

Playing Games with Shelter Dogs

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"It is a happy talent to know how to play."

— Ralph Waldo Emerson

Benefits of Play!

- *Play is enriching – physically, emotionally and socially*
- *Play reduces stress*
- *Play enhances social skills*
- *Play enhances training/learning*
- *Play enhances emotional state and welfare*
- *Play promotes emotional resilience*
- *Play is healing*
- *Play is contagious*
- *Play helps us get to "know" shelter dogs*
- *Play helps dogs make connections with people*
- *Play is healthy for them—and us*
- *Plus, it's FUN!*



THE POWER OF CONNECTION

Cooperative brisk activities, positive energy and PLAY are excellent ways to engage shelter dogs. Play is a powerful stress buster and mood lifter—and importantly, it helps dogs connect with people. Teaching a dog to play a game is a great starting block for building a relationship. Play builds trust, confidence, and coping skills. Play is also FUN for dogs and humans alike. And, playing games with dogs is an excellent way to build a foundation of real life skills that will set dogs up for positive, fun learning experiences and healthy social interactions with people.

Bear in mind that some dogs are very easy to engage in play, while others are more challenging. Play styles and preferences vary greatly among dogs and depend on many factors including genetics, personality, prior experiences, and emotional state among others. That being said, playing is a fundamental behavioral need for all of us – and when we find ways to play with a dog, it is an incredible way to connect with them! The effort invested in finding what 'works' for a dog (i.e., what gets them playing) is well worth it.

GETTING STARTED

The only prerequisite to playing with shelter dogs is having some knowledge of canine body language and signaling and defensive handling techniques. Understanding and being able to recognize signals and behaviors associated with fear, anxiety and aggression versus play will enable staff, volunteers and foster caregivers to play safely and successfully with shelter dogs.

Viewing videotapes about canine body language and play, as well as watching dogs engaged in play with other dogs, are two great ways to learn. Don't forget to regularly review and always practice humane defensive handling techniques. Then, **JUST GO PLAY!**

Lastly, a nice thing about play is that you don't have to have perfect timing, a lot of complex knowledge, or much of anything else to do it—just a positive, fun loving attitude, some common sense, and a little time—that is all that is required for this most excellent medicine!

SKAMES ☺ (SKILLS-GAMES):

Skames are games to build positive emotions and motivation, while teaching skills! Game on! Skames incorporate “fun behaviors” and PLAY into learning desirable behaviors. Don't think of it as training—just concentrate on PLAYING. It is easy and fun—and also therapeutic for dogs and humans alike! Through playing games, anxious dogs may learn to let go and relax and highly aroused dogs may learn that they can have fun and control their impulses at the same time. How awesome is that! FUN is always the name of the skame!

LET THE SKAMES BEGIN!

Maintain a playful attitude and positive energy—find a skame that ‘works’ for the dog. Some skames involve toys. Some involve food. Some skames focus on playful physical activity and contact. Some skames utilize “targets”.

Determining the games (skames) you will play with shelter dogs will depend on your population—canine and human. You don't need a lot of equipment or space—just a light heart and some creative spirit. Remember: play is contagious—it creates positive emotions in all who embrace it. Besides being great FUN, it is also a great way to “show” (or show off) a dog—a great way to engage potential adopters! Who doesn't love a dog that will play with you?!

WHAT KIND OF GAMES DO DOGS ENJOY?

Think like a predator—what's fun?

- Running games
- Chasing games
- Hunting games (sniffing games)
- Jumping games
- Mind games
- Anything “fun” has game potential!

There really is no limit to the games you might create for playing with shelter dogs. A few of my favorite games for dogs and people to play are described herein. Some of them can be played with dogs that must remain confined to their runs for safety reasons—they need to play, too!

The games are organized into 3 main categories:

- Toy (object) play
- Food (play) games
- Physical play

Choose the games that are most practical, fun, and useful for your shelter dogs. Above all else, make time to PLAY! Make it a priority—every little bit will help. Remember, play is essential for all of us! We all deserve a little PLAY TIME!

Special note: If a game you choose for a particular dog triggers “unruly”, “inappropriate”, or “undesirable” behavior, modify the game or find another one to play – Don’t allow the dog to practice such behavior. Playing games should be FUN, and at the same time, they should help build appropriate, healthy behaviors with people! Game On!

TOY PLAY

Toy play is a foundation for off lead control: Leash comes off – toy comes out! What a fun way to engage and connect!

