



## Shady Acres Pet Ranch Dog Management and Behavior Course

This course is designed to supplement the hands-on and online learning that each employee will complete during their on-boarding and training period.

Understanding dog behavior and how to manage dogs moving from kennel to playgroups and managing behaviors in the play groups is vital to any employees' success at Shady Acres Pet Ranch.

It is important that the employee pay close attention to all verbal instruction, demonstrations, online videos and printed material so that they will pass the written tests as well as the competency demonstrations as well.

### ▪ **TOOLS USED IN PLAY GROUP AND DOG MANAGEMENT:**

1. **Command Presence of Kennel Tech** – Handlers/Kennel Techs should always carry themselves with confidence and authority. This includes how confidently you move the dog from its kennel to the play yard, how firm you are in **NOT** letting the dog pull on the leash, how firm you are on **NOT** allowing the dog to jump on you, how firm you are in **NOT** letting the dog rush through thresholds, and the overall way you handle the dog throughout the day.
2. **Walkie-Talkies** – Staff **WILL** always have their walkie talkies on them and working at all times. Further, they will be of such volume that you can always hear what other team members are saying. In the event of a fight, the kennel tech / handler will advise **“FIGHT”** into the walkie talkie so that other staff can come and assist.
3. **Leash** – Kennel Tech / Handlers will **ALWAYS** have a leash on them at all times. When the need arises to secure a dog, you don't want to have to search for a leash. This time can be the difference in avoiding a fight or having a full-on dog fight occurring.
4. **Catch Pole** – A catch pole is a **SAFE** way to handle a dog who may be reactive or fear biting when trying to secure via a leash. Catch poles are used when a dog has run from you or is in a corner showing that he/she is very uncomfortable. During this time of extreme fear or discomfort, the dog is more prone to biting. The catch pole allows for a safe securement of the dog. Great care will be made to use it correctly as to avoid any possible injury to the dog.
5. **Whistle** – Staff **WILL** always have their assigned whistle on them. The purpose of the whistle is to create a distraction in the event that two dogs appear to be engaging in a pre-fight behavior or have started a scuffle. In the event that you observe one of these, you will **blow your whistle** very loud while immediately moving towards the dog or dogs in question.
6. **Dressage Whip / Rattle Paddle** – A dressage whip is used in training horses and other livestock. Its' design was to be able to “whip” the back end of animals or to use the rod to touch them in certain areas of their body to get a desired movement. As handlers, we will **NOT** use the dressage whip to strike or whip a dog in any way but **WILL** use it as an extension of ourselves. This is beneficial in reaching into a dog or group of dogs to create movement or stop movement. The rattle paddle looks like an oar and has beads in the

paddle part of the rod. This makes a noise that animals don't like and will respond to. The rattle paddle is used to create movement in dogs or stop movement and is most useful when creating personal boundaries of the kennel tech / handler.

7. **Water Bottle** – Water bottles are useful in squirting a dog with water to disrupt unruly behaviors like barking, jumping on staff, crowding another dog, jumping on kennel sides, etc. It is important that the bottle shoots a **STREAM** and not mists. It also important to know that the water bottle works for some but not all dogs. If it's ineffective, stop using it and move to something else.
8. **Air Horn** – The air horn is a can that has compressed air in it and when discharged makes a **VERY LOUD** sound. This is used to break up fights or pre-fight behaviors. **DO NOT** activate directly at the ears of the dog. This should only be used in extreme circumstances while out in the play group and should not be routine.
9. **Food and Treats** – Food and/or treats are to be kept in a treat pouch that is secured to the kennel tech / handler with a top that can be secured. It is preferable to have the kind of treat pouches that SNAP shut. This will prevent food from falling out while the handler bends over, runs or any other movement that could allow for treats to fall to the ground. Treats on the ground can cause a serious dog fight.
10. **Time-Outs & Walking Time-Outs** – A **"Time-Out"** is when the dog is placed in to the time out kennel located in the play yard. If the troublesome behavior continues repeatedly, then place the dog back inside to his kennel. A **"Walking Time-Out"** is when the offending dog is leashed up by the kennel tech / handler and made to walk around the yard while always with the handler. This is done to break the cycle of behavior as well as to control movement. The idea is that if a dog knows that certain behaviors will cause him to lose freedom, the behaviors will diminish.

