



Dog Park User Guide

SWCDP User Guide is arranged by topic via Table of Contents so members can scroll through quickly to find topics of specific interest. We have packed the document with a great base of info on a variety of helpful subjects – all with the intent of helping our members enjoy the dog park and find answers to frequently asked questions. We hope you will find every page useful.

If you have further questions – contact SWCDP Secretary: secretary.swdogpark@gmail.com

We are happy to help you enjoy your dog park



Opened October 2006 . . . Celebrating 16+ Funtastic Years

501(c) (3)

Southwest City Dog Park
is a non-profit organization.
SWCDP has no paid staff; we rely on
our members to help manage every
aspect of dog park operations.

Will you help us?

Mailing Address

Southwest City Dog Park
P.O. Box 191152
St. Louis, MO 63119

Message Center

314/567-2012

For quicker response – use email; phone
messages not always checked on daily basis.

www.swcitydogpark.org

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Dog Park Tour



Street View



*Sidewalks & Ramps
Muddy Slope Gone!*

New sidewalk, steps & ADA compliant ramp installed in 2014 and electric line run in 2016 thanks to funds allocated by Alderman Larry Arnowitz and the St Louis City Parks Dept. For added safety, Raising Cane's Restaurant funded our front handrail. New front fence and gate including our access control system for improved security was installed in 2019 from SWCDP operating funds. And we continue to maintain an expanded front garden through our volunteer help – we consider the garden our “face” to the community and thanks to the City for allowing us to use their park.

Front signage greets & informs the community about SWCDP. Within our “**Clean and Green**” initiatives, SWCDP donated and installed a poop bag station for Willmore Park visitors – to encourage them to pick up after their dogs while visiting the park; this bag station is maintained by SWCDP volunteers.

Entry Area



We have a double-gate entry as *required by City Ordinance 66595*. Members must enter the dog park while dog is still leashed – but remove leash prior to entering the Main or Alternate play areas. This is considered an important “transitional” area. Give each dog plenty of space; don't pile up in heavy traffic entry areas. Dogs are overly excited when arriving and need space and time to get to their designated play area.

Members must enter one household at a time – using their assigned fob; do not allow other members or non-members in under your fob as this breaks down safety protocol. Gate entry log is a critical SWCDP tool that allows management to know who is on property at any given time – important for safety and accountability reasons and to reduce trespassing issues.



SWCDP Lost & Found – always check L&F (blue container) if you lose something – members are good about putting lost items there – check frequently. Contact SWCDP directly if high valuables such as wallet, car keys, expensive jewelry are lost. **SWCDP Bag Bin** in the entry; members are expected to keep an eye on bag supply, bring used plastic grocery bags as needed for poop pick up. No tiny or large bags, please. This is our central storage supply; members take turns distributing the bags to various bag holders located throughout the dog park.



SWCDP Message Boards & the arched sign in the garden were made possible by donations from our Veterinary supporters (Affton Vet Clinic, Big Bend Vet Clinic, Watson Vet Clinic, Webster Groves Animal Hospital) and additional operating funds. The large board offers emergency and informational contacts and general management info – updated as needed. The small board is an interactive messaging space for members to post goods or services. Topics must be dog related, such as dog events, lost dogs, etc – posting is good for 60 days and if info is still viable members may re-post. No political, religious, or potentially controversial postings are allowed.

SWCDP Mail Box (locked & tamper proof) provided to deposit reports, checks, other hard copy communiqués.

Dog Wash



SWCDP Dog Wash (Water Station 5) located near exit is available year round so pups that smell funky from the doggie pools, got a little muddy, or rolled in a stinky who-knows-what can clean up before going home. A two level wash table is provided as a human convenience. This is only a rinse off station, water only. **No Shampoo allowed.** We have no waste water out take; water simply settles into the surrounding ground. We don't want chemicals damaging our garden or have soap build up. Remember to turn off the hydrant by the handle and drain extra water from the hose line to prevent breakage. Clean up after yourself (pick up wads of hair, etc). Trash can available.

SWCDP Boot Brush for humans to scrape mud from their shoes. The Dog Wash was made possible by members donating lots of cash and sweat equity. No operating funds were used for this project. You can read the story via the plaque hanging at dog wash and see photos of BIG DIG III on our website under capital improvement. A huge volunteer project!



Gangway

High Energy Area!

Connects entry area to Main playground. **Unleash your dog before entering** – so every dog has equal, free movement. Dogs already in dog park may be eager to say hello. Enter with confidence – encourage your dog to follow you to the open area. Hesitation or stopping only gives time for the dogs to pile up. Keep moving

Dog Park Tour



Continued

Main Park



Our Main playground is where most of the action takes place – lots of different play styles and energy levels – the playground dynamics changes frequently as a variety of dogs and people come and go. SWCDP provides several metal picnic tables and benches scattered throughout the park and moved occasionally to allow turf to regenerate. Tables and benches provided by our operating funds.



