

K9 Elementary

Sometimes dogs do silly things and just need someone with understanding...

...and our best friends aren't always the best ones to turn to...

...but, help may be rushing to greet you. I'm just a call away.

Ph: 9498 2718 (Katie)
 Mob: 0415 241 106
 Web: www.k9elementary.com
 Email: katie@k9elementary.com

Member:
 Association of Pet Dog Trainers




As a trainer, I am frequently asked how I feel about dog parks. My answer is, "I don't know, how does your dog feel about dog parks?"

Dog parks can be great places for your dog. They can meet and play with other dogs, run in large areas free from their leash and safe from traffic hazards. They can meet all kinds of new people of different colours, ages and sizes, and some of those suckers...er umm people even dish out treats!

Dog parks can also be dangerous places for your dog. Most dog parks have rules posted requiring the dogs to be vaccinated and excluding "aggressive" dogs. That's great in theory. Have you ever had to show proof of your dog's vaccinations before entering a dog park? Not every dog owner is responsible maintaining their dog's vaccinations. Between, sharing kisses, water dishes, and toys, dogs who frequent dog parks run the potential for being exposed to worms, giardia, and other parasites and diseases.

Also, who decides which dogs are aggressive? Is a dog playing rough and very vocal, or is he truly exhibiting signs of aggression? Are you prepared to make the distinction? Is any other owner in the park? If your dog is on the receiving end of the rough treatment, does it matter to you?

Now you might be thinking that dog parks aren't such a great idea. So, I'll tell you that I regularly go to dog parks with my dog. I began because we lived in an apartment, and she is a high-energy dog who needs to run. I have continued, because it is a great place for us to work on training with distractions. Once she had solidly learned a basic behaviour, we went to the dog park to work on it there. Not only was this great for her, it dramatically improved our bond. Which is, after all, why I got a dog in the first place. Also, it has given me a dog who'll pay attention to me and work for me despite the presence of other dogs. Nice bonus.

However, to enjoy the advantages of a dog park, I had to make a few choices. Initially, part of why the dog park seemed so great was I could let my dog run around and burn some energy with other dogs, and I didn't have to do that much work. After a full day at work, I'm not really all that excited about playing two hours of fetch! I quickly realized though, that going to the dog park with my dog was not about me sitting on the picnic bench while she ran around. It was still about me paying attention to, and spending time, with my dog. I needed to know where she was and what she was up to...at all times. This is not only for purposes of po



Walking Dogs at Manly Lagoon

patrol, but also because I wanted to know she wasn't starting any trouble, no other dogs were starting any trouble with her, and she wasn't barking at people or chasing kids. Although I do not think dog parks are an appropriate place for young children, they are there. It's my job as a responsible owner to make sure nothing unpleasant happens between my dog and the toddler walking around with cookie residue on her hands and face. This is your responsibility when you go to the dog park.

Each and every time I go to the dog park, I assess the other dogs and owners in the park. If I see anything I don't like, either before I get in the park or while I'm there, we're out of there.

The Threshold Area. Some dog parks have a double gated area to take your dog off-leash before you are both actually in the park. First, take your dog off-leash in this area. DO NOT walk into the park with your dog on leash. When you walk into the park with your dog on-leash and all the other dogs are off-leash, you are potentially creating a number of problems. First, you may be affecting your dog's body language. When a dog is pulling on leash, all their body is going forward and they are telling other dogs they are a challenge...even if they don't actually intend to be. Second, by keeping your dog on-leash when all the other dogs are off-leash, you are putting your dog at an enormous disadvantage. If your dog feels the need to get away from the onslaught of dogs, she has no way to. Being unable to get away, she may feel the need to defend herself.

The Rush. Without fail, when you and your dog arrive at the dog park, many other dogs will rush the gate to greet you. How friendly of them. The problem here is that dogs in dog parks form loose packs, and they will want to quickly assess where your dog fits in that pack. This may lead to some conflicts, particularly if you have a fairly dominant dog. Also, the sheer number of dogs at the gate may overwhelm your dog, and again, she may feel the need to defend herself. One way to avoid that particular pitfall is to just wait it out. If you stay in the gated area until all, or most, of the dogs have gone back to running around, you can avoid a lot of potential problems. This may mean you have to wait for quite a while, but it will make the dog park experience much more pleasant for your dog, so it is worth it. Also, if your dog is gathering at the gate as new dogs arrive, either call her off or go get her. Let the new dog have a chance to get in the park with a minimum of problems.

What Is Your Dog Saying? Pay attention to your dog at the dog park. Be ready to accept that your dog may not be an appropriate dog to be in the dog park or may not enjoy the company of other dogs or that many other dogs. Let me just tell you right now, dog parks are great fun for SOME dogs. They are a nightmare for others.



Blackwattle Bay Park

Is your dog being a bully? You might think, "She just plays rough like that." Look at the dogs your dog is playing with, if they aren't enjoying it, your dog is being a bully. Dogs are masters at communicating their discomfort and fear. A dog who behaves appropriately will respect that another dog is uncomfortable and either leave the dog alone, or ease up. If your dog does not do this, then your dog is being a bully. Own up and either remove your dog from the park or at least make her back off of the dog she is bullying.

