



DOG PARK DOs & DON'Ts

Dog parks can be a tail-waggin' good time—but it's important that you and your pet be prepared so you can minimize the dangers.

- ✓ **DO** make sure your pet is up to date on all vaccinations and parasite prevention! Because you can't be sure how responsible other pet owners are about their pet's preventative care, you need to make sure your pet is protected. If you go to the dog park regularly, you may even want to consider having more frequent fecal examinations for your pet.
- ✗ **DON'T** avoid the dog park if you think your pet would enjoy and could benefit from the exercise and socialization. That said, not all pets have the right temperament and training for this kind of environment. If your pet is fearful, reactive, or doesn't seem to know how to "play" with other canines, a dog park is not the place for them.
- ✓ **DO** work on commands with your dog regularly, such as recall, "leave it", "sit" and "stay." These are not only essential at the dog park, but can also reinforce training when there are other animals and people around.
- ✗ **DON'T** be distracted by your phone or other pet owners—keep an eye on your pet at all times and know the signs of aggression and anxiety. Understand dog body language and how to safely remove your pet from potentially dangerous situations.
- ✓ **DO** pick up after your dog. No explanation should be necessary.
- ✗ **DON'T** bring food, tiny children, or dogs in heat to the dog park. Food can be a source of competition and some dogs don't have nice manners. Groups of running, excited canines—some of them large and very strong—can seriously injure small kids. And a female in heat at the dog park? That's a recipe for aggression (and puppies).
- ✓ **DO** understand that there's always some risk when you take your pet to a dog park. Aggressive, untrained dogs, infectious disease transmission and injury are all possibilities. But if you're prepared and your canine is personable and protected, a dog park can be a great way to add some fun and socialization to your pet's life!

Need to get your pet's vaccinations and parasite prevention up to date so you can join the dog park party? Book an appointment today!