A key to successful toy play is finding a toy the dog REALLY likes.

The following toy games are described:

- Fetch
- Tug
- Chase IT

FETCH

An easy and fun way to teach a dog to play fetch is to use the two-toy fetch method.

Get two **identical** dog toys -- plush dog toys or tennis balls or whatever the dog likes. It is very important that the two toys be exactly the same so the dog will like each of them just the same. If they are different, he will likely prefer one over the other, and this technique will not work!

Offer the dog one of the two toys and let him play with it – don’t take it away from him!

Then, wave the other toy – he will likely drop the first one and grab the second one. Alternate the toys. You may playfully tease the dog to entice him.

Next, begin tossing one of the toys – only a couple of feet at first. As soon as the dog goes to get the toy, call and encourage him to come back – run backwards to encourage him to follow you if necessary. When he reaches you, show him the other toy. He will probably want to get

the other toy. He may drop the other one he has – or you can trade him for a treat. Then, throw the second toy. He will then run after it and you can start the process over again. Start slowly and build up over time. Always stop for the day before the dog tires of the game.

 Fetch is a great game for any dog that can be enticed into the game—and a great way for a potential adopter to connect with the dog. Everyone seems to love a good game of fetch with a dog!

NOTE: Special toys designated for FETCH and TUG should be put away unless you are actually playing the game with the dog – this will help to keep them fresh and enticing, leaving the dog wanting more.

TUG

Encourage the dog to grab a toy – find one he likes and wave it in front of him. Reward him for getting it by allowing him to have it. Get it back from him after a minute by “trading” him the toy for a tasty treat. Then, wave the toy again. Gradually work up to tugging – some dogs are naturals, others will need more encouragement. (Hint: Playing Chase IT may get a reluctant dog into the game!)

Once the dog is “into” the game, it is time to begin teaching him some rules to play by:

Teach him to leave the toy on your cue or command

- Have a release command such as “out”, “leave it”, “mine” or “thank you”
- The dog releases, gets a food reward, then cue him to re-take it (“tug”, “get it”, “yours”)
- The dog gets used to having it, releasing it, receiving a reward, being presented with it again

The dog may not take or re-take the object until invited to do so

- The penalty for doing so is a time out (game ends)

Zero tolerance for accidental nips

- The consequence of a tooth nip is that the game immediately ends

As long as the dog plays by these rules, he can get as excited as he wants!

- Shake, growl, tug, tug, TUG! FUN!!

Always stop for the day before your dog tires of the game!

Once the dog is committed to the game, **TUG UP!** Dogs engage in tugging by pulling the opposite way that you are pulling. When they are first learning, I let them pull me forward as they tug. If they pull too hard, I can let the toy go so I don't lose my balance. But, once I see that they are committed to the game and I have done the sequence a few times safely with them (i.e. they tug it, release it, receive a reward, I present it again, then repeat), then I begin to **pull UP** as they tug. This encourages them to pull **DOWN** making it **MUCH** easier for me. I can turn in a circle or move a step one way or the other while tugging up, as they tug down. This takes less effort on my part and also prevents the dog from pulling me off balance. Thus, tugging **UP** is easier and safer for the handler. That said, I don't start out tugging up because I am more comfortable with them pulling away from me at first until we are playing good together – this is simply defensive handling on my part – I don't want to pull them up towards my face until I am sure we are playing nicely together. When I see they can “turn it **ON** and turn it **OFF**”, then I begin to tug **UP!**

 Tug is a great game for dogs with impulse control and arousal issues—there's nothing better to help burn off some energy in a hurry, and it does not take a lot of space to play this game. Dogs learn to “turn it **ON**” and “turn it **OFF**” while having fun—this is very important for those strong, excited, impulsive types of dogs!

CHASE IT

(Use a Kong Chase IT squirrel stick; Vee Chase and Pull stick; or make your own using a horse lunge whip and a dog toy, or a PVC pipe and rope)

1. "Be the squirrel!" — Use the pole to move the toy on the ground → erratic motion → quick hop in the air!!!
2. Let the dog capture it occasionally.
3. Release for treat (toss treat to free the squirrel!)
4. Take breaks (squirrel stops moving)
5. Finally, the squirrel dies and the game ends.
6. Always leave 'em wanting more!