#### **RULES FOR USING TREATS IN PLAY GROUPS:**

- a. Treats should **NOT** be used around dogs who are extremely food aggressive. If you have a dog like this in group, isolate him/her prior to working with the rest of the group.
- b. Keep in mind that the dogs **EARN** the treats for behaviors you ask for. Not any other time. Giving a dog a treat "for fun" minimizes the learning process. Make them work for each one. In doing this, you will begin to condition desired behaviors.
- c. Remember: There is no "shaking of the vending machine". Dogs must **ALWAYS EARN** the treat. They cannot annoy or pester you for it. If they do, simply walk away and disengage from the process.
- d. **DRILL #1:** Practice going into the dog's kennel and asking for multiple **SITS**. Teach them that you'll want them to do something before they get to exit the kennel.
- e. **DRILL #2:** Use treats to get sit commands while in the actual play group. Randomly ask a dog to approach you and offer him a treat for a sit command.

- f. **DRILL #3:** Use treats to teach and reward the recall. Some call this a call-off, but it's to reward when a dog comes to you when you call his / her name. When doing this drill, it's important to reward the come command by giving the treat to the dog **IMMEDIATELY** as he / she gets to you.
- Don't ask for a sit first as you'll then be rewarding the sit when your intention is to reward the come command. As a dog progresses with the come command, you can then begin to randomly incorporate a sit into the entire sequence. For now, be sure each command you work is isolated and rewarded.
- g. **DRILL #4:** Use treats to reward a dog who is sitting patiently at a threshold (gate, door, kennel door, etc.) and comes through the threshold when you call his or her name. Only the dog called gets the treat. This is a higher skill set so be patient when teaching this.

## ▪ UNDERSTANDING THE PRINCIPLES OF HOW DOGS LEARN:

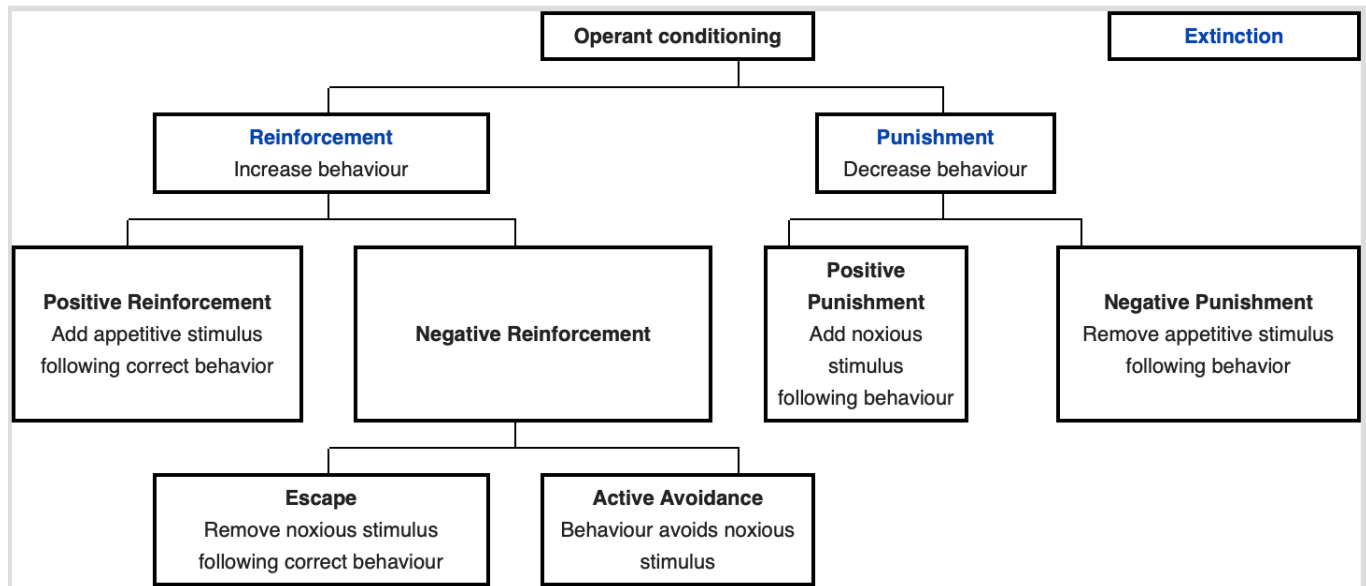
To state it in ***simple terms***, a behavior that is rewarded will **likely occur again**, and frequently. A behavior that is not rewarded or is punished, will likely **decrease** in occurrence.