Main Park Agility Course



Available year-round

Agility is fun and often a nice break from the group play. Agility builds a bond between canine and human, strengths dog muscles and coordination, and helps your 4-Legged build self-confidence. We offer jumps, tunnel, pause table, weave poles; plans to add additional equipment. Equipment donated by a SWCDP members and operating funds.



Main Park

Winter Shelter Straw Maze



Available Fall thru Spring

Temporary shelter offers nice break from the wind and gives humans a place to congregate and warm up. When volunteer crew is available for set up and take down – SWCDP installs winter straw maze, with ramps, hallways, hide & jump areas. Dogs and humans alike love this play station. Provided by operating funds.



Main Park Alternate Park

Pools



Available June thru October – Main and Alternate

In Main, we have a pool pad and maintain 3 pools of assorted sizes and shapes. In Alternate, we have 1 small pool which is moved around on grass. Dogs who love water cannot resist splashing and soaking in these pools during warm weather months.



Alternate Park

Respect SWCDP “Pecking Order”

Priority to small dogs (under 30 lbs) – they have first right of usage. The space is also intended for special needs dogs or humans (recovering from illness/surgery provided they are not contagious) and is wheelchair accessible. When space not being used by small dogs - senior dogs or dogs with a lower energy level may use area. When none of these groups are using the space – members may use for small play groups or taking a break from Main. **In all circumstances members must speak to each other to determine the best and fairest use of the Alternate Dog Park when multiple dogs are on site.** Take turns if necessary.

Alternate Park

Patio Special Events



SWCDP offers several annual events when volunteer help and funds available, usually with various booths, games and more. Our patio was made possible via combination of funds from our operating account and the City sidewalk project (2014), via Sticka Brothers donating additional labor and materials.



Clean and Green



Blue recycling cans are provided in Main and Alternate areas – members are encouraged to recycle. **Don't put dog poop or plastic bags in blue cans** – they contaminate the recycling process. Several grey & tan trash cans are provided throughout the dog park for poop and all other trash. Members are required to pick up after their dog and place feces in the grey and tan containers. **“Pick up one and then one more!”** is the member approach that we encourage. Both types of receptacles are managed by SWCDP volunteers and emptied on a regular basis. Cans, can bags and bag holders provided thru operating funds. Please help keep our dog park “clean and green”.

SWCDP Merchandise



Ask about our high quality SWCDP merchandise...

We have limited inventory on hand that includes a variety of colors and sizes: t-shirts, tank tops, hoodies, sweatshirts, hats, caps, totes. SWCDP may place special orders, depending on member interest and ability to meet minimum order requirements. SWCDP Merch promotes our dog park in the community and is a revenue source for dog park upkeep and improvements.



Tips for Success



Park ID Important. Keep your Fob and Password to the SWCDP website (use the email and password from membership registration) with you at all times. Dogs are required to wear their SWCDP membership tag. You will need access to SWCDP website to see our Dog Member Roster. Put this info in your cell phone and a hard copy either in your wallet or car glove compartment, so that you have a back-up in case you forget or lose.



Dog Member Roster. A list of member dogs (name, breed, color, tag #, and picture) and owner's first name is updated frequently and available on SWCDP website. You must be signed in as a member to access. Helpful if you need to know a dog's name or owner's first name, or check for SWCDP membership authenticity (help reduce trespassing). This is a wonderful resource – members appreciate having it.



Temporary Closings. For extreme muddy conditions, repair/maintenance projects, or other turf or safety considerations, dog park will close for short periods of time.

Dog Park closed every Tuesday 8am to Noon during warm weather months

SWCDP Website, Home Page Open/close status updated daily – always check website before coming to dog park during inclement weather.

HOTLINE: 314/567-2012 #2 When necessary to give members more details, we will leave info on Hotline or for special situations we may send emails.



Start with short visits. Leave on a successful note, lengthen your visit as your dog demonstrates that he is enjoying the experience – ***don't force him***. As your dog gains confidence he will understand this is his time and his playground.



The Greeters. Dogs already on site are eager to greet newcomers. If you have a "greeter" you should stay close by and not allow your dog to pile-on or overwhelm arriving dog. Most dogs need a chance to move thru the gangway and adjust to playground energy. If you are just arriving, your dog must be off leash when entering the gangway. For successful greetings – all dogs must have same freedom to move around as needed. Leashed dogs will feel trapped if restrained while the other dogs have free movement.



Hold on to dog leash. Keep the leash with you at all times, in case you need to take control of your canine. This is both a SWCDP rule and a City Ordinance.



