



DogsTrust

BE DOG SMART GUIDE



Paws



Think



Stay Safe

Helping families and dogs
live together safely and happily,
at home and in the community

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Paws



Think



Stay Safe

Over 40% of Irish households have a pet dog*. Even if you don't have one at home, you are very likely to meet a dog at some point or another. This could be at a friend's house or while out and about in the community. That is why it is vital for your child to understand how to behave around dogs and how to stay safe.

Whether you are a dog owner preparing to bring home a new baby or a parent wanting to ensure your teenager stays safe while outdoors with their doggie companion, our **Be Dog Smart** Guide has lots of helpful tips and advice for you to share and talk about with your family.

Owning a dog, or being around a dog, brings many wonderful benefits, and dogs can be so much fun for children of all ages. With a little foresight and research, you can easily ensure that all your family members will **Be Dog Smart**.

* Dogs Trust Behaviour & Attitudes Survey 2019



1. Why a Dog Might Bite

Dogs might bite for any number of reasons. Just like us, they have feelings and emotions, and it is very important to be mindful of this when interacting with them. Even the smallest, cutest dog can bite when they feel they have no other option or if they are provoked. As parents, there are a number of scenarios and situations we should be aware of that can potentially cause a dog to bite.

A dog might bite because they are:

🐾 scared or worried about a situation, person or place

A great way to build your dog's confidence is by introducing them to new places and new people (see section three of this guide, Socialisation, for further information). However, we must also remember that new experiences can worry our dogs, and we should be extra vigilant of their body language during these times. We have described what to look out for in the section four of this guide.

🐾 trapped or backed into a corner

As with humans, a dog's 'fight or flight' response kicks in when faced with a stressful or scary situation. If a dog is backed into a corner, their option for 'flight' is removed and they might have no other choice but to 'fight'. This scenario is particularly common when children are allowed to pursue a dog who is trying to get away. We must ensure that we do not allow this situation to occur. Supervision is the most effective way of keeping dogs and children safe and happy together.



unwell or in pain

Ask any vet and they will agree - even the most docile dog can become grumpy and snappy when they're in pain. If you notice a sudden change in your dog's behaviour or tolerance levels, it's always a good idea to get them checked over by the vet in order to rule out any pain or discomfort that might be causing it.

protecting a person or property

Some dogs like to guard their people, food, bed or toys. Teaching your dog some basic obedience commands, such as 'drop it' or 'leave it', or distracting them with another item, will help if you need to take something away from them. Section two of this guide has great tips for basic dog training.

feeling overexcited

Lots of activity and noise can excite our dogs, and they might react by nipping and jumping up. A nip from a puppy might not be too painful, but a nip from an adult dog can hurt a lot. Avoid rough play with your dog as this can result in play biting. Always encourage calm behaviour around your dog.

surprised or shocked

If you've ever been surprised by someone jumping out from behind a door, you'll know that your initial instinct is to protect yourself - or run! This is caused by adrenaline racing through our bodies. The exact same hormone pumps through your dog's body when they get a shock or surprise. Try to be mindful of fast movements around your dog, and be aware of potentially stressful events like Halloween. Keep your dog on a lead and walk them early before the fireworks begin. Then stay indoors, give them nice distractions (such as a comfy bed or toys) and turn on the radio or television. Don't forget, our costumes can be frightening too!

ALWAYS

-  Always be aware of potentially stressful situations for your dog and allow them to move away if they need to.
-  Always encourage calm behaviour around your dog.

NEVER

-  Never allow children to follow a dog who is trying to remove themselves from a stressful situation.
-  Never ignore a change in your dog's behaviour. If they are in pain, they might not tolerate usual levels of attention.

2. Training

Training your dog is a very important part of being a responsible dog owner. Dogs that are trained are happier and more well behaved, making it much easier to live safely together at home and in the community. Training can also be a very enjoyable experience for both you and your dog. You will spend concentrated time with each other, helping your bond to grow. Your dog will expend energy and engage their brain. And, of course, the treats are a bonus too!

Many adults and children are scared of animals, so having control over your dog is very important. If you are starting from scratch, or if your dog has some behavioural issues, consulting a behaviourist is a good idea. A trained dog generally equals a safer dog!



Here are some training cues that are very useful for your dog to understand. Repetition is the key to your dog learning them.

Drop it

- 🐾 Pick out some of your dog's favourite toys that they like to chew on, along with some tasty treats.
- 🐾 Encourage your dog to chew on one of the toys while keeping the treats in your other hand.
- 🐾 Once they have the toy in their mouth, hold the treat near their nose and say 'drop it'.
- 🐾 Once they drop the toy, give them the treat as you take the toy with your other hand.