It is important to distinguish between desirable behaviors and undesirable behaviors.

There are two primary learning conditions that you will need to know:

1. ***Operant Conditioning Definition:*** Operant conditioning (*also called instrumental conditioning*) is a type of associative learning process through which the strength of a behavior is modified by reinforcement or punishment. It is also a procedure that is used to bring about such learning. This theory was introduced by **B.F. Skinner** in 1938.

***See the charts below for how this works...***



### *Example of a Dog Pulling on Leash & Operant Conditioning*

# THE 4 QUADRANTS OF OPERANT CONDITIONING

When training an animal, there is one behavior that we want to **reinforce** (increase), and another behavior that we want to **punish** (decrease).

We can add something good or bad (+ **positive**) or remove/delay something good or bad (- **negative**) to get the behavior we want.

IN THIS EXAMPLE: The reinforced behavior is LOOSE-LEASH WALKING.

The punished behavior is PULLING ON THE LEASH.

**+R**

**POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT**  
ADDING GOOD STUFF TO  
INCREASE A BEHAVIOR



**-P**

**NEGATIVE PUNISHMENT**  
DELAYING GOOD STUFF TO  
DECREASE A BEHAVIOR



**+P**

**POSITIVE PUNISHMENT**  
ADDING BAD STUFF TO  
DECREASE A BEHAVIOR



**-R**

**NEGATIVE REINFORCEMENT**  
DELAYING BAD STUFF TO  
INCREASE A BEHAVIOR

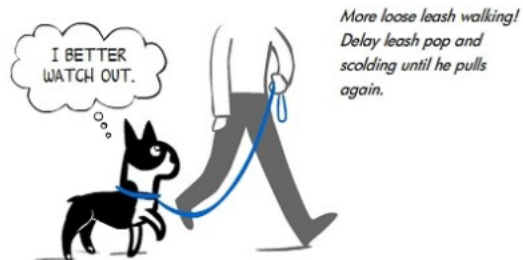


Illustration inspired by "Clickertraining 101" / ClickerExpo 2011

*Lili*

*Example of a Dog Jumping on Humans & Operant Conditioning*

### Positive Reinforcement

**Give** something **Good**  
give a treat, give attention

*no jumping is encouraged*



### Negative Punishment

**Take Away** something **Good**  
take away your attention

*jumping is discouraged*



### Positive Punishment

**Give** something **Bad**  
give a bump on the nose,  
push dog down  
*jumping is discouraged*



### Negative Reinforcement

**Take Away** something **Bad**  
stop pushing the dog down

*no jumping is encouraged*



*Dog-training-excellence.com*

# The 4 Quadrants of Operant Conditioning

When training an animal, there is one behavior that we want to **reinforce** (encourage/increase), and another behavior that we want to **punish** (discourage/decrease).

We can add something good or bad (+ **positive**) or remove something good or bad (- **negative**) to get the behavior we want.

