



Coach Carly Academy

Understanding Canine Body Language

Learning to read your dog's body language helps you respond before problems develop. Dogs communicate through their whole body, not just their tail.

Observe the Whole Dog

- Eyes
- Ears
- Mouth
- Tail
- Weight shift
- Movement
- Breathing
- Environment

Signs Your Dog Is Relaxed

- Soft eyes
- Loose body
- Relaxed mouth
- Normal breathing
- Willing to engage

Signs of Stress or Concern

- Lip licking
- Yawning (when not tired)
- Turning head away
- Sniffing the ground
- Paw lift

- Whale eye
- Tucked tail
- Freezing

When to Give Your Dog Space

- Repeated stress signals
- Hiding
- Growling
- Avoiding interaction
- Overwhelmed by the environment

Owner Checklist

- Watch before interacting
- Respect your dog's choice
- Reward calm behaviour
- Avoid forcing greetings
- Keep children supervised
- Remove pressure if your dog looks uncomfortable

Remember

- Context matters
- Look for clusters of signals
- Every dog is an individual
- Early intervention prevents escalation

Coach Carly Tip: Don't focus on one signal in isolation. The combination of body posture, facial expression, movement and the surrounding environment gives the clearest picture of how your dog is feeling.