Keep moving! Most of our 4-Leggeds tend to play close to their humans. When humans congregate for long periods in one spot – so do the 4-Leggeds. We want to encourage our pups to run and move. Doggie brawls often happen when multiple dogs hang out in same space; 3-4 dogs piled on top of one another rarely works out well. Help keep things interesting for your pooch – give them new focus. ***Standing in one place also destroys grass.***



Take a break from electronic devices. Membership rules require members keep an eye on their dog (s) at all times and be within a reasonable proximity in case of need to redirect attention - good time to put your cell phone and other electronic devices away. Treat yourself to a break from the daily stresses. Bond with your dog; enjoy the park.

Tips for Success

Continued



Excessive barking is rude. Some dogs are very vocal and use barking as an invitation to play. Others use barking as warning to back off. Either way it can be annoying but members must understand both. And sometimes dogs don't pick up on the cues either and the humans may need to step in. Please re-direct your 4-Legged's attention if he fixates on a dog (s) and ruins their play with his barking – but first give the dogs a chance to work it out on their own.



Smaller dogs and the prey risk. While SWCDP does not currently have a rule about smaller dogs being required to only use the Alternate Dog Park – it is strongly recommended. Small dogs on the Main playground run the risk of being viewed as prey, especially when they run, bark, etc. – and this puts an unfair burden on the larger dogs who misinterpret them as prey. Also, given the significant difference in weight & size, a small dog could easily be injured even during a nice play session with a much larger dog.



Visiting during extreme weather. It is always much colder and windier on the dog park grounds than in your own backyard – the wind whips across the field at a robust clip. Bring extra warm clothing if you plan to stay awhile but also keep vigilance regarding your 4-Legged (s). Tips of ears & tails and paws can sustain damage if allowed to get too cold. And on hot days, remember dogs can overheat even in mild spring temperatures – keep them hydrated with frequent rest breaks – watch closely.



Water Stations

Water Station 1 – Open November thru March
 Water Station 2 – Open June thru October
 Water Station 3 – Open June thru October
 Water Station 4 – Open June thru October
 Water Station 5 – Open Year-Round



Water Buckets

Multiple white, plastic water buckets are available during warm weather; members are encouraged to keep filled with fresh water – and distribute around the park. Heavier, black buckets are available in the winter. In freezing weather, it may be necessary to bring jugs of water, if water faucet is frozen.



Pools – Hoses – Mud

Pool etiquette means using the water as it relates to what is good for the group, not what each individual feels like doing. Change water in pools when dirty but not excessively. We do not have adequate drainage, and constant pool dumping creates serious water standing issues – which will require pool closing until the area dries out. Hoses are intended for quick pool refill, not for spraying your dog as this also creates mud problems.



Dog Ears . . .

can get infected easily. Ears should be dried after each bath or pool activity.



Ear Troubles?
Try Epi-Otic Advanced

Important Information

Leash and Collars, Coming and Going

Use your leash while in the parking lot or just outside the dog park. This is the law but it is also a matter of common courtesy to your fellow dog park users. UNLEASH your dog inside the double-gated areas while other dogs are not immediately close to your dog. When a leashed dog is greeted by an off leash dog (s), the leashed dog will not be able to display normal doggie greetings and he may feel trapped or threatened. If he does feel this way he may act defensively and a tense situation may arise. When all dogs are off leash they can display normal dog greeting signals and they can get away from a pressure situation if they feel the need. This is very important.

Retractable leashes or "Flexie" leads are not a good idea even in the parking lot or outside areas of the park – and they are not allowed inside the dog park. These long thin cords can get entangled around people or dog's legs with potential for panic or injury to others. These leashes can offer no help to you if your dog gets into an altercation with another dog while inside the dog park. A regular 6ft leather or nylon leash, which you should carry with you while in the park, can act as an emergency leash to help separate dogs or quickly get control of them. Just put the snap end of the leash thru the hard loop and turn the leash handle inside-out. This leash can then be quickly slipped over the dog's neck or back leg to gain control of a situation without having to reach in close to grab a collar to attach a leash by the snap.

The collar your dog wears while inside the dog park is another important consideration. A buckle, snap or Martingale-style (leather or nylon) collar, with your dog's tags attached, is the safest choice for a dog in the dog park. Pinch, prong, choke training collars and loose-fitting collars are not allowed. These collars have caused injury and death to dogs when playing dogs get caught in the links (catch teeth, collar, etc.) and cannot get free. The tendency for both dogs when something is caught on a link - is to pull in the opposite directions, seriously choking one of the dogs. If one of these collars is necessary for you to control your dog, you should refrain from visiting the dog park until you achieve better control of your dog through obedience training. But at a minimum, these collars must be removed upon entry to the dog park, and replaced with an appropriate collar. Please, don't put your dog or other member dogs at risk.

Children, Safety First

Dog parks are not children's playgrounds and extra care must be taken. **Children under the age of 8 are not allowed. Period.**

Carefully consider whether you want to bring children to the dog park. In most households, the 4-Leggeds are considered "family", so it is a natural extension to want to bring children to the doggie playground. But, it is important that parents are informed and stay alert to certain issues in order to make good decisions.