IN THIS EXAMPLE: The reinforced behavior is POLITE LOOSE-LEASH WALKING.

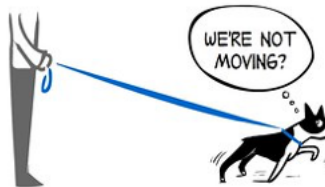
The punished behavior is PULLING ON THE LEASH.



**+R**

**Positive Reinforcement**

ADD Good Stuff: Give treats, keep walking. Polite walking behavior is encouraged.



**-P**

**Negative Punishment**

END Good Stuff: Stop walking, stand still. Pulling behavior is discouraged.



**+P**

**Positive Punishment**

ADD Bad Stuff: Give leash correction. Pulling behavior is discouraged.



**-R**

**Negative Reinforcement**

END Bad Stuff: Stop leash correction. Polite walking behavior is encouraged.

*Lili* 3/2011  
doggiedrawings.net

2. **Classical Conditioning Definition:** Classical conditioning (also known as **Pavlovian** or respondent conditioning) refers to a **learning** procedure in which a biologically potent **stimulus** (e.g. **food**) is paired with a previously neutral stimulus (e.g. **a bell**). It also refers to the learning process that results from this pairing, through which the neutral stimulus comes to elicit a response (e.g. **salivation**) that is usually similar to the one elicited by the potent stimulus. This theory was introduced by **Ivan Pavlov** in 1902.





Unconditioned Response  
(Salivation)



Unconditioned Stimulus  
(Food)



No Response



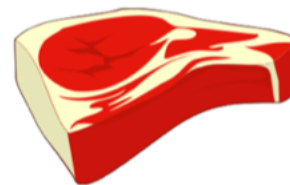
Neutral Stimulus  
(Bell Ringing)



Unconditioned Response  
(Salivation)



Neutral Stimulus  
(Bell Ringing)



Unconditioned Stimulus  
(Food)



Conditioned Response  
(Salivation)



Conditioned Stimulus  
(Bell Ringing)



Student will discuss the different ways in which the dogs at our facility learn by engaging these two different conditioning types (***Operant and Classical***).

**Examples:**

- Behavior shown BEFORE being fed.
- Behavior shown BEFORE being let out to play.
- The sound of the door alarm from up front.
- Leash pulling to get outside or to walk.
- Results of rushing gates and thresholds.
- Results of demand barking at staff.

▪ **MOST COMMON ISSUES OBSERVED IN PLAYGROUPS:**

1. **Zoomies** – Zoomies are when a dog will randomly begin to run like a wild dog around the play yard. While the dog may be having fun, this movement is likely to cause other dogs to react due to the HIGH intensity being shown by the dog. Social dogs like to play, but don't want a lunatic around them while playing. Imagine you're at a bar enjoying a nice drink and someone really loud and obnoxious comes in and creates an unpleasant experience. Not much fun.

Zoomies must be **INTERUPTED** immediately to avoid conflict. This is done by calling the dog to you or enticing it to come to where you are. When doing this, start by calling him over to you in a happy voice and reward him when he arrives. If this doesn't work or the dog goes back to Zoomies, place the dog on a leash and do a "walking time-out".

2. **Gate Crowding / Rushing** – This is one of the main causes of fights at the gates or entry/exit points. Staff must control these points at ALL TIMES by using spatial pressure to make the dogs yield to us and we control the space.

- a. **Hula Hoop Drill** – Place a hula hoop anywhere in the play yard. Then, stand inside the hoop and ANY dog that enters the hoop, use spatial pressure to remove the dog. Say the word "back" and you move towards the dogs with your arms extended out as if you're going to hug someone. When the dog backs out of your space, mark the behavior with "yes" or "good". You can use your legs to block the dog, but do NOT hit or kick the dog. Practice this until you become good at it and the dogs respond to your commands and authority. Next, you can move the hula hoop to the gate and repeat the drill. You should do this enough until you can show proficiency at keeping dogs out of your space. This will help immensely in gate control and management.
- b. **Rattle Paddle Drill**: While in the hula hoop OR at the gate, use the rattle paddle as a source of deterrence to the dogs who may enter YOUR SPACE. Simply tap the paddle on the ground near their feet to back them up. Once again, use the word "back" and then "yes" or "good" when they back up. The same drill can be done using the dressage whip, except use it to touch their feet while saying "back" and then mark as "yes" or "good" when they retreat.

