

# How to Avoid Getting Bitten by a Dog

Everyone knows a dog is man's best friend. And it is generally true. But every dog has the *capacity* to bite, and children are most often the ones who get bitten. Everyone, particularly children, should learn some basics about dog behavior and safety around dogs.

## When Dogs Might Bite

- When they feel threatened or afraid.
- When they are protecting their territory, food, toys, family, or pups.
- When they get excited, even in play.
- When they don't know you.
- When their "chase response" is triggered.
- When they have been bred and/or trained to be aggressive.
- When they are in pain or irritated.

## How To Tell When A Dog Might Bite

- The dog may stand stiff and still, maybe with his or her hair up.
- The dog may stare at you.
- The dog may hold his or her tail stiff and up in the air, and may wag it back and forth very fast.
- The dog may growl, snarl, show teeth, or bark.

## What To Do If You're Threatened By A Dog

- Stand very still and try to be calm. **DON'T SCREAM AND RUN.**
- Be aware of where the dog is. Don't turn your back on him or her, but don't stare the dog in

the eyes, either.

- If the dog comes up to sniff you, don't resist. In most cases the dog will go away upon deciding you aren't a threat.

- If you say anything, speak calmly and firmly.

- Try to stay until the dog leaves then back away slowly until he or she is out of sight.

- If a dog does attack suddenly, "feed" him or her your jacket, purse, your bike, anything that may distract the dog and give the animal something to bite besides you.

- If you fall or are knocked down, curl into a ball with your arms and hands over your head and neck. Try not to scream or roll around.



## What To Do If You Get Bitten

- Children should tell their parents immediately. All bites should be reported to the police or animal control department.
- Go to the hospital for treatment.
- Tell the policeman or animal control officer as much as you can about the dog—what he or she looked like, where you saw the animal, if you've seen the dog before, and so on. It's important for them to try to find the dog.

## Remember: Most Dog Bites Are Avoidable

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