Leave it

- 🐾 Start by holding some treats in your hand. Let your dog see them. As soon as they are interested, give the cue 'leave it' and then close your hand.
- 🐾 When you do this, your dog will try to get to the treat. Repeat the phrase 'leave it' and ask them to sit down or give a paw before you offer the treat from the other hand.



Don't jump up

- 🐾 The best way to prevent or stop this problem is to teach your dog to sit when getting attention or praise. If you do this consistently, they won't feel the need to jump up for attention but will sit nicely instead.
- 🐾 Once they have all four paws on the ground, you can reward them with lots of attention, praise and strokes.



Go to bed

- 🐾 Start by choosing a place where you would like to send your dog. It could be their bed, a rug or a mat - or just a place where your dog feels safe and relaxed.
- 🐾 Stand close to the chosen spot and give the cue 'go to bed'. Then encourage them over with some treats.
- 🐾 As soon as all four paws are on the bed or mat, give them a treat.
- 🐾 Practise this as many times as you can, gradually moving further away from the bed.



Down

- 🐾 Ask your dog to sit, and show them a treat.
- 🐾 Slowly move your hand towards the ground in front of your dog and use the cue 'down'.
- 🐾 Your dog should follow your hand with their nose and lie down. Praise them and give them the treat.



Sit

- 🐾 With your dog in front of you, show them a treat in your hand.
- 🐾 Move the treat above your dog's head and give the cue 'sit'. Their head should go up for the treat, naturally placing them in a sitting position.
- 🐾 Treat and praise your dog. Never force them to sit by pushing- this is unlikely to work and could hurt them.



Stay

-  Ask your dog to sit or lie down. Count a few seconds before praising and allowing them to move.
-  If they get up, ask your dog to 'sit' and 'stay' again. This time only count one or two seconds before praising them and allowing them to move.
-  If they do this short 'stay' correctly, gradually increase the distance between you and your dog or extend the time that they are asked to stay. Every time your dog moves when they are not supposed to, go back a stage in distance or time and build it up again gradually.



Come

-  Encourage your dog to come to you for a treat. Treat and praise them once they reach you.
-  Now ask your dog to 'sit' and 'stay'. Take a step back, show the treat and ask them to come.
-  Repeat this over and over, gradually stepping further away from your dog until they come to you every time they are called.
-  Practise in different indoor situations before trying this in a safe outdoor space. Always remember to take treats or toys on a walk.



Heel

-  Begin by practising somewhere with few distractions.
-  Choose which side you want your dog to walk on, and stick to it.
-  Hold a treat in one hand in front of their nose. Show your dog the treat and walk forwards.
-  As they follow your hand, say 'heel' and give your dog a small bit of the treat.
-  Keep some of the treat in your hand and continue on. As your dog keeps to your side, say 'heel' and give them some more treat. Don't stop walking – treat while you are both on the move.



Training Tips

ALWAYS

- 🐾 Always practise in your home and garden before trying commands in public areas.
- 🐾 Always keep sessions fun and short (10 to 15 minutes maximum).
- 🐾 Always reward or treat your dog on a random basis, once the new cue has been learned.
- 🐾 Always take your time and be patient.
- 🐾 Always stick to one new command per training session to avoid confusing your dog.
- 🐾 Always consider going to a local training class. If your dog is anxious or fearful around other dogs, a one-to-one training session might be a better option.

NEVER

- 🐾 Never train your dog when they are tired or hungry. It will make them frustrated, and they won't enjoy it.
- 🐾 Never chase your dog when you want them to come. They will think it is a great game and will run away even more.
- 🐾 Never try to train them in an area with lots of distractions like other dogs, people, noises or smells.
- 🐾 Never expect too much too soon.

There are lots of good training classes around the country.

Ask your vet to recommend some reputable classes in your area, and only choose one that uses positive, reward-based training methods.

Training classes not only help your dog to learn, they also allow your dog to socialise.



Visit our website for some great training videos and further details on these training tips.

www.DogsTrust.ie/help-advice/training-videos



82%

**of parents
say they
teach their
children how
to behave
safely around
dogs**

1 in 3

**Irish parents have
seen their child
kiss a dog
on the nose**

Based on a survey of 1,000 Irish adults conducted in April 2017 by Amárach Research on behalf of Dogs Trust.