 **CHASE IT** is a great game for all dogs and is very easy for humans to play! With a little finesse and the right toy on the end of the stick, this can be very useful for piquing interest in shy dogs and getting them into the game. It can also be a great energy burner for any dog who is into the game. For handlers that are not comfortable playing tug or fetch, this game is a nice choice as it will allow them to engage with the dog with a little more space between them, the toy and the dog's mouth!



FOOD PLAY

 Most dogs LOVE food games! They are simple to play—requiring only that you have food that the dog is eager to eat. Depending on the individual dog, that food might be dry kibble, baked chicken or something in between! Many food games can be played with dogs that must remain confined to a run. For shy dogs that are too uncomfortable to eat in front of you, leave some extra delicious treats in their enclosure...When no one is looking, they will discover them! Before that moment, they may have had no idea how tasty those hot dogs/cheese balls/meatballs you offered them were—but now they do—and they will be more likely to engage with you the next time!

The following food games are described:

- Get It – Get it (food toss) Game
 - Get It – Get it Game – Target Version
- Chase ME
- Catch
- See It – Drop It
- Place
- Find It Games (food puzzles, nose work games)*
- Leave It

*Note: Find It games are generally less interactive, but make for good enrichment in the dog's enclosure (e.g., stuffed Kongs or a muffin pan with a treat under a tennis ball in each cup). For dogs that prefer these games, they can be made more interactive by taking the dog to a room, and hiding food, and then helping him search it out! For example, hide the food in an empty box → SEEK AND DESTROY! Or, make a trail of treats for the dog to follow! Or, play the SHELL GAME with him—hide treats under shells or small bowls!

GET IT – GET IT (FOOD TOSS) GAME

Toss food left – GET IT GET IT – toss food right – GET IT GET IT -- Toss food left – GET IT GET IT – toss food right – GET IT GET IT – repeat sequence a couple of times...

Start with a short toss at first – get the dog's attention and be sure he sees you toss the treat.

Using a treat that is a contrasting color compared to floor will help him see it and easily succeed. When he gets the first treat, wait until he turns back to look at you and then toss the next treat in the opposite direction.... And so forth...

Cheese balls work great for this game!

 You can also do a **target version** (use a small dish, lid, or paper plate to place the cheese ball). Once the dogs knows the game, then the targets can be used to help the dog confidently go to new places...The targets can be used to encourage a shy dog to walk down a hall, explore a room, or go close to strangers. Just place a series of targets in a trail – GET IT GET IT! It works like MAGIC for many shy dogs! Quite the confidence builder!

CHASE ME!

A love of running and chasing is hard-wired in dogs. It is a big part of play between dogs: they consider it a very cool game...Dogs will consider it super-cool that you know the game, too!

One absolute rule: It's one-way only.

- The dog should chase you and not the other way around (don't encourage the dog to run from you)

To play the game, run away from the dog—make some noise: clapping and giggling are good!

- This should encourage him to run towards you
- When he is only a few feet away, toss a treat behind you (even through your legs) so he keeps running in your direction

Then turn and run the other way

- You only have to run 5 or 10 feet to play!

This teaches the dog: running to you is fun! This is a great foundation for a fun and reliable recall. Consider interspersing chase games and obedience commands for a fun session!

Know when to stop:

- If chase leads to nipping, mouthing, and/or over-exuberant jumping, then the game stops
- This game is not recommended for young kids to play for this reason
- You may be able to redirect the dog if you modify the game – try tossing him a toy to carry in his mouth, or focus on tossing the food to redirect him before he gets to you

 Note: This game is often very good for shy/anxious dogs – it can be confidence building. For shy dogs, be sure to take it slow at first so they are not overwhelmed or frightened by your silliness. Use high value treats that they love, and encourage them without being too over the top until they relax and join the fun of the chase! On the other hand, this game is not always good for mouthy/jumpy dogs – it can encourage unruly behavior!

CATCH

If the dog likes popcorn, it is a great tool to use to teach this trick – light, big, fluffy, easy to see—and relatively easy to catch.

Buy a bag and toss one kernel at the time.

Some dogs don't try to catch at first – but as the kernels fly gently in their faces, they will try! Enjoy watching those motor skills improve! Coordination may take time, but they will develop skill in time!

Catching is fun and often quite amusing for all involved. Of course, you can absolutely use any type of food for this game—it doesn't have to be popcorn 😊.

 Catch is great for old dogs, young dogs, confined dogs, shy dogs, bold dogs, busy dogs, bored dogs---and it is so very easy to play!

