

Watch For These Common Signs of Stress In Your Dog

By Lisa Desatnik, CPDT-KA, FFCP, FDM, CPBC
www.SoMuchPETential.com



If your dog exhibits any of these signs of stress, take action to make a change that will support your dog to feel comfortable in that environment. This may include stopping the way you are currently interacting with your dog, giving your dog distance, or changing your body posture. These are common ways a dog may show that he is not feeling good about what is happening, before your dog escalates to a hard stare, growl, or worse.

Closed Mouth

Turning Away Or Shifting Body Away

Tongue flick

Breathing Changes

Rolling onto back (depending on context,
often seen with other stress signals)

Excessive grooming

Hypervigilance scanning the environment

Rapid Panting/Heavy Breathing

Blinking

Speeding or slowing down the pace of eating

Whites around the eyes

Yawning

Body shake off

Stiff body muscles

Inability to settle

Lowered body posture

Humping

Zooming

Difficulty learning

Excessive mouthing

Growling, Snarling, Biting

It is important to note the context as some of these behaviors may mean different things in different contexts. A dog may jump on the sofa next to you and flop over on his back indicating a belly message; however, if I lean over a dog and that dog rolls over, it very well could be that dog is asking for distance.

An excellent, easy-to-read book on dog body language (written for kids or adults) is [Doggie Language by Lili Chin](#).