3. Socialisation

Socialisation helps your dog get used to other dogs, new people and different environments so they can enjoy a happy life at home and in the community. The earlier socialisation starts the better. A lack of socialisation can lead to behavioural issues.

The process of socialisation is really quite simple. Let your dog experience something new, and praise good, calm behaviour. A well-socialised dog is much more likely to be a safe dog! We have provided some examples of socialisation methods in this section.



Socialisation Tips

ALWAYS

- 🐾 Stand with your dog near the road, on a lead and at a safe distance from the traffic. Let your dog watch and listen as cars go by. If they sit with you calmly, praise them and give them a treat.
- 🐾 Always praise your dog and give them a treat when they meet a person in a safe manner. See our Dog Safety Outdoors section of this guide for information on how to safely approach a dog.
- 🐾 Let your dog meet a friend's vaccinated, well-behaved adult dog in your garden on a regular basis. Supervise them closely and watch how your dog learns his doggie social skills. Praise your dog for gentle play and friendliness towards the other dog. Remember that it is OK for an older dog to scold a puppy if they forget their manners! Dogs communicate to warn us when they need space. We don't want to suppress this, but we do need to provide adequate supervision at all times to ensure it does not escalate.
- 🐾 Always carefully supervise play with other dogs.



NEVER

- 🐾 Never encourage your dog to be scared. If they have a nervous reaction to anything new, give your dog some tasty treats to help them make a positive association with whatever they are worried about. Remove them from the situation, wait until they have recovered and then try again. If the reaction is concerning you, ask a suitably qualified trainer or behaviourist for advice. It is easier to deal with a possible fear problem at a young age rather than later in life.
- 🐾 Never expose your dog to too many new things in one day. It could do more damage than good, and we don't want to overwhelm them. Socialisation takes time, and we need to build our dog's trust and confidence. And that means we need to be patient with them.
- 🐾 Never allow your dog to run off-lead outside. Not all dogs are friendly, and your dog might be concerned by strange dogs coming up to them, especially when they are on a lead. Don't forget, some people are afraid of dogs and might not want to meet yours.



4. Body Language

A dog is a living creature that thinks, feels and gets frightened - just like us - so it is important to be able to recognise the warning signs that your dog might be stressed, scared or uncomfortable. Identifying and understanding these signals will help to keep you and your family stay safe around dogs.



Here are some signs to look out for.

Fear

- 🐾 Cowering with wide eyes and flat ears suggests that your dog might be frightened, and this could lead to defensive bites.
- 🐾 The back might be lowered and the tail down between the legs.
- 🐾 Stiffening and straightening of the body



Anger

- 🐾 Growling should not be ignored. Even if they have never bitten before, your dog is trying to tell you something. Don't deter your dog from growling either. It is an important warning sign to express their feelings instead of going straight to a bite.
- 🐾 Showing of teeth, barking and flat ears can all be indications of anger in your dog.
- 🐾 Anger leads to aggression, so identifying when your dog is angry is very important to staying safe.



Stress

There are many signs that your dog might be under stress.

- 🐾 Licking their lips when no food is nearby.
- 🐾 Panting when they are not thirsty or hot.
- 🐾 Acting sleepy or yawning when they shouldn't be tired.
- 🐾 Suddenly refusing to eat when they were hungry earlier.
- 🐾 Pacing the room.



Avoidance

- 🐾 If your dog is trying to move away from you or your child, or they are trying to leave the room, let them.
- 🐾 Do not let your child follow your dog or continue to engage with them. Otherwise, this could lead to growling, snapping or, at worst, a warning bite.



Alertness

The signs below indicate that your dog is interested in something or is trying to decide on a course of action. In these situations, dogs are not receptive to attention, such as petting from a child, and should be left alone.

- 🐾 The ears are forward and the mouth is closed.
- 🐾 The eyes are intensely focused.
- 🐾 The body is rolled forward and is tense.
- 🐾 The tail is high.
- 🐾 There is a slow, deliberate tail wag.

When a dog is alert, they are intensely focused and ready for action, like chasing a cat. Teach your child to leave a dog alone when they are tense and focused like this. It is not an appropriate time to pet your dog.



Remember -
We never really know how a dog is feeling.

ALWAYS

- 🐾 Always supervise young children when they are around dogs, regardless of how well behaved or good natured your family pet might be.
- 🐾 Always give your dog space to back off from a child or adult if they feel threatened - to keep everyone safe.

NEVER

- 🐾 Never approach a dog that is displaying any of the signs of stress, anger or fear listed above.
- 🐾 Never rub a dog that is showing his teeth or growling.