Your child may be familiar and get along fine with your own dog, however, realize that while only non-aggressive dogs are allowed in the dog park, some dogs do not live with or understand small children and may be unpredictable around them. Member dogs are expected to be under control by their owner, but **SWCDP does not require that member dogs have experience around children**. SWCDP does not guarantee any specific level of training of such dogs nor can SWCDP guarantee the child's safety while on the dog's playground.

Dogs engaged in play or simply running and having fun can easily knock down adults – and frequently do. A young child could be unintentionally hurt, especially by a large dog – or group of dogs – if dog (s) bumps into or knocks down the child.

If you want to bring your child to the dog park (only those 8 and older) – please note: Children who have not been around dogs could suddenly become very frightened by a friendly dog, and dogs sense fear and sometimes react to that fear in odd ways.

It is not easy to closely watch your children and WATCH YOUR DOG while in a dog park but both must be done equally to ensure safety for all. The dog park, especially our Main Playground, is a high energy, high action playground and the situation can go awry within seconds – members are expected to keep an eye on their dog (s) at all times.

SUGGESTION FOR FAMILIES WITH SMALL CHILDREN

Those who wish to show younger children the "doggie" activity may wish to bring some lawn chairs and sit outside the SWCDP fence (excellent viewing from the ball park side) – and simply observe and enjoy up close while keeping youngsters safe by the protection of the fence. It is recommended that should one choose to do this – consider doing so when no ball games are in session, for additional safety precautions.

Dog Play Styles

Dogs play with one another in four basic styles. Some of the different styles blend well for nice, compatible play, while others do not combine well. It is important to be aware of your dog's play style and play preferences before you bring your dog to the dog park, especially if your dog is very shy or timid or if your dog has a high-energy, bordering on bullying tendencies. It is up to you to seek out playmates that are compatible with your dog – or keep your dog moving, or use the Alternate Dog Park, as situations and behavior warrant. All dogs need exercise and socialization – but each dog has his own degree of comfort – it is YOUR job to make sure your dog – and those sharing the dog park with you – find the right mix.



- 1. Rough and Highly Physical Body Contact:** These dogs play by pushing into one another's space. They run hard, clash, rear up on their hind legs and then clash like rutting elk. There are lots of body slams and hip checks, all done with a fair amount of brutality. You'll see lots of hard impact and physical contact. This style is common to the bully breeds (Pit Bulls, Boxers, etc.) but popular with many other breeds & mixes as well.
- 2. Chase or Be Chased:** These dogs play by instigating a chase by running and egging another dog on. They usually like to both chase and be chased. These dogs like to run and the excitement of being chased. This style is common to many breeds & mixes, especially the herding breeds and sometimes sight hounds.
- 3. Mouth Wrestlers:** These dogs play with their mouths. Usually one dog lies down with his butt in the air while the other dog dances around his head, their mouths engaged. There is the lazy, lying down role and the agile, leap up and over role. There is often vocalizing. Various breeds and breed mixes seem to play in this style.
- 4. Scare and Be Scared:** These dogs play in the same way that children watch a scary movie – they can't help but thrill themselves by peeking through their fingers during the scary part. These dogs are not frightened or scared of other dogs; they just like to play by poking and jabbing at the other dogs. They both freeze and then suddenly burst out in play. Often these dogs keep their ears pinned back, don't look directly at the other, and one will parry forward and poke and prod to get the other one to play. Both dogs get equally thrilled by play and the sudden explosions of activity. Various breeds & breed mixes seem to play in this style.

TWO MORE PROFILES, JUST FOR GENERAL INFO

- 1. Just Hangin':** Enjoys doing own thing; sniffing, watching, just happy being there, may check out other dogs but then content to go off on own.
- 2. Fun Police:** Not really a play style - but enjoys being Playground Monitor, will lay and watch or circle around - will break up any dog interaction that seems overly intense, by his/her own standards.

Dog Language & Signals

Please Leave Me Alone . . .

Dogs that are experiencing stress and wish to be left alone will use Cutoff or Calming Signals. These are normal behaviors, but if you see two or more of these signals during dog interactions, you should defuse the situation by distracting or separating the dogs.

Some dogs are natural peacemakers & will walk between the two dogs that are tense and 'split' them apart. These Peacemakers will not make hard eye contact and will be nonchalant in their approach.



- Sniffing
- Yawning
- Paw Raising
- Lip Licking
- Head Turn
- Scratching
- Sitting or laying down
- Sneezing
- Shaking Off
- Pretending Interest in Environment

Please, Please Take Me Home . . .

If your dog is exhibiting any of these signs of tension and anxiety for longer than 10 minutes, please take him home immediately; he is not having fun. Staying longer will not make him more comfortable.

