



**Delaware Valley Veterinary Behavior
(724) 953-3801**

delvalvetbehavior@gmail.com

<http://delvalvetbehavior.wix.com/dvvb>

Canine body language and behavior:

Signs of “fear” or response to a perceived threat may include:

- Lowered head
- Lowered body posture/crouching
- Tucked tail
- “Whale eye” (whites of the eyes visible)
- Stiffening
- Staring
- Growling
- Snapping
- Biting
- Barking like a guard dog
- Retreating or fleeing
- Averting the head or gaze

Signs of stress may include:

- Lip licking
- Licking another person or dog
- Teeth chattering
- Cheek puffing
- Panting
- Abruptly closing the mouth
- Yawning
- Ear pinning or pricking
- Pupil dilation
- Increased facial tension or skin wrinkling
- Raised “hackles” or piloerection along the neck, back, or tail
- Flushing of the skin, especially on the belly and face
- Raising a single forepaw

- Wagging the tail
- Raising the tail
- Penile crowning in male dogs
- Shaking off
- Stretching
- Barking
- Whining
- Mouthing
- Jumping up
- Urinating or defecating
- Digging or scratching at the ground
- Sniffing
- Disinterest in food
- Failure to respond to known cues

Appropriate social responses:

- Approaching another dog by curving around them, and sniffing nose to tail
- Soliciting play by bowing or pawing at another dog
- Growling or snapping to ask for increased distance from a resource or resting spot, or to end play
- Retreating from another dog who stares, growls, or snaps to ask for increased distance, or who shows disinterest in play
- Experiencing an extinction burst but then desisting or offering an alternative behavior if frustrated from reaching a resource

Inappropriate social responses:

- Approaching another dog by running directly towards them, and sniffing face-to-face or slamming into them
- Soliciting play by immediately jumping on or mounting another dog
- Biting without growling or snapping to ask for increased distance from a resource or resting spot, or to end play
- Failure to retreat from another dog who stares, growls, or snaps to ask for increased distance, or who shows disinterest in play
- Aggressing in response to another dog who stares, growls, or snaps to appropriately ask for increased distance
- Persisting in offering a single behavior and becoming increasingly agitated if frustrated from reaching a resource