Almost

1/4

**of Irish adults
have let a child
in their care
approach a
dog they didn't
know**

96%

**of parents were
unaware that there
are over 21 signs
that a dog may feel
uncomfortable or
stressed**

Based on a survey of 1,000 Irish adults
conducted in April 2017 by Amárach
Research on behalf of Dogs Trust..

5. Bringing a New Baby Home

A baby on the way is a wonderful time for everyone involved. Sometimes though, all the excitement can become stressful for a dog if it is not managed properly. The ideal time to prepare your dog for a new arrival is before your baby is born. Follow our guidelines and **Be Dog Smart!**



Here are some things you can do before your baby arrives.

- 🐾 Train your dog. Be sure that your dog understands basic commands such as 'sit', 'stay' and 'leave it'. Please refer to sections two and three of this guide, Training and Socialisation, for more information.
- 🐾 Set ground rules and out-of-bounds zones. During pregnancy is the perfect time to break bad habits like allowing your dog on the furniture. You might want to designate certain rooms or spaces as off-limits to your dog, such as the baby's room or playroom. The earlier you begin this training the better.
- 🐾 Make a dog friendly, indoor, safe space or quiet spot where your dog can go if they need to get away from the busy household.
- 🐾 Allow your dog to become familiar with the sound of a crying baby. Introduce a lifelike doll, one that makes noises, or play baby sounds from your smartphone. Give your attention to the doll when it 'cries'. Carry the doll, hold it on your knee, make soothing sounds and speak to it as you would a child. The more realistic you act, the better the lesson for your dog.
- 🐾 Familiarise your dog with baby products. Allow them to sniff and inspect buggies, car seats, blankets, baby clothing, changing bags, wipes etc.
- 🐾 Gradually decrease the time and attention your dog gets. It might not seem nice, and it could be hard on you both, but it is the kindest way to enable your dog to get used to the new routine.
- 🐾 Bring your dog for a health check-up. It is good practice and offers peace of mind. Make sure your dog has a clean bill of health and is up to date with vaccines and worm and flea treatments.
- 🐾 Remember to seek professional help if you are struggling or unsure in any way. You have the time before the baby arrives, but that will soon change!



When your new baby arrives.

ALWAYS

- 🐾 Always make sure that the first introduction is a calm and positive experience for your dog when your new baby arrives home. Avoid making too much of a fuss.
- 🐾 Always teach your dog how to approach your baby properly, safely and gently. Allow them to make initial investigations under your supervision. As a precaution, it is advisable to keep your dog on a lead during this time.
- 🐾 Always praise and reward your dog for good behaviour around your baby. This will reinforce the positive association in your dog's mind.
- 🐾 Always exercise your dog daily and adequately. This will make for a happier dog and a calmer house.