- Pressing into your body
- Ears Back and Tight Against Head
- Tail Tightly Tucked / Low Tail
- 'Whale' Eye
- Dilated Pupils
- Slow/Little Movement
- Pacing
- Hiding
- Crouching on the ground
- Freezing in place
- Trembling
- Yawning
- Lip Licking
- Excessive Salivations
- Panting
- Shallow/Fast Respirations
- Whining/crying
- Stiff Posture
- Stretching
- Sweaty Paws
- Inappropriate Urination
- Penis Crowning

Dog Language & Signals

Continued

Signs of Potential Conflict . . .

Dogs that are on the offensive will display these signals prior to actual physical contact.

Upon seeing two or more of these signals in combination, you should immediately defuse the situation by distracting or separating the dogs, and perhaps a brief time-out to allow your dog to reduce arousal. Dogs that continue to exhibit these signals should be removed from the park immediately.

- Up on Toes, Body Leaning Forward
- Tense Body with Stiff Walk
- Ears Up and Forward OR Tightly Pressed to Skull
- Prolonged Stare, Dilated Pupils
- Hair Raised on Shoulders or Base of Tail
- Tail High, Tail Held Still or Waving Slowly
- Baring Teeth, Growling, Snarling Barking
- Lips Drawn Back or Mouth Tight

Behavior

Proper greeting behavior entails the dogs sniffing each other. Growling and snapping at a dog that is boisterous in greeting should not be inhibited. It is a polite warning that communicates 'settle down' to a rude dog. Dogs that resist appropriate sniffing by scooting away or sitting down are not yet ready to visit the dog park.

If your dog is not having fun, GO HOME! Usually, 30-60 minutes of interaction is enough time to meet an average dog's social, mental and physical needs. If you are new to the dog park, start with short visits, increase as your dog's comfort level and enjoyment increases. Visiting the dog park during "off peak" hours (Week days Mid-day or Weekends after 8:00pm) is helpful, too.

Self-control is the expected behavior on the dog park grounds. Boisterous" or "Overly-Friendly" dogs must be controlled by their owners. Examples of inappropriate behavior includes: mounting another dog, circling another dog while barking hysterically. Mounting is an indication that excitement levels are too high – dogs that are mounting should be called away for a calm-down period.

Know Your Dog

Before you use the dog park, Know Your Dog! Check your ego at the gate and be realistic rather than idealistic when it comes to your dog's temperament. Is he a bully and pushy with other dogs? Is he shy and timid? Is he old and might feel vulnerable in this environment? Dog parks are great for most dogs, but some do not like being there. People must WATCH THEIR DOG very carefully to ensure the dog wants to be there. If your dog lives with another dog he may get along fine with that dog, but if he hasn't been introduced to strange dogs on a regular basis he may need time to adjust to many different doggie personalities he may encounter at the dog park.







Aggressive dogs, even if he is your "best buddy", are not appreciated by others, and not allowed at the dog park. No matter how cute you think he is and no matter how much you want your dog to be able to use the park, if he's acting aggressively he needs to leave. To some humans, there is a fine line between "aggressive" and "physical" play – and each dog and each situation can vary. Work together with the other dog owners to determine the correct action, if any, to take. Always, be respectful of the other members and if it appears that it is YOUR dog causing the ruckus – or making the majority of members uncomfortable – then YOU must take charge of the situation, and correct or remove your dog immediately.



If your dog has not interacted with other dogs and you are not sure if he will get along you can find out how he may react when meeting other dogs. Invite another owner with a dog that is known to be 'dog friendly' to meet at a fenced location unfamiliar to both dogs ('neutral territory'). Separate them and let them both go off leash (or drop the leash on your dog to and allow it to drag the ground). Let them meet on their own terms. If an altercation does break out you will be right there to intervene.

Fights and Bites

FIGHT!!! What Do We Do?

	REMOVE ALL SPECTATORS If your dog is not involved, calmly call him to you and get out of the area as quickly as possible. Wading in to help can signal your dog to join the fray!
	REMAIN QUIET Stay calm and QUIET. Shouting rarely helps and can be misinterpreted as ‘excited barking’.
	INTERRUPT THE FIGHT WITH NOISE / SPRAYS Attempt to interrupt the fight by blowing on a loud whistle or an air horn. A blast of water from a hose is effective and preferred. Spray Shield (<i>formerly known as Direct Stop</i>), a humane citronella formula, can also be used, but must be sprayed directly in the dogs’ faces. SWCDP does not condone pepper spray or other harsh chemicals. When the dogs break apart, the owners should immediately leash the dogs. Loop the leashes around the dog’s necks and fasten the clasp some distance away.
	INTERRUPT THE FIGHT PHYSICALLY As a last resort, the owners of the involved dogs should grab their dogs. First, be sure all other dogs are removed from the immediate area. Next, each owner should grab their dog by the hind legs or tail, and lift their back ends off the ground. This technique will increase the chances of breaking the dogs apart, and lessen the possibility of being bitten. <u>Stay silent</u> , or speak only using a calm reassuring voice as you touch your dog. Once you succeed in separating the dogs, face them away from each other and securely attach their leashes. Move the dogs some distance away, and sit quietly and assess any injuries.
	AFTER THE FIGHT ALL owners who have been visiting the dog park during the fight and whose dogs were either involved directly, indirectly, or otherwise engaged emotionally, should take their dogs home for the day. Adrenaline will be flowing; emotions will be high and over stimulation can result in another altercation. After everyone has calmed down, the owners of the fighting dogs should quietly and unemotionally exchange contact information, as well as vaccination information. Owners are legally responsible for any injuries inflicted by their dog. SWCDP is <u>not</u> responsible for negotiating settlements.
	FILE AN INCIDENT REPORT, <i>maybe</i> Report incidents with injuries to SAIC. It is not necessary to file for fights that do not cause injury. If you have ongoing situations with a dog who is overly aggressive or a human who is not watching his dog, you may send a “note” to SAIC with dates and specific details including witnesses.