3. **Inappropriate Play or Crowding** – This is where another dog will crowd or pester another dog who may not be enjoying the same type of play. When you see this behavior, try to call

the dog in question to you or do something to redirect the dog away from his obsession with the other dog. You can also use the dressage whip to touch the dog and back them away from the other dog. If the dog repeats the offense, follow the discipline protocol and move on to a walking time-out or normal time-out.

Also, remember that **“Three’s a Crowd”** – This is when two dogs are enjoying mutual play and a third dog begins to join the crowd and the entry may be unwanted. Always look to see that **ALL PLAY** is **MUTUALLY** enjoyed. If not, then intervene.

4. **Dogs Not Responding to Cues or Names** – This is best cured by teaching the dog their name and the come command or recall command. Read above on the **“using food in daycare”** drills. Practice, practice, and more practice.
5. **Humping** – This must be stopped **IMMEDIATELY**. This is a HUGE reason that dogs will fight. If you observe even the beginning of a dog mounting another dog, you should call out the dog as **YOU ARE MOVING TOWARD** him/her to take action. **“Max, that’s enough”**....if he stops and moves on, great. If he tries to hump again, then it’s a walking time-out. If a dog proves to be a **“habitual humper”**, then notify a Supervisor for action.
6. **Resource Guarding** – This is where a dog will show aggression over possessing something like a toy, stick, rock, etc. If you see that a particular dog is showing aggression in this scenario, you should remove the object in question and take away his impulses. If it’s a group toy, then wise decision will need to be made about removing the toy versus removing the dog in question. When in doubt, ask a Supervisor.
7. **Puppy Play is Too Rough** – Puppies will often play too rough when young and when in the process of learning what is appropriate play. Many times, this issue is resolved dog-to-dog and won’t require staff intervention unless staff feels that it is getting out of hand. Usually another dog will “correct” the puppy when play gets too rough, but corrections rarely causes injury. These types of corrections are very normal. When you see play getting too rough, simply recall or redirect the puppy to you or something else.

Understanding the importance of each of these observed behaviors and how to appropriately respond is very important in managing a **SAFE** play environment.