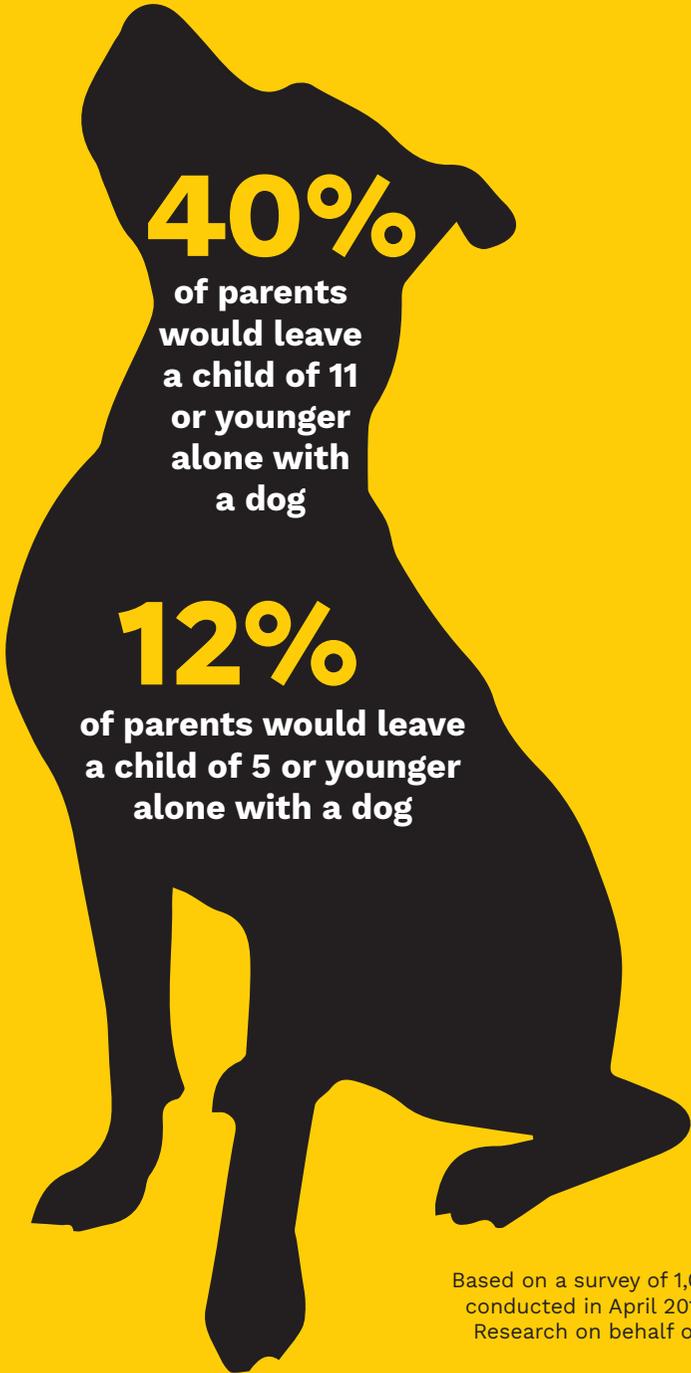


5. Bringing a New Baby Home

NEVER

- 🐾 Never leave your dog and baby (or any child) unattended. Supervision is always a priority.
- 🐾 Never place your baby on the floor with your dog; they could innocently hurt your child.
- 🐾 Never shout at or scold your dog if they approach your baby in the wrong way. Remember, they are still learning, and you must keep up the positive association so that they don't view your baby as a negative presence.
- 🐾 Never leave things to the last minute or assume your dog will adjust. Be responsible. Prepare and train your dog as best you can, well in advance.





40%

**of parents
would leave
a child of 11
or younger
alone with
a dog**

12%

**of parents would leave
a child of 5 or younger
alone with a dog**

Based on a survey of 1,000 Irish adults
conducted in April 2017 by Amárach
Research on behalf of Dogs Trust..

6. Toddlers and Young Children

A dog can be a child's best friend and most loyal companion as they grow up. This relationship is something we should cherish and respect. While most dogs are lovable and make wonderful family pets, we must always remember that every dog has the potential to bite.

As parents, it is important to foster a healthy relationship between our children and our family pets. Adults have a responsibility to be aware of any stressful environments or behaviours that could lead to potentially dangerous situations. We must also encourage children to treat dogs with appropriate care and consideration. The following tips and suggestions will help to keep both children and dogs safe.



ALWAYS

- Always supervise children and dogs when they are together. Look out for any subtle warning signs of stressful situations for your dog.
- Always teach your child to interact safely and to play gently with your dog.
- Always make sure that dogs have their own toys. Do not allow them to play with your children's toys.
- Always teach a child to leave a dog alone when eating, sleeping or resting.
- Always keep dogs and children separate at meal times.
- Always have a quiet space available for your dog so they can be alone and away from your children when they want to be.
- Always ensure that your child knows to ask permission from the owner before petting a dog. Teach them how to do this safely if the owner agrees.
- Always ensure that your child knows what to do if they are scared or nervous of a dog. Go to page 28 to learn what to do in this situation.



NEVER

- Never leave children and dogs unattended.
- Never encourage a child to cuddle, kiss or climb on a dog.
- Never allow children to pet or disturb a dog while sleeping. Children should never play in a dog's bed or kennel.
- Never tie a dog up around young children. When dogs are tied up, they cannot get away from approaching children and could snap or bite in defence. Sometimes it might be necessary to separate your dog from activity in the home environment, especially if there are visitors. In situations like this, it is best to restrict your dog to a particular room and give them plenty of toys or treats to keep them occupied. It is also wise to tell your guests that the room is out of bounds.
- Never allow a child to hold the lead when walking a dog. When excited, even small dogs or pups can be too strong for children, and they could pull them over.



7. Dog Safety Indoors

While we can be very conscious of our children's safety around strange dogs and dogs outside the home, their safety with our own dogs and in our own homes is just as important. We often feel like we know our dogs really well, believing that they would 'never harm a fly'. However, in truth, any dog is capable of biting. Teaching your children how to behave around dogs in the home and not leaving them together unsupervised are the most effective ways of ensuring everyone's safety.



Here are some potentially risky situations that we should watch out for.

