

THREE STEPS FOR MEETING A DOG

Whenever you are outside and you see a dog, you must never, ever, assume that dog is friendly or stroke it.

As we are much bigger in size than dogs, sometimes we can seem a little scary to them. Consider how you feel when you first meet someone - shy, nervous or worried perhaps?

Never ever go up to a dog who is with its owner without permission from your parents or an adult who is caring for you first.

Step One - Ask the OWNER

Stop about 5 feet away and ask the owner - *'may I stroke your dog?'*

Sometimes the answer may be no - many dogs are not comfortable with strangers.

If the answer is no stay perfectly still and quiet until the dog passes you by.

Step Two - Ask the DOG

Make a fist with the palm pointed down and slowly extend your arm for the dog to sniff your hand. (so the dog can learn about you)

Watch his body language - does the dog say 'Yes' or 'No'?

Yes Responses:-

- Dog comes forward with loose, waggy motions
- Dog leans forward for a quick sniff and seems comfortable
- Dog makes gentle, sustained physical contact

No Responses:-

- Dog turns his face away from your hand
- Dog backs away or moves behind the owner
- Dog looks anxious or unsettled.
- Dog barks or growls
- Dog is overly excited (could jump on you and hurt you)

Politely say to the owner - *'I do not think your dog is ready right now, thank you anyhow'* and then walk away.

Step Three - Stroking the Dog

If both the owner and the dogs say 'YES' you may stroke the dog

Most dogs do not like to be petted on top of their heads.

Do not jump around or squeal and shout when you are stroking a dog - this can scare a dog.

How to stroke a dog in the correct way:-

- Gently stroke the side of the dog's neck,
- Rub under the dog's chin
- Scratch his chest
- Gently stroke along his back

Most dogs prefer slow gentle strokes - they do not like rapid pat-pat

And finally.....do not forget to thank the owner for being allowed to stroke their dog.