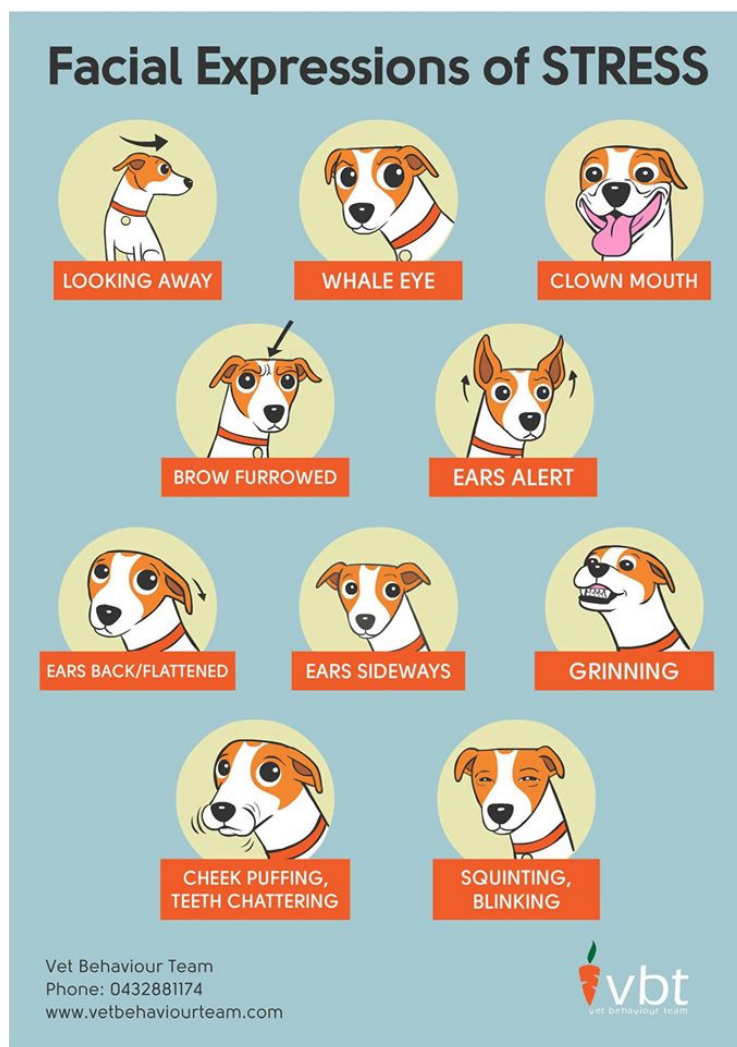
▪ **WHAT WE WATCH FOR IN PLAY GROUPS:**

1. High tails in group
2. Fastest moving dog
3. Dogs that may be staring at each other – also a dog fixating visually on another dog
4. Predatory Sequencing – *you will read more about this below*
5. Predatory Drift – Cross Over
6. Know bite level #'s – *how does this pertain to group management?*
7. A dog correcting another dog is **NOT** aggression, it is normal
8. Most bites are **PREVENTABLE** and are the results of **HUMAN ERROR**
9. A dog who doesn't **BITE HARD** is a good dog. Restraint.

▪ **CORRECTION SEQUENCING:**

1. **Verbal Call Out:** *"That's Enough" or "uh-uh" or "Max! Enough", etc.*
2. **Action – DO SOMETHING:** Move towards the dog and redirect when possible.
3. **Walking Time-Out:** Place the offending dog on lead and make him/her walk beside you for a period of 5 minutes or so, then release back to group.
4. **Time-Out:** Place offending dog in time-out kennel in the play yard for 5-10 minutes.
5. **Inside:** Ultimately if the dog persists in being a problem, radio to a team mate to take him back to his kennel.

- **CANINE BODY LANGUAGE – STRESS SIGNALS / READING DOGS:**



# Reading Canine Body Language: T-E-M-P.

(with Tickle the Pit Bull)

Tail, Ears & Eyes, Mouth, Posture



Relaxed (down)



Relaxed



Submissive / Happy  
I'm Not A Threat



Happy



Ready To Play



Submissive  
Deferential



Please Leave  
Me Alone



Anxious  
Stressed



Terrified



Fearful: Ready  
To Fight



Alert



Wary / Unsure  
Suspicious



Stalking



Defensive  
Territorial



Angry: Ready  
To Fight

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Illustrated by Samantha Hines

# DOGGIE LANGUAGE

starring Boogie the Boston Terrier



ALERT



SUSPICIOUS



ANXIOUS



THREATENED



ANGRY



"PEACE!"  
look away/head turn



STRESSED  
yawn



STRESSED  
nose lick



"PEACE!"  
sniff ground



"RESPECT!"  
turn & walk away



"NEED SPACE"  
whale eye



STALKING



STRESSED  
scratching



STRESS RELEASE  
shake off



RELAXED  
soft ears, blinky eyes



"RESPECT!"  
offer his back



FRIENDLY & POLITE  
curved body



FRIENDLY



"PRETTY PLEASE"  
round puppy face



"I'M YOUR LOVEBUG"  
belly-rub pose



"HELLO I LOVE YOU!"  
greeting stretch



"I'M FRIENDLY!"  
play bow



"READY!"  
prey bow



"YOU WILL FEED ME"



CURIOUS  
head tilt



HAPPY  
(or hot)



OVERJOYED  
wiggly



"MMM...."