When a dog is eating or drinking

Never approach a dog when they are eating or drinking. Would you enjoy someone petting you while you were eating your dinner? Neither would a dog! Give your dog a nice quiet area to eat. Choose a space that is tucked away from your children so that they are not tempted to encroach on your dog's space. Teach your children that dogs must always be left alone when eating.



When a dog is in their bed

Never approach a dog when they are in bed. We've all heard the adage 'let sleeping dogs lie', and it is one we should pay attention to. Dogs need their own space, just like we do, and often their bed is the only place in the home that belongs to them. Teach your children to respect your dog's space. Don't allow them to approach your dog when they are in bed, even if they are not asleep. They certainly should never be allowed to get into bed with your dog, no matter how cute a photo you think it will make. Teaching children to respect a dog's space will help create a safe environment for your whole family.



During fireworks or thunderstorms

A dog's hearing is at least four times better than ours, and they can be very sensitive to noise, particularly loud things like fireworks or thunderstorms. These can cause our dogs a lot of stress, and a stressed dog might not behave as they normally would. Our Body Language section outlines some common stress signals in dogs. Giving your dog a safe place to retreat to, where you don't allow your children to follow, will go a long way to keeping everyone safe. Help your dog cope with fireworks or thunderstorms by turning up the radio, closing the curtains and giving them something nice to chew on.



Overenthusiastic play

Young children sometimes get carried away with play, running around and making lots of noise. This noise and movement might frighten your dog and could cause your dog to get excited too. When this happens, your dog might jump up and nip in play. To avoid any incidents, teach your children to remain calm and relaxed around your dog.



Poking and pulling

As children grow, they like to explore world with their hands. While this might be harmless for inanimate objects like toys, it is not safe practice with dogs. Teach your children to play appropriately and to be gentle when they interact with your dog, as a hurt or worried dog might bite.



ALWAYS

-  Always give your dog a spot in the house that they can retreat to, undisturbed, when they need some space.
-  Always be aware of potentially stressful situations for your dog.

NEVER

-  Never leave children unsupervised with dogs.

8. Dog Safety Outdoors

If you have a dog, there are some important things to remember when walking them. First of all, it's YOUR responsibility to make sure that you are in control of your pet at all times. Your dog should not be allowed to approach people (especially children) without an invitation. Remember, not everyone likes dogs or is comfortable being approached by them. Your dog should always wear a collar with an ID tag to identify them. They should also be microchipped - it's the law. Dogs should never be walked by children on their own. If your dog decides to chase something, or if there is any kind of incident, you need to be there to take control.



These are a few basic rules to teach children about how to behave around dogs they meet in the community.

- 🐾 Never run around or make lots of noise near dogs as they could potentially scare the dog.
- 🐾 If a dog is alone, either running loose or tied up outside a shop, never attempt to pet them. When a dog is tied up, and they are not used to children, they have nowhere to run if they get scared.
- 🐾 Never chase a dog or encourage them to chase you. When playing, dogs can easily get carried away. What might start out as a fun game could escalate into a negative situation.

How to safely approach a dog

Children should ALWAYS ask an owner before they pet their dog, even if the dog is super cute!

And remind them that they should never talk to strangers without you there.

🐾 **Walk**

When approaching a new dog (and only when the owner is present), walk up to the owner and ask permission to rub the dog. Do not walk straight up to the dog and never run towards the dog.

🐾 **Remain calm**

Stay nice and calm when you approach. Dogs can get excited by lots of activity, and we don't want them to jump up!

3-second rule

- 🐾 If the owner gives permission, stand still with your hands by your side for three seconds and see if the dog is interested.
- 🐾 If the dog comes over to sniff you, ask the owner where the dog likes to be rubbed and then gently rub them.
- 🐾 If the dog does not come over to sniff, it's best to not rub them as they might not want to say hello today.



By following these rules, we can help our children to stay safe around dogs outside.

What to do if you are scared of a dog

If we encounter a loose dog, there are a few things that we can teach our children to help manage a potentially scary situation.

X Factor

- 🐾 If a dog approaches you and you feel scared, stand still and upright.

Bring your arms into an 'X' across your chest, keeping your hands

- 🐾 up and away from the dog. We call this the 'X Factor'!

Don't look at or talk to the dog.

Turn your head up towards the sky

- 🐾 and don't give them any attention at all.

Walk away calmly and slowly (don't run), keeping your arms crossed

- 🐾 in an 'X'. Ignore the dog and don't turn back to see where they are.

Walk indoors or towards someone that can help you - but not a stranger.