SEE IT DROP IT

This game uses food to teach impulse control – the dog learns to wait and look at the food before being cued to GET IT GET IT!

The game progresses from gently restraining the dog so that he waits and sees it, to the dog doing this on his own, to the dog doing it even if the treat is dropped or tossed. The handler patiently helps the dog succeed with a playful attitude.

Short sessions will prevent frustration and keep the dog (and handler) in the game.

This is a handy way to teach stay – all the while the dog just thinks it is a fun game!

 See It, Drop It is a great game for any dog that needs to learn to look, listen and wait—excellent for those strong, impulsive types!

FOOD SKAMES USING TARGETS – TARGETS ARE FUN!!!

In dog training, a "target" is anything that the dog must focus on and perform some action towards. Trainers use targets to help get dogs into the position they want – or to perform the behaviors that want them to perform.

Dogs tend to develop strong positive associations with targets – they provide a positive focal point, which is especially helpful for dogs that tend to “worry” or for those that are very “busy”... Focusing on the target is a great thing!

Targets are very useful for building many skills – (playing many games!) and can be faded as necessary over time.

PLACE

“Place” is a type of “target game” – In this case, the dog’s target is his “place” (a bed, a mat, a platform – whatever you would like for it to be). As you play this game, the dog will become very confident that whatever you have designated as “his place” is a really great place for him to be!

The game is to make him *choose* to go there – and when he does, he earns a reward!

An excellent way to train this exercise is through “shaping” – this means you will reward successive approximations of the behavior (e.g., reward when the dog has one foot on the place, then 2 feet on it, and so forth). You will gradually raise the criteria for a reward until the dog is completely on his place!

Begin no more than a foot away from the “place”. Try to refrain from luring the dog to the place. The plan is to “get him to do it himself” and then reward him for it.

The dog needs to know you have treats (and needs to be motivated by the fact that you do). His “problem” is to figure out how to earn the treats. This will get him thinking 😊!

Stare at the place – use your body language if you need to help him (lean towards the place) but try to refrain from luring him with your hand or leash.

Click (or use a “reward” word) and immediately give him a treat for each contact with his place. You can feed the treats by hand, or toss them as a reward (see GET IT GET IT food toss GAME above). Each time he comes back to his PLACE, you toss him another treat—how FUN is that?!

If your dog is not comfortable with the mat or platform that you have chosen for his place, allow him to become familiar with it first – encourage him to sniff it, walk over it, or eat a few treats off of it – before you begin the game.

After the dog readily goes to his place when you stand next to it, then it is time to add the command “Place”.

The next step is to work from a little farther distance away – stand back from the place a couple of feet and stare at it – stay at this distance until the dog goes to his “place” all by himself. The moment he sets foot on it, toss him a treat—or maybe several! Bravo!! Gradually increase the distance you are from the place in small increments.

 Place is a wonderful game for shy dogs – it is confidence building as they learn “their place” is a great place to be – Good things always happen when they go to their place! This can be a powerful tool for meeting new people because if they are in a positive emotional state when on their place, they will be more likely to engage a new person in a more confident and friendly manner. Soon, they will learn not only is it great to go to my place, but I can also meet nice people there – because after all, only GREAT things happen when I am on my place! Place is also very helpful for dogs that need to learn impulse control. It can be used as a foundation for teaching stay or wait – the dog must remain on the place until you tell him that he can get off. Place and See It Drop It work well together for those impulsive types!

Note: A dog crate can also be designated as the dog’s place. Dogs can learn to race into their crates by playing crate games – This can actually be a pretty impressive trick to see when the dog makes a mad dash across a room to dive into his crate!

LEAVE IT!

It is always a good idea for dogs to learn how to take treats gently from your hand. They should learn how to “LEAVE IT” and not grab it from your hand until it is offered to them. You can teach this skill readily to any dog that wants the food you are holding.

Here are a few simple methods for doing that – If you are clever, these too can be fun games for dogs learning this important skill!

LEAVE IT (method 1)

1. Hold a tasty treat in your fist.
2. Hold your fist out to the dog with the treat inside.
3. The dog will likely investigate your fist – sniff, paw, lick...try to nibble...