Is your dog afraid of the other dogs? Dog parks can be too overwhelming for some dogs. Is her tail tucked and ears back? Does she feel like she has to defend herself from the other dogs? If so, maybe the dog park isn't a happy place for your dog. Maybe your dog would rather go on a walk or run with you, or play a rousing game of fetch, or learn agility.

Ultimately, the choice about dog parks is up to you. But, as with every aspect of having a pet, if you choose to go to dog parks, do so with your eyes open.

Copyright 2005 4Paws University, Inc. All rights reserved. Used by permission. www.4pawsu.com

About the Author

Kelly Ryan is a Certified Dog Behaviour Consultant a Certified Pet Dog Trainer and co-owner of 4Paws University based in Sacramento, CA. 4Paws focuses on positive reinforcement training methods to help owners train their dogs to be well behaved companions. They teach owners how to better understand their dogs by focusing on relationship and communication.

Council Off-Leash Parks

Council	Off-Leash Park	Address
Ashfield Council	Cadigal Reserve	1 - 4 Grosvenor Cresnet, Summer Hill
Auburn Council	Coleman Park Lidcombe Oval (Wyatt Park) Webbs Park Deakin Park	Georges Avenue, Berala Church Street, Lidcombe Webbs Avenue, Auburn Deakin Street, Silverwater
Bankstown Council	Vale Of Ah Reserve	Auld Ave, Milperra
Baulkham Hills Council	Balcombe Heights Castle Hill Showground Dewhurst Reserve Coolong Reserve Crestwood Reserve Don Moore Reserve The Pavillion Reserve Martin Knight Reserve Murray Farm Reserve	Seven Hills Road, Seven Hills Doran Drive, Castle Hill Dewhurst Drive, Castle Hill Coolong Street, Castle Hill Peele Road, Baulkham Hills Tiernan Avenue, North Rocks Adelphi Street, Rouse Hill Greenwood Road, Kellyville Murray Farm Rd, West Pennant Hills
	Torry Burn Reserve North Rocks Reserve	Jasper Road, Baulkham Hills Behind North Rocks Community Hall
Botany Bay Council	Alstrolabe Park	Issac Smith Street, Daceyville
Blacktown Council	Sherwood Reserve Faulkland Crescent Reserve Metella Road Reserve May Cowper Reserve Tregear Reserve	Hambledon Road, Quakers Hill Faulkland Crescent, Kings Park Metella Road, Toongabbie Francis Road, Rooty Hill Ellsworth Drive, Tregear
Blue Mountains Council	Old Airstrip Sir Frank Walford Park Leura Oval Reserve Bulls Camp	Hat Hill Road, Blackheath Gates Avenue, Katoomba Lone Pine Ave, Leura Off Great Western Hwy, Woodford
	Summerhayes Park Lennox Bridge	Hawkesbury Road, Winmalee Mitchells Park, Glenbrook
Burwood Council	Henley Park Matthews Park	Mitchell Street, Enfield Roberts Road, Enfield
Camden Council	River Road Reserve	River Road, Elderslie
Campbelltown Council	Minto Reserve	7 Eagleview Road, Minto
Cannada Bay Council	Five Dock Park Drummoyne Park Lysaght Park Halliday Park	Ingham Avenue, Five Dock Bayswater Street, Drummoyne Bibby Street, Chiswick Udall Avenue, Five Dock
Canturbury Council	Glamis Street Park	Glamis Street, Kingsgrove
Fairfield Council	Freeman Reserve Wakeley Reserve	Railway Parade, Canley Vale Kembla Street, Wakeley
Gosford Council	Forresters Beach Wamberal Beach Terrigal Beach Avoca Et Nth Avoca Beach Copacabana Beach Putty Beach	Crystal Street, Forresters Beach Surfers Street, Wamberal Ocean View Drive, Terrigal View Street, North Avoca Del Monte Place, Copacabana Putty Beach Road, Killcare Heights
	Ettalong Beach Ocean Beach Pearl Beach Patonga Beach	Beach Street, Ettalong Augusta Street, Ocean Beach Agate Avenue, Pearl Beach Brisk Avenue, Patonga
Hawkesbury Council	Pool Park	Ham Street, South Windsor
Holroyd Council	Percival Road Reserve Edward Drive Reserve	Percival Road, Woodpark Edward Drive, Pemulvey

A complete list can be found at the Urban Animal site: www.urbananimal.net/offleash.html

As Seen on ABC TV's 'Pet Show'

The Grass is Always Greener With Dog Rocks®

Did You Know?
Dog Rocks filter out impurities such as tin and ammonia from your dog's drinking water, leaving it cleaner and healthier for your pet.

Dog Rocks are great for your dog and great for your lawn.

BEFORE



AFTER



The Dog Rocks 600g Bulk Pack is great value for people with multiple dogs, or for dogs with multiple water bowls.

160g packet also available.




To find your nearest Dog Rocks® stockist call 1800 032 139 www.dogrocks.net

Why?
Because.....Squirt is FUN!



Pina Colada



Kahlua



Tea Tree Oil

squirt

stuff for dogs

Specially formulated to suit your dogs' skin at a pH neutral level of 7, Squirt will have your pooch coming back for more!
Call **1800 032 139** to know where you can get some, or email info@vetcompanies.com.au
First 20 callers will get a free trial twin sachet pack