Understand Bite Inhibition Understand Bite Assessment

Most dogs learn bite inhibition before 3 months old from their litter mates & Mother. If they were not properly socialized early, it may take longer to learn. If your dog gets into fights and does not bite – he has learned to control his bite. If your dog inflicts puncture wounds or tears while playing or fighting – he has little to no bite inhibition and this can be dangerous.

According to Ian Dunbar, DVM (*world renowned dog behaviorist*), bites are categorized at six levels. Read more about this at: <https://www.dogstardaily.com/training/teaching-bite-inhibition>

Understand Growling Understand Bluster



Characteristically, growly and blustery dogs are middle-ranking males, who have limited experience and are insecure of their social standing and so, usually resort to bluff and protracted threats. Often the dog may growl incessantly to add major emphasis to a minor point. Most overtly aggressive dogs are all bark and no bite. Indeed, a true top dog is a rather cool and relaxed customer, who very rarely resorts to threats of any kind, let alone lengthy blustery bluffs.

But growling is also used as a legitimate warning. Some dogs have not learned the cues and continue to pursue a dog who has explicitly told him to back off. In these cases, often a fight will ensue – it is up to the owner’s vigilance and understanding of dog signals, and their dog’s tolerance & communication skills, in particular. <https://www.dogstardaily.com/training/fearful-growling>



Emergency & First Aid



Canine CPR

Remember ABCs

Airway - Breathing - Cardiac Compression

- **A** - Establish an airway. Safely check for debris from mouth.
- **B** - Blow 5-6 quick breaths into nostrils, 1 every 3-5 seconds (Mouth to nose ~16% oxygen)
- Check for pulse and mucous membrane color.
- If none, put both hands on the widest part of the chest cavity for dogs over 15lbs. Use thumb and forefingers for dogs under 15lbs.
- **C** - 80-120 compressions/min., alternate this with continued mouth to snout blowing. Each compression should depress the chest cavity by ~1/3.
- Scoop and run to Vet immediately.

Overheating

Heatstroke can be deadly.

Share this image to help pet parents learn the signs!



The signs of heatstroke include:

- Excessive panting
- Thick saliva
- Hyperventilation
- Anxiety
- Glassy eyes
- Dark/bright red tongue and gums
- Staggering
- Stupor
- Seizures
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Bleeding
- Coma

Heatstroke can be deadly. Share this image to help pet parents learn the signs!

Petfinder

Dogs don't recognize their activities are causing them to overheat; need help.

Symptoms

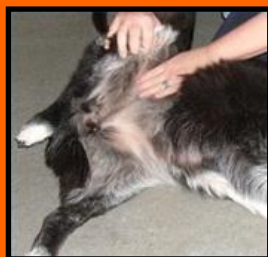
Excessive panting, thick saliva, hyperventilation, anxiety, glassy eyes, dark/bright red tongue and gums, staggering, stupor, seizures, vomiting, diarrhea, bleeding, coma

What To Do

Lower dog's temperature, douse him with cool (not cold) water, apply wet towels to head, stomach, feet, "armpits". Blow as much cool air as possible (maybe the car's a/c vents) on way to Vet, if necessary.

Where to Find Pulse

Femoral pulse is located high on the inner thigh where the leg meets the body.



If cannot find pulse, use left side of the chest behind elbow; count for 15 seconds and multiply by 4.