4. Wait quietly until he stops and moves his nose away from your fist: the instant he does this, say “YES” or click, and open your hand and let him eat the treat from your flat palm.
5. Remember to add the cue when the dog is reliably refraining from getting the treat – you can say “LEAVE IT”.
6. When he is doing well, raise the bar (make the game a little harder) – Try offering him the treat in an open hand. The goal is for him not to take it until you give him permission to do so—Be prepared to close your fist around the treat if he tries!
7. When he is doing well, try doing this in different situations – treat on a chair, treat on the ground, etc.
8. Remember to add the cue when the dog is reliably refraining from getting the treat – you can say “LEAVE IT”. You should also use a cue to let him know when he has permission to take the treat – “TREAT”.

LEAVE IT (method 2)

1. Hold a dry biscuit in one fist and a higher value treat (and your clicker if you are using one) behind your back.
2. Hold your fist out to the dog with the biscuit inside.
3. The dog will likely investigate your fist – sniff, paw, lick...
4. Wait quietly until he stops and moves his nose away from your fist: the instant he does this, say “YES” or click + feed him the high value treat from behind your back.
5. Remember to add the cue when the dog is reliably refraining from getting the biscuit – you can say “LEAVE IT”.
6. When he is doing well, raise the bar (make the game a little harder) – Try offering him the biscuit in an open hand. The goal is for him not to take it so be prepared to close your fist around the treat if he tries! If he successfully refrains from trying to get the biscuit, say “YES” or click + feed him the high value treat from behind your back.
7. When he is doing well, try doing this in different situations – biscuit on a chair, biscuit on the ground, etc.
8. Remember to add the cue when the dog is reliably refraining from getting the biscuit – you can say “LEAVE IT”.

LEAVE IT (method 3) *Note: This method is not recommended for hand shy or fearful dogs.

1. Hold a tasty treat in your hand.
2. Position your hand palm up with the treat between your thumb and forefinger, and the rest of your fingers closed gently over your palm. Offer the treat to the dog and let him take it. Repeat this a few times in a row until he has happily taken several treats from your hand.
3. Next, hold a treat between your thumb and forefinger, but change the position of your hand such that your palm is facing down with your other fingers closed gently over it. When the dog approaches to take the treat, encourage him to move away by straightening your fingers out and waving them or gently pushing his face to block his

advances. The amount of insistence you use will depend on the dog, but NEVER hit the dog and be very careful not to frighten the dog with your hand.

4. Wait quietly until he stops and moves his nose away from your hand: the instant he does this, say “YES” or click, and return your hand to the original position (palm up) and let him have the treat.
5. The position of your hand becomes the dog’s cue as to whether or not he may take the treat. This tends to slow down a dog that wants to snatch the treat right out of your hand because he learns that he must look to see what position your hand is in before he can approach and take the treat. For some dogs, this works very nicely!

PHYSICAL PLAY

Cultivating a playful relationship with a dog is a healthy thing to do. It helps to think about how dogs play with one another—and then try to physically engage! Example – play stance, tag with your hand, jump up for joy! Run a few steps together – WOO HOO!

Some dogs show little interest in toys and eat the food you toss them, but don’t really seem to be “in the game”. Sometimes, these same dogs LIGHT UP and COME ALIVE if you bow at them and playfully tag them on the rump. That being said, you always need to proceed with caution when you play physical games with unfamiliar dogs. Physical play may be best suited for engaging dogs that have been in the shelter for at least several days.

Before attempting to engage in physical play, it is important that you have some familiarity with the dog and that he/she appears comfortable with you. Keep in mind that your attempts at physical play may not be understood by the dog and could be perceived as scary or even threatening. It is very important to carefully observe body language and to be confident and friendly, and perhaps a bit silly—not too serious—when you try to engage a dog in play. If you are comfortable with the dog and he/she appears comfortable with you, then give it a try! The goal is to be safe and have FUN!

The following physical games are described:

- Gotcha
- Tag
- Hide and seek
- Go wild and freeze
- Touch, lift, spin and other “fun” behaviors



GOTCHA

Note: This game is not actually physical play, BUT it is a skame I play with dogs that are new to me before I engage them in physical play. This game lets me communicate to them that if I reach out towards them, it's all good!

With one hand, reach out and gently touch the dog's neck as though to take him by the collar and say GOTCHA. At precisely the same time, use your other hand to give him a treat—just feed it right to him—pop it right in his mouth!

Once he is comfortable, do this from various positions—sitting, standing, and walking. The goal is for the dog to welcome you to reach for him and take him by the collar. He associates your reach with good things happening!

 This is a great skame to play with any dog – and has many foundational applications. Few things are more important than being able to reach for a dog's collar without inducing fear. This is an important skame for all dogs and can be especially helpful for shy and fearful dogs.

