



✦ *Highlights* ✦

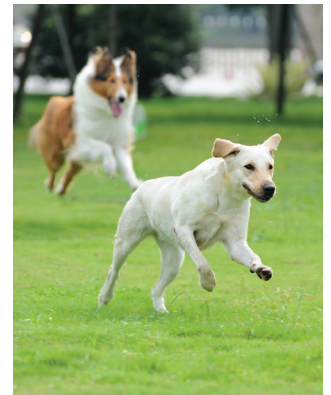
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## LIVING WITH DOGS

### Successful Canine Housemates

A new puppy or dog is a time of fizzy excitement and anticipation. If you have an existing dog at home, some careful planning can make things a whole lot smoother. Here are some tips for making the introduction a positive and stress-free experience for both furry friends.



**Prepare Your Space:** Before the big introduction, consider a neutral space where both dogs can meet for the first time. This helps to reduce the likelihood of tension. Remove any items that your existing dog might be possessive about to avoid potential conflicts.

**Controlled Introduction:** Keep both dogs on leash during the initial meeting. This allows you better control and an easy way to step in if needed. Choose a calm and quiet environment to minimize distractions and stress for the dogs.

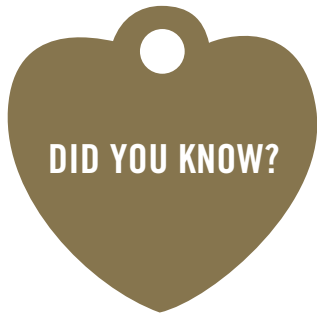
**Observe Body Language:** Pay close attention to what both dogs communicate with their bodies. Look for signs of curiosity, playfulness, or tension. Positive body language, such as loose wagging tails and relaxed postures, signals smoother sailing. If either dog displays signs of upset or discomfort, such as stiffness, growling, or bared teeth, separate them and try the introduction again later.

**Separate Spaces:** Provide each dog their own safe haven, complete with beds, bowls, and toys. This allows your dogs to relax while they get used to each other and reduces the likelihood of conflicts over resources.

**Gradual Familiarization:** After the initial meeting, gradually increase the time your dogs spend together, always under supervision. Continue to monitor their behavior closely and reinforce positive interactions with praise and treats until you are confident they've formed a solid relationship.

Remember, every dog is unique, and the introduction process may take time. Be patient, stay positive, and celebrate small victories along the way. And if you have concerns, contact a force-free trainer for guidance.

*"The most affectionate creature in the world is a wet dog."  
—Ambrose Bierce*



### How Many Dog Breeds Exist?

Dogs come in an astonishing variety of breeds, each with its unique characteristics, appearance, and temperament.

- The FCI (World Canine Organization) recognizes over 360 officially registered dog breeds, and the American Kennel Club acknowledges around 197 breeds.
- These numbers are continually evolving as new breeds are developed and recognized. Some arise from intentional crossbreeding, while others result from natural evolution and adaptation to specific environments.
- Originally, dogs were selectively bred for specific purposes, such as herding, hunting, guarding, or companionship. This selective breeding led to the creation of breeds tailored to excel in their designated roles.



## A WORLD OF DOGS

### Understanding the Canine Lexicon

Have you ever marveled at the way your dog seems to understand exactly what you're saying? Or how even if you spell out the word 'w.a.l.k', they know exactly what's up? It turns out the language comprehension of our canine companions goes well beyond basic training cues.



Dogs don't comprehend language in the same way as humans. They may not grasp the nuances of syntax or grammar, but they have an impressive ability to understand words based on associations, intonations, and context. The key to a dog's word comprehension lies in the way we communicate with them. Dogs pick up on visual and auditory cues, associating specific sounds with actions or objects. This is why your dog might get excited when you mention the word "walk" or start tilting their head when you say "treat." The question then arises: How many words can dogs truly understand?

Research suggests that the average dog can comprehend around 165 words, ranging from basic commands to familiar objects and even some abstract terms. Of course, there are outliers on both ends of the spectrum – some dogs may grasp a few dozen words, while exceptionally trained dogs can understand a more extensive vocabulary. Chaser, the famous border collie, has the largest vocabulary of any known dog - a staggering 1,022 nouns.