Puppies tend to have higher pulse, up to 220 bpm

Normal Vital Signs

Heart Rate at Play: 60 – 160 bpm

Rectal Temperature: 100°F – 102.5°F

Respiration Rate at Rest: 20 – 40 bpm

Know Your Pet's "Normal Vital Signs"

Trouble Signs - Emergency

Dog Size

Heart Rate

Small	<80bpm or >160bpm
Medium	<70bpm or >150bpm
Large	<60bpm or >140bpm

Rectal Temperature: <99°F or >103°F

Head Trauma

May be life-threatening

- Keep pet still & warm
- Hold head elevated or level to body
- Minimize pressure on head, neck, back
- Use stretcher, or keep body level in transport to emergency care

Impalement

Do not remove object

- Cut or dismantle object, if a permanent structure, to free the dog
- Apply gentle pressure with cloth
- Stabilize object, keep it from moving
- Use stretcher, keep level

Dog Bites

Even tiny bites can be serious

- Clean with antibacterial soap & warm water
- Apply pressure with cloth, cold pack to reduce swelling, as needed
- Seek Vet care: infections, tears, deep bites

Dog Stretchers located on MSD side of SWCDP "Big Box" (shipping container)

one large – one small

Contacts

Who You Gonna Call?



Always call 911 for Emergency Situations

Park Rangers

314/289-5350

Keep number in your cell phone

For situations such as trespassers who refuse to leave dog park, vandalism in progress, people on SWCDP grounds who have become unruly and pose a safety threat, or any other non-emergency situation that cannot be handled by members. Several Park Rangers are assigned specifically to South St Louis City area so they can respond City Park calls quickly. Please use discretion when choosing to contact the Park Rangers but know they stand ready to help when needed.

Organization

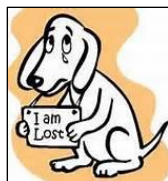
Contact Info

Service

Organization

Contact Info

Service



St Louis Lost Pets

www.stllostpets.org/

Collaboration: Animal Protective Association (APA), St. Louis County Animal Care and Control and the Humane Society of Missouri (HSMO)



CITY OF ST. LOUIS

ANIMAL CARE & CONTROL

<https://www.stlouis-mo.gov/government/departments/health/animal-care-control/index.cfm>

St Louis City contact for stray or injured animals

314/657-1500

314/231-1212

You must rescue & deliver. Call for instructions

Wildlife Rescue Center

1128 New Ballwin Rd
(Big Bend-New Ballas)
636/394-1880

Rehab -release injured rabbits, squirrels, game birds (*duck, geese, turkeys*), reptiles. Does not handle deer!

Wild Bird Rehabilitation

314/426-6400

Rehab and release

Song birds only

World Bird Sanctuary

636/861-3225

Raptors only



24/7 Animal Poison Control Center
855-764-7661

Southwest City Dog Park Veterinary Supporters

In 2012 the following Vet practices donated the funds to purchase our primary message board and other new signage. They are familiar with SWCDP and have often served as advisors on many health or safety dog park issues as well as occasionally speaking at dog park events. SWCDP considers them our "go to" contacts when we need veterinarian guidance.

Affton Vet Clinic

www.afftonvet.com

8455 Gravois Road
314/352-8600

Big Bend Vet Hospital

www.bigbendvet.com

2224 Big Bend Blvd
314/781-6121

Watson Vet Clinic

www.watsonrdvet.com

3725 Watson
314/644-1544

Webster Vet Hospital

www.webstervets.com

9937 Big Bend Blvd
314/822-7600

Responsibility & Accountability

Southwest City Dog Park is a “**Use at your own risk**” facility with volunteer management oversight. This means a self-directed playground with no day-to-day on site supervision. In order to have a dog park that is fun, well maintained and reasonably safe - it is necessary for every SWCDP member to adhere to the dog park rules and to help enforce the rules by monitoring the playground and reporting issues that cannot be handled easily as they arise. This is a collective effort and success depends on you, the members.

Members who fail to comply with SWCDP rules or fail to comply with directives from the Safety and Incident Committee regarding outcome from complaints or incident reports may have their membership either temporarily or permanently revoked

Owner: Any adult member who is accompanying member dog inside dog park will be considered the “owner” for sake of legal responsibility during that visit.

Household: Each base membership is considered a “household unit”. Humans and dogs being registered must live at this household to qualify as part of household. Visiting children or foster dogs are the exception. Members must clear foster dogs or children (living at household part-time) with SWCDP when status changes before bringing either into the dog park.

Pet Sitter: An adult who is given responsibility to care for member dog while owner is unavailable. May not bring non-member dogs into dog park and must be registered and sign waiver before bringing in member dog (s).

Trespasser: In compliance with City Ordinances 66595 and 57333, anyone entering SWCDP facilities without a current membership is considered a trespasser and SWCDP has the responsibility to report such trespassing to authorities for further action.

Each year SWCDP must qualify for the renewable St Louis City User Permit (which allows SWCDP to use the City property in Willmore Park for the exclusive benefit of SWCDP members) and the City required Insurance Policy. To do this – SWCDP must manage every aspect of administrative, operational and improvement activities; SWCDP management must maintain the integrity of SWCDP initial agreement with the St Louis City Parks Department and adhere to all City Ordinances and City required insurance policy guidelines.