TAG

At a distance from the dog, assume your best play stance (wide stance, knees bent), smile with your mouth open and look at him sideways with squinty eyes—then, laterally hop towards the dog (who should be looking at you). If he does not look afraid, reach out (without looming over him) and playfully touch or gently push at his neck, shoulder or rump—then move away. Don't come on too strong at first – easy does it until you can gauge his response! If he comes after you with playful excitement – you can run a few steps – giggling is good. Depending on his response, getting on the ground and engaging him might be good – repeat what was fun for both parties! Adjust or end the game as needed if any unruly behavior is triggered!

 Tag can be the ticket to healthy fun engagement with people for some dogs – so don't rule it out as a way to connect and play with a dog. But, that being said, it can frighten some dogs or result in over-arousal for others. Remember: games should NEVER induce fear and if unruly behaviors are triggered, the game should be modified to prevent such, or another game should be played instead. For dogs that get too rowdy with tag, consider playing GO WILD AND FREEZE, or redirect the dog with LIFT or SPIN (described below). Finally, if the dog likes to run while carrying a toy, you can try playing while he is doing so because he can't mouth YOU as long as he has the TOY in his mouth. However, he can still join you for some jumping-running-hopping FUN together!

HIDE AND SEEK

This game is just as it sounds – you leave the room quickly and go hide, then call out and wait – Hopefully, the dog will search for you and find you! Then, once he does, there is some giggling, crawling on the floor, hiding your face, petting, etc...

 This game is great for foster dogs – it can help break the ice and build your relationship with them.

GO WILD AND FREEZE

Here's another game that is played just as it sounds – First you look at the dog and say GO WILD – and you jump around, make some noise, hop laterally, get silly, get excited. Hopefully, he will be encouraged to do the same and you can playfully engage and connect together. Then, after a moment or two of wildness, say FREEZE and turn away from him, cross your arms, and say nothing at all – When he is calm, re-engage him and GO WILD again.

 This is a good game for strong, young, impulsive dogs. It teaches them how to turn ON and OFF and rewards appropriate behavior with play! It is actually quite fun to play a group version of this – one dog with more than one person – all going WILD! and then FREEZING. This is truly an amusing and quite useful game for dogs and humans alike.

TOUCH

Teach the dog to touch your hand. Hold the palm of your hand near his face. Wait for him to touch it with his nose, and then give him a treat. Keep your hand still once it is near his face. Do not reward mouthing. As he learns this, gradually put your hand in other positions so he has to move to touch it. This is the behavior we want to shape: the dog seeks your outstretched hand—and it is a fun and positive experience!

Building on the foundation of touch and/or following your hand, introduce LIFT and SPIN

LIFT

Hold your hand above the dog's head such that he has to lift up to touch it. This can be used to shape an impressive leap to touch your hand, which is FUN for many dogs.

SPIN

Move your right hand in a small clockwise circle over the dog's nose. As he follows it, he will SPIN in a tight circle. Gradually fade your hand over time as he learns the motion—he'll begin to rely less and less on following your hand and will SPIN with only a hand gesture as a cue. Many dogs LOVE to spin!

Other “tricks” may also be fun – For example, SHAKE or WAVE or JUMP through a hula hoop. Trick training is fun and can be useful for connecting with adopters – Go ahead: show off! And, most dogs enjoy doing tricks because of all the positive attention and associations created with them. In fact, tricks often end up becoming stress busters and mood boosters in and of themselves! Everyone loves silly pet tricks!

 TOUCH and various Tricks are great for all dogs!

BE SAFE AND HAVE FUN! GAME ON!!

RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

Videos:

- ACT Canine Body Postures by Hetts and Estep. This is a basic canine body language video (a must see for anyone who works with dogs).
- Dog Play by Patricia McConnell (body language of canine play).

These and many other canine body language videos are available at TawzerDog.com and Dogwise.com.

FREE Posters from Dr. Sophia Yin:

- How to Greet a Dog: <http://info.drSophiaYin.com/greeting-poster/>
- Body Language of Fear in Dogs: <http://info.drSophiaYin.com/fearful-body-language/>

Book: Play with your Dog by Pat Miller (available at Dogwise.com)

This is an easy to read book with numerous clever ideas for playing with dogs.

Playing for Life! – Aimee Sadler’s shelter dog playgroup program – all about dog-dog play!

<http://dogsplayingforlife.com/>