While the exact number of words a dog comprehends can vary, their sensitivity to our communication goes beyond mere vocabulary. In addition to verbal cues, dogs excel at understanding our emotions and tones, using their masterful interpretation of our body language and facial expressions. So, the next time you think your dog understands what you're saying, it's not just in your imagination – they're likely picking up on a combination of verbal and non-verbal cues.

Understanding the depth of your dog's language abilities opens up exciting opportunities for your relationship with them. Whether you're teaching new tricks, expanding their vocabulary, or simply enjoying your life together, your dog's ability to understand you makes them a unique and special companion. Want to return the favor? Learn all you can about their language too! Understanding canine communication, and particularly body language, will let you truly 'speak dog'.

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## DOGS IN ACTION

### Guardians of the Gateway

When you think of security at an airport, you might conjure images of uniformed officers, stringent screenings, and those exasperating queues. Yet there's another diligent force working behind the scenes — detection dogs. These remarkable dogs, often German Shepherds, Belgian Malinois, Labrador Retrievers, Beagles, and Springer Spaniels, play a pivotal role in ensuring the safety of air travel.



Trained as expert olfactory detectives, these dogs have a nose for trouble—specifically, the scents of prohibited items, explosives, and illicit substances. Detection dogs undergo rigorous and ongoing training to stay sharp and adapt to evolving threats. Their keen sense of smell, vastly superior to humans, allows them to detect minute traces of odors, even in the bustling environment of an airport.

Unlike static screening methods, detection dogs provide a dynamic and efficient approach. They can navigate through crowds at various airport checkpoints, scanning passengers and luggage for potential threats. In a fast-paced airport environment, their ability to cover vast areas in a short time is a game-changer.



## HEALTHY DOG

### Ticks and Lyme Disease

Lyme disease is a tick-transmitted disease that has been found in nearly all states in the U.S. and in large areas in Europe and Asia. While acquired cases aren't found in Australia and New Zealand, it has occasionally been diagnosed in overseas travelers. Dogs are 50 to 100 times more likely than humans to encounter disease-carrying ticks. Common symptoms include lameness (especially recurrent), fever, lethargy, and swollen lymph nodes. Ticks must be attached to your dog for 48 hours for him to contract Lyme disease, so daily checks and quick removal dramatically ups your chances of keeping your pooch healthy.

To remove a tick, dab the area with rubbing alcohol, then use a pair of tweezers to grab the tick as close to your dog's skin as possible (leaving parts of the tick behind can cause serious problems). Pull straight up; don't twist or jerk the tick. Disinfect the area, wash your hands, and sterilize the tweezers. Monitor the bite site for the next few weeks. If you see redness or swelling, visit your vet right away.

## DOG IN THE SPOTLIGHT

### The Afghan Hound

This sleek, silk-coated aristocrat of the canine world was originally bred for life in rough mountainous terrain. They now spend more time at the doggie equivalent of the runway: the dog show. Afghans, like other supermodels, require a great deal of grooming and maintenance. A sighthound bred to catch deer, gazelles, and leopards, the Afghan boasts a top speed of 40 miles an hour and a 270-degree field of vision. The stunning exterior and strong personality of Afghans have inspired writers and artists all through history, not least Picasso, who depicted his beloved Afghan Kabul in both paintings and sculpture. Appropriately, the human companion of Prissy the Afghan in Disney's *One Hundred and One Dalmatians* is an artist. Who better to appreciate a dog as graceful as a ballet of swans?

To re-home an Afghan, search online for a rescue group near you.



## OUR SERVICES

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### **Keeping Your Dog's Coat Seed-Free**

Grass seeds can be a hazard for your dog - lodging themselves in the skin and even entering your dog's body through their nose, mouth, and ears. Here's how to manage these pesky intruders.

**Regular Grooming:** Brush your dog's coat regularly, especially after walks. Pay close attention to the paws, ears, and armpits, where grass seeds tend to cling.

**Check and Monitor:** After walks in grassy areas, inspect your dog's coat. Look for seeds, burrs, or plant awns that may have attached themselves.

**Trimming Between Toes:** Long hair between your dog's toes is a magnet for grass seeds. Regularly trim this area to minimize the chance of seeds getting lodged.

**Use Protective Gear:** Consider protective gear like doggy boots or coats in areas with tall grasses or seeds.



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