"I LOVE YOU,  
DON'T STOP"

## ▪ UNDERSTANDING PREDATORY DRIVES / AGGRESSION

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### 1. Predatory Behavior



All dogs share a common ancestor with wolves. It may not seem possible when you ponder a tiny Yorkie with a fancy hairdo, but it is true! Through generations of selective breeding, we've transformed the way wolves look: from as powerful as an 80-pound predator to as tiny as a teacup Chihuahua.

So what do wolves have to do with anything anymore?

Here's what: A lot of dogs retain many, many wolf-like behaviors from [how they respond to something scary](#) to how wolves hunt for food. These are the things that breeders have developed in lines of dogs to make them do certain jobs. They are also the things that often make people pick up the phone and cry to their local dog trainer, "Why is he DOING that, and how can I make it STOP!?!"

The complete process wolves go through to find and consume food is called the "predatory sequence":

- Search
- Stalk
- Rush/chase
- Grab, kill, dissect
- Eat

Dogs have inherited pieces of this sequence. Sometimes the behaviors are complete and recognizably wolf, but more often they are weird, odd, fragments of wolf behaviors, such as:

- Shaking and dissecting stuffed toys rather than prey animals,
- Chasing tennis balls and bike tires, and
- Burying food in between couch cushions.



Sometimes, humans have selected these strange fragments of wolf behaviors and made them exceptionally robust by breeding (for example):

- Beagles to have superhero-like scent-tracking abilities,
- Border Collies to know in their DNA the most efficient route to herd a flock of sheep, and
- Greyhounds to sprint faster than 40 miles-per-hour to chase a decoy rabbit.

Thus, a dog's desire to herd is a fragment of the sequence: "stalking." Fetching balls and hurtling towards tires is a later fragment of the same sequence: "chasing." And dogs LOVE doing these things.

In fact, crazy though it sounds, dogs feel about chasing, herding, and fetching, like we do about eating favorite foods like pizza, cheesecake, and cinnamon buns. Of course, dogs don't eat the stuff they herd (i.e. cattle or, perhaps, toddlers), fetch (i.e. balls and Frisbees), or chase (i.e. bike tires); they just love love LOVE the experience.

The take-home message is that when dogs herd, fetch, and chase, they are simply acting like a normal dog — doing normal and enjoyable doggie things. If your dog loves to fetch, provide him with this fantastic exercise as often as you can.

## 2. Predatory Drift



Why is it dangerous to have big dogs and little dogs off-leash together? What about two dogs on one? One possible answer is "predatory drift," a term coined by veterinarian, behaviorist, and dog trainer [Ian Dunbar](#).

Sometimes, when a big dog and tiny dog play together, the big dog's ancestral DNA kicks in, and he thinks that tiny dog is prey. Maybe the little one yelped. Maybe he just ran the other way. Whatever the reason, the big dog's prey drive kicks in and if he catches Tiny, he might grab, shake, and kill him.

The big dog is not actually being "aggressive" in the way we might normally think -- the drive that he inherited from wolves (that all wolves have in order to survive) has simply kicked in.

It doesn't mean the dog will now become aggressive towards people, or other dogs, for that matter. But it does mean that this dog should never be allowed off-leash with little dogs again (or with cats or pet bunnies...). If you can envision a bigger dog being able to pick up a smaller dog in his mouth and shake it, predatory drift could occur.

Other predatory drift situations include two-dogs-on-one-dog scenarios and also when dogs fight. Armed with this knowledge, you can help keep your pup and other dogs in off-leash areas safer by avoiding these situations.

### 3. Predatory Behavior and Dog Breeds

Many dog breeds have been purposefully shaped by humans to do a fragment of the wolf predation sequence in preference to other behaviors.



