



Dog Park Etiquette

Do:

- 🐾 Exercise your dog before going to the dog park. A short walk to relieve some excess energy is a great idea.
- 🐾 Make sure your dog is feeling well and in good health before heading to the dog park
- 🐾 Observe the dogs inside the dog park before allowing your dog in. Watch for behavioral issues or potentially "pushy" dogs.
- 🐾 Supervise your dog when playing. Interrupt play every so often. This teaches your dog to check in with the human and respect their presence. Always interrupt rough play.
- 🐾 Ensure your dog knows his/her basic commands, sit, down, stay, come. This will help when trying to get your dog's attention and to call your dog away from play.
- 🐾 Understand that not all dogs are good candidates for a dog park. If your dog is not having fun, is stressed, is bullying or being bullied, be willing to leave the dog park. This keeps your dog as well as others safe and relaxed.
- 🐾 It is ok for dogs not to engage in play. Let them sniff and take in the environment. As long as they are enjoying themselves and not stressed, they do not have to interact with the other dogs.
- 🐾 Be aware of dogs who are not neutered or who are in heat. This can cause heightened awareness amongst a pack of dogs.
- 🐾 Step in anytime you feel the play is escalating, if you are uncomfortable or the situation doesn't feel right. You are your dog's best advocate.
- 🐾 Remove any training collar, harness, leash etc. Dogs should play with a flat buckle collar only.
- 🐾 Clean up after your dog.

Don't:

- 🐾 Do not bring puppies under 6 months to a dog park. Be careful with any dog under a year due to the imprint period.
- 🐾 If your dog is good with other dogs, but becomes nervous by larger groups of dogs, do not allow your dog to become bombarded by other dogs. Take them to a less populated part of the park or remove them.
- 🐾 If your dog is giving you clear signs that he or she is not comfortable at the dog park, do not force them! This will only end up being an unsuccessful experience for them.
- 🐾 No treats, food or toys while at the dog park. If there are no other dogs in the park while you are there, throwing a ball for your dog is fine. However, dogs can be potential resource guards and having toys, food or treats amongst a group of dogs can trigger a squabble.
- 🐾 Pay attention to your dog while at the dog park! Texting or talking on your phone only serves as a distraction. As squabbles amongst dogs can happen in a split second, always observe, pay attention, interrupt often.
- 🐾 Do not let dogs "work it out". If you see something that doesn't feel right, the play is too rough, or begins to escalate, or if a dog is bullying others or getting bullied, step in and remove your dog. Remember, **YOU** are your dog's best advocate!

We offer classes from Puppy Preschool to Therapy Dog International taught by certified trainers

For more information, or to sign up for classes, visit us at:

www.animalprotective.org/canine-academy

53 Maple Avenue, Scotia, NY 12302 • (518) 374-3944, ext. 101