

Dogs Speak Without Words

Dogs speak with more than just their mouths. Different canine body parts convey different messages. For example, ears that are erect, tense and forward often mean the dog is attentive and curious. Scared and worried dogs often hold their ears against their heads. Eyes are also determiners of a dog's mood. Direct staring means confidence and often dominance. Soft eyes are usually seen on content, relaxed dogs, while dogs with dilated, large pupils are fearful and aggressive.

Dogs also use their mouths to display their feelings. Lip curling and teeth showing may be signs of aggression. Yawning, which lowers a dog's blood pressure, usually means stress, not fatigue. Tongue flicking often means uneasiness and uncertainty. Dogs that mouth your arm or hand usually just want to play, but if they use their teeth they are challenging you.

Pay attention to your dog's hair on his coat in order to detect his or her emotions. A calm dog displays a smooth coat from shoulders to hips. Hair along the spine will stand up on a scared or challenged dog. A scared dog will also often tuck his or her tail, while an alert dog will hold his or her tail straight up and wag it.