Walk, don't run

- 🐾 Never try to run away from a dog – they love to chase things! If we run, the dog might think we're playing a game with them and could chase us or jump up.
- 🐾 When riding a bike, get off and use the bike as a barrier between you and the dog. Walk calmly indoors or find someone you know who can help.

Stone

- 🐾 If a dog jumps up at you, keep your hands up and cross them over your chest. Then turn to the side slightly.
- 🐾 If you get knocked over by a jumping dog, do the 'Stone'. Curl up into a ball on the ground, covering your head and your neck with your arms.

Wait for an adult to help or for the dog to go away.



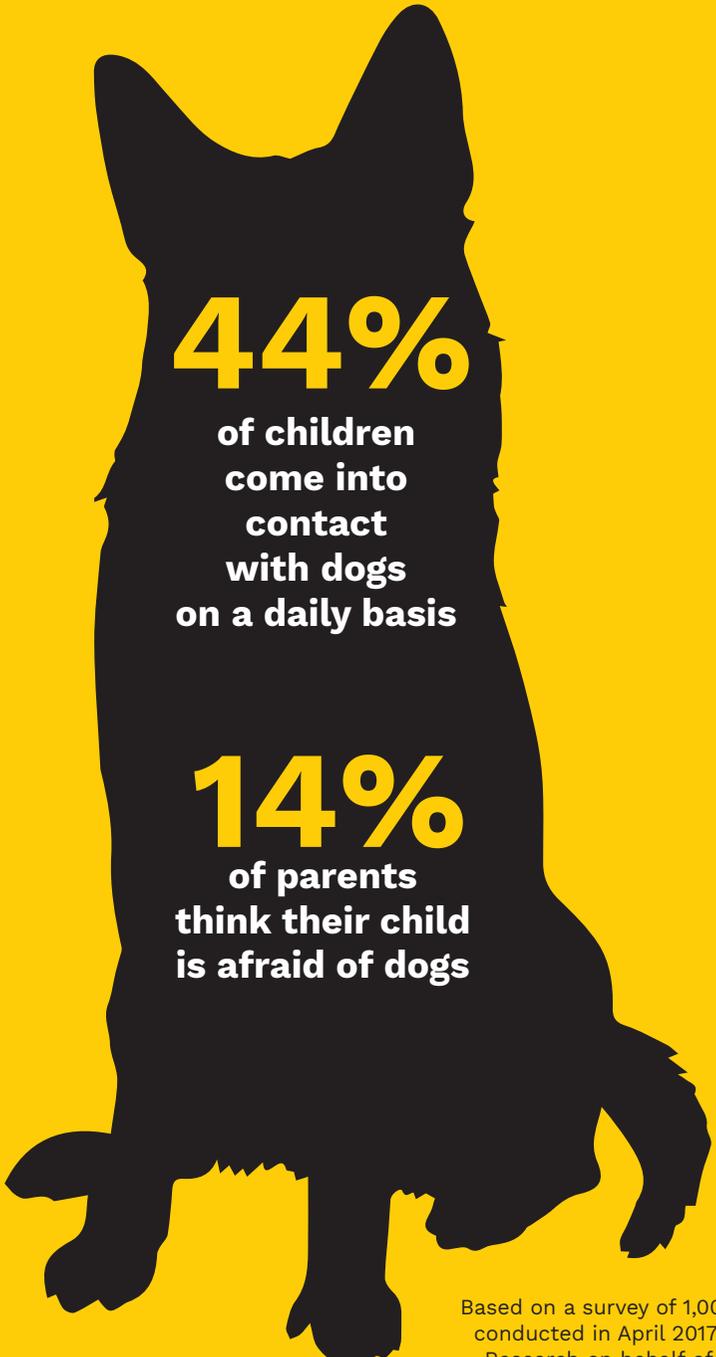
- 🐾 The most important thing is to remain calm and not to give the dog any attention.

ALWAYS

- 🐾 Always ask the owner before petting a dog.
- 🐾 Always remain calm and walk when around dogs.

NEVER

- 🐾 Never allow your dog to approach strangers, especially children.



44%

**of children
come into
contact
with dogs
on a daily basis**

14%

**of parents
think their child
is afraid of dogs**

Based on a survey of 1,000 Irish adults
conducted in April 2017 by Amárach
Research on behalf of Dogs Trust.

9. Travelling with Your Dog

Travelling with your dog is great fun, but we must remember to put safety first. A happy, relaxed dog is a safer dog.



