the fence. If either dog shows any of these behaviors, they are probably not a good match for each other and the introduction should not proceed. If both dogs show more loose, relaxed body language (a loose, wagging tail, relaxed muscles around the dog's ears, eyes and mouth, the dog's body moving loosely from side to side), proceed to Step 2.

Step 2: Walk the dogs together, both on leash. Walk closely enough that the dogs can see and smell each other but far enough away that they each have their own space. Again, try your best to keep each dog's leash as loose as possible. If they are showing interest in meeting each other, allow them to walk alongside each other, but try to keep the momentum moving forward. If both dogs appear loose and comfortable, proceed to Step 3.

Step 3: Begin with the dogs walking alongside each other. Once both dogs appear loose and comfortable, allow them to interact with each other while standing in place. Calmer dogs may sniff each other's faces, or circle around each other and sniff each other's hind end. More energetic dogs may become playful, play-bowling and jumping up toward or on each other. Remember to keep the leashes loose as much as possible. As the dogs move around each other, it is likely that the two leashes will become entangled. Move with your dog so that you are always behind him, and try your best to keep both leashes free from each other so that the dogs can be separated if necessary. Do not allow one dog to stand with his front feet placed on the other dog. Pay close attention to each dog's body language. If either dog becomes tense, stiff or still, if the hair above the base of the tail or over the shoulders is raised, or if either dog growls or barks, call and guide both dogs in opposite directions away from each other. Keep this initial interaction short (between 5-10 seconds), even if they seem to be getting along. This will help both dogs from becoming over-aroused and will give them both a break.

Step 4: If the face-to-face meeting goes well, repeat Step 3 and gradually increase the amount of time you allow the dogs to interact with each other. If they are getting along well, drop their leashes (if you are in a safely enclosed space) and allow them to have more freedom to run and play. Keep their leashes clipped on and dragging so that you can easily pick up the leashes and separate the dogs if needed. Remember to make the dogs take breaks by calling them away from each other and holding onto their leashes if necessary. Even if they are getting along well, taking breaks will help prevent them from becoming over-aroused. Some dogs may prefer to simply be near the other dog without much play. Others may avoid the other dog or keep their distance without showing any aggressive behavior. **Never force dogs to interact with each other.**

Introducing two dogs with a well thought out plan will help reduce overall tension and stress in both dogs. By providing a structured outlet for your dog's social tendencies, you will be helping to enrich the life of your dog.

Tips:

*If one dog is more nervous or fearful than the other dog, the interaction should proceed at a pace that the nervous or fearful dog is comfortable with.

* If either dog is avoiding or trying to move away from the other dog at any point in the introduction, that's a good time to take a break and re-assess your plan – these dogs might not want to be friends with each other.

*If either dog is becoming forward and growling or snapping at the other dog at any point in the introduction, that's a good time to take a break and re-assess your plan – these dogs might not want to be friends with each other.

Additional resources:

Search "setting up parallel walks and meet and greets for new dogs" for an instructional video example by Bravo Dog Training and Behaviour.