Scent hounds, such as Beagles, are “search” experts. They have a tremendously powerful sense of smell, which means they can hunt down rabbits. It also means they need daily opportunities to sniff their surroundings to feel fulfilled.



Golden Retrievers and Labrador Retrievers excel at rushing, chasing, and grabbing. They can fetch fowl shot down in a hunt, and they adore games of fetch. And, to the dismay of some pet owners, they also might feel an urge to chase cars, children, bikes, and cats.



Some herding dogs who are bred to nip at their flock to move them around, like Corgis, have been known to nip at children's heels.



Sighthounds, such as Greyhounds, are bred to chase down their prey and thus can run at speeds faster than 40 miles-per-hour. They also are bred to shake and kill small prey, which means they need to be managed carefully around

While breed doesn't predict all behaviors, it can be helpful in determining if a dog will fit in well with your lifestyle. And by learning about what “jobs” your pup's line was bred to do (a.k.a. the predatory-drive behavior that breed excels at), you can also figure out what types of activities will make your dog feel mentally and physically fulfilled.

## ▪ **FIGHT POLICY:**

Even though dogs are screened prior to admittance to our facility, situations can occur which result in a dog fight. We expect staff members to protect themselves and also minimize injury to the dogs involved in the fight. It is important that you think through the process of breaking up a fight before one actually occurs. When a fight happens, all staff members must respond and actively participate in stopping the fight.

### 1. **Tools**

- Slip lead kept with you at all times
- Radio kept with you to call for help
- Object to startle and distract dog(s) – metal bowl, air horn, blanket, water hose

Grab one of the dogs – the instigator if possible – by the **BACK LEGS**, lift up high, and toss the dog sideways. Be careful that the dog doesn't turn and bite you by accident as you lift. Most dogs will let go of the fight when they get lifted. Then, act quickly to keep the dogs apart.

### 2. **Fight - In your group**

- Call for help as you move quickly to the dog fight – YELL **"FIGHT"** in Walkie-Talkie
- Startle to distract dogs
  - Yell "hey, stop that" in a loud deep voice
  - Make a loud noise (metal bowl, air horn)
  - Throw water on dog (water bowl, bucket or hose)
- If noise or water does not work then insert object between dogs being attacked (chair, flat board, broom, etc), **OR** separate dogs by grabbing ahold of rear legs, lift quickly and toss dog to the side – be prepared to leash quickly as dog will likely try to go back to the fight. Be sure to grab legs, lift, and toss to side **QUICKLY**, as the dog may redirect to your hands.
- Identify the **AGGRESSOR** and remove that dog immediately. Remove to the nearest separate area, a crate, transition area, outside yard (without dogs), etc.
- Separate other dogs involved into crates.
- Assisting staff should leash and separate other aroused dogs in the playgroup / facility and put in separate enclosures to prevent secondary fights from breaking out.
- Check people and dogs for injury (check again in 30 minutes as it can take time for wounds to appear/bleed) and contact a manager immediately.

### 3. **Fight - In another group**

- If you are in small dog, leave your group immediately and move toward the fight.
- If you are at the front desk, move towards small dog to cover until situation is resolved.
- If you are a runner, kennel staff, or otherwise free, move immediately to the fight.
- If you are in a group adjacent to the fight, make a quick decision:
  - If the person in that group has reinforcement, stay in your group and immediately call dogs into your group to decrease the number of dogs in the group with the fight.

- If the person in that group does not have reinforcement, leave your group to quickly help break up the fight, returning to your group immediately after it has been stopped.
4. **KEY TAKEAWAY:** If you are in the building and a fight happens, you must **DO SOMETHING**. Yell, bang on walls, and move towards the fight. Doing nothing is not an option and will result in disciplinary action.
- **CONCLUSION:**

Managing dogs and play group can be a lot of fun but can also change in a second. Staff must always be aware of what the dogs in group are doing and what they are communicating. Swift, authoritative action must occur at the slightest sign that something is not right. Together, we can create **SAFE & FUN** Playgroups!