



7 Never, Ever, Ever's of Meeting a New Dog

Meeting a new dog can be fun and can make us feel a lot of really strong emotions. We need to remember that dogs have feelings just like we do and we need to make sure we don't hurt them or make our pets feel unsafe or uncomfortable. Below is a list of seven behaviors you can make sure to avoid when you are meeting a new dog for the first time to show that you understand what our furry friends need.



1. **Never, ever, ever bother a dog while they are sleeping.** Dogs need their sleep, just like we do! If you wake up a sleeping dog they might be frightened or startled and they might hurt or scare you by mistake.
2. **Never, ever, ever bother a dog who is eating or drinking.** Have you ever been in the lunchroom at school while someone was bothering you? Maybe they were poking you or trying to take your food. Was that annoying? Well our pets feel the same way. Dogs can also be very protective of their food. If you try to take it from them they might get angry or frustrated.
3. **Never, ever, ever take a toy or bone from a dog's mouth.** Dogs can be very protective of their toys, just like they are with their food. If we try to take away their favorite toy, that would be like someone trying to take away your controller when you are in the middle of playing a video game! They might get frustrated and hurt you by mistake.
4. **Never, ever, ever place your fingers through a fence or windows of a parked car to pet a dog.** Dogs can be very protective of their homes. If they think you are trying to come in to their home, or their car, or their yard, they might think they have to protect themselves.
5. **Never, ever, ever disturb a mother dog and her puppies.** Momma dogs are protective of their puppies just like your adults are protective of you! If she sees you pick up one of her puppies she might think that you are trying to take her puppy away and she might accidentally hurt you to protect her puppy.
6. **Never, ever, ever make a dog angry or tease a dog.** Remember that dogs have feelings and emotions just like we do! Just like you don't like to be teased, neither do dogs. Do your best to not tease them or make them angry.
7. **Never, ever, ever put your face near a dog's face.** Dogs can't tell us their emotions the same way that we can, using words. They have to rely on actions and body language. One way that a dog can tell you that they are uncomfortable is through actions like growling, snapping, and biting. If we put our face too close to theirs, they might hurt us by accident when they try to communicate their emotions.