ALWAYS

- 🐾 Always secure your dog when travelling in a car. A loose dog can become a projectile in the event of a collision. This can seriously injure or kill a human, let alone your beloved pooch.
- 🐾 Always secure your dog in the car with a harness clipped to a seat belt, by crating them or by putting them in the car boot. If using the boot, you must install a grate to prevent them from entering the main car. Estate boots are comfortable for dogs, but never put them in a saloon boot.
- 🐾 Always be aware that your dog could suffer stress throughout the journey, and they might not be themselves upon arrival. Speak to them in a calm voice and reward them with treats for good behaviour. Remember, a calmer dog equals a safer human.
- 🐾 Always remember to acclimatise your dog to the car with short trips before undertaking a long journey. Please see our Training and Socialisation sections for more tips in this area.

NEVER

- 🐾 Never leave your dog alone in a parked car, even if the window is open slightly. Dogs are prone to overheating and dehydration in these conditions. This could put your dog at serious risk. In addition, a stressed and agitated dog can be reactive and unsafe for the owner.
- 🐾 Never let your dog ride in the car with its head sticking out the window. While they might enjoy this, it could result in an injury or a traffic accident.
- 🐾 Never drive for long periods of time without stopping. Give your dog a chance to stretch their legs, have some water and a toilet break. This will make your dog more comfortable and calm and, in turn, keep you safer.



10. Health and Hygiene

It is perfectly feasible to have a clean home with a dog in the house, but we do have to remember to be careful with our own hygiene.



ALWAYS

- 🐾 Always wash your hands after petting your dog, especially before you eat.
- 🐾 Always pick up after your dog when they poop. Dog dirt can carry nasty bacteria that can cause illness and even blindness.
- 🐾 Always remember to treat your dog for worm and fleas regularly. Only use products bought from your vet. Cheaper supermarket products might not be as effective.
- 🐾 Always feed your dog with quality dog food. This results in a healthier dog with a stronger immune system, so your dog will be much less likely to spread disease to you or your family.
- 🐾 Always remember to clean your dog's bed and toys regularly. These can be ideal breeding grounds for bacteria, so frequent washing is a must.



NEVER

- 🐾 Never let a dog lick your face or mouth. Dog saliva contains mild antibacterial properties, which is why they can lick up dirt and crumbs from the ground. However, we don't want that same dirt on our faces or in our mouths.
- 🐾 Never touch your face directly after petting your dog. Give your hands a wash first, just in case.
- 🐾 Never ignore a dog bite or scratch, even if it's minor. Thoroughly wash the wound with soap and warm water, and keep an eye on it for swelling or signs of infection. If you are unsure, or if the wound is getting worse, seek medical advice. Puncture wounds should always be seen by a doctor.
- 🐾 Never let your dog's claws get too long as this can lead to nasty scratches. They can be clipped by a vet or a groomer.

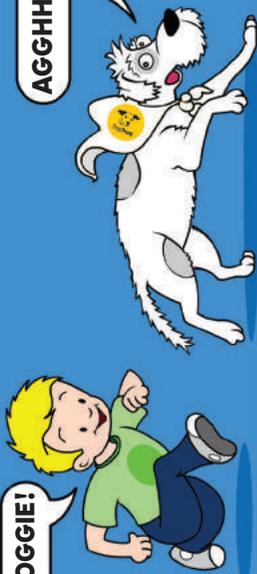
How to meet a dog safely...

MEET OUR SUPER SAFE DOG, CAPTAIN CANINE.



Although I'm a super friendly dog, it is important to always be very safe around me and all of my doggie friends.

NEVER APPROACH A DOG WHO ISN'T WITH THEIR OWNER. REMEMBER, EVEN IF THEY ARE WITH THEIR OWNER, NEVER RUN TOWARDS THEM. ALWAYS WALK SLOWLY.



DOGGIE!

AGGGHHH!!

IF YOU WANT TO PET SOMEONE'S DOG, ALWAYS REMEMBER TO ASK.



Can I pet your dog please?

What a polite child!

Remember; only speak to people you know - never strangers.

LET THE DOG SNIFF YOU, WITH YOUR HANDS BY YOUR SIDE. IF THE DOG DOESN'T COME OVER, IT DOES NOT WANT TO BE PETTED.



Mmmm! This smells like a nice person!

Sniff Sniff

IF THE DOG DOES COME OVER TO YOU, ASK THE OWNER WHERE THE DOG MOST LIKES TO BE RUBBED.



I love being scratched behind my ears!



 **Paws**
 **Think**
 **Stay Safe**

www.BeDogSmart.ie

www.DogsTrust.ie