SWCDP Volunteer Management

Since opening in 2006, SWCDP has been fortunate to have had a dedicated core management team as well as a variety of support volunteers. **SWCDP has no paid management.** Thanks to leaders who volunteer their time, energy, and vision: SWCDP has earned a reputation as a top notch City dog park. Through planning and fiscal responsibility SWCDP leaders have consistently brought upgrades (such as our entry fob system and web site) and improvements (such as Dog Wash, Pool Pad and Agility Course) plus we expanded our membership community. SWCDP management provides financial and budget reports via the General Membership Meeting (GMM) during first quarter of each year and ongoing info via emails and blog posts year round.

But, life changes and retirements are inevitable. We have ongoing needs for leadership and support tasks. Our dog park is only as good as the effort we members put into it. Overseeing rules compliance, safety issues, administration and operations as well as ongoing maintenance and capital improvements are all vital components to SWCDP ongoing success.

Urgent Need for Volunteers

Maintenance Situations – Contact SWCDP

Issues with sprinklers, water stations, hoses, fence or gate troubles, temp fencing needed for muddy or problem areas. Replacements for cleaning supplies, First Aid Kit, wasp spray, dirt for dirt bin, etc.

Maintenance Situations – Things YOU can do

Bring used plastic grocery bags for bin, refill bag holders throughout the park, fill holes with dirt, destroy/remove wasp or bee nests using wasp spray (*located in vertical storage units*), pick up poop or trash. Volunteer for ongoing tasks.

Contractor Protocol

Contractors always have right of way

Safety comes first. Service gates will be open, equipment and/or trucks will be used and contractors have crew and time limitations. SWCDP will often close dog park during contractor work (such as Tuesdays from 8am to Noon during warm weather) – but if members happen to be on the grounds while work is being done - members must either leash dog or leave dog park until contractors leave.

SAFETY AND INCIDENT COMMITTEE

Members should report incidents directly to SAIC

- Log in to SWCDP website using the email and password used for membership registration
- Go to tab “Member Actions” (upper right side of screen)
- Scroll down to “**Report a Dog Park Incident**”
- Complete form and submit (system will forward to SAIC and begin the email communication)

Please do not send incident reports SWCDP Secretary, Membership Manager, Member Registration Team or those tasked with sending member emails. SAIC team's sole purpose is to review dog park problems arising from dog or human issues.

Before you submit

Take time to calm down – consider whether the experience is a legitimate incident or inevitable playground ruckus? Think it through before filing report – but also file while incident details are still fresh in minds of all involved. Gather as much info as possible: dog or human names or descriptions as well as witness (s). Check photos in Member Roster (on website under “Member Actions”) for help identifying dogs involved. If injuries are involved, send photo of injuries with report.

Report evaluation is team effort and time consuming. Before SAIC can fully review a report, all parties directly involved must be allowed to submit their incident interpretation - both sides are allowed to provide witness testimony if available.

SAIC Scope and Process

SWCDP management selects member volunteers who have dog park experience and basic understanding of dog language and play styles. None are professional behaviorists or trainers. SAIC objectively evaluates case facts without emotion or prejudice. If a SAIC member's dog is involved, they do not participate in evaluating that case. Every report is assigned a case number and becomes a SWCDP permanent record. SAIC requires everything in writing in effort to protect against potential detail oversight or changing versions of what happened. Once all info is collected the committee discusses and votes on path forward. Bringing the issue to offending dog's human and asking for better management of their dog while on SWCDP grounds is most frequent out come. SAIC has authority to alter membership status (temporarily suspend or permanently revoke membership), recommend or require outside training or behavioral evaluation, or other actions, as needed. It is a unique and exceptional situation in which a dog is permanently banned from SWCDP, but it does happen.

What SAIC can do

Provides structure to process incidents and maintain permanent records. Will assist (limited basis) with identifying offending dog (s) by checking log-in records for gate entry system if there is any confusion. Will also request positive identification via membership photo before contacting offending party for additional info. Once all involved have submitted requested info SAIC will review and recommend appropriate actions and monitor progress until case is closed.

What SAIC cannot do

SAIC is not the dog park supervisor – SWCDP is a “Use at your own risk” facility. SAIC is not responsible for negotiating financial or legal disputes between members – we do monitor how members handle injuries caused by their dog since taking responsibility for dog's actions is part of SWCDP membership agreement. Sometimes SAIC cannot resolve because both sides give conflicting info and no witnesses available to resolve discrepancies. It is incumbent upon person filing report to provide reasonable amount of info; If SAIC cannot quickly identify all parties via checking our access control system (fob entry) the case cannot proceed. Example: “It was a black dog” – at time of incident either no black dog on site or a dozen black dogs on site.

Help SAIC . . . No Tag - No Entry – No Exception

Members must use fob for entry so SAIC has a record of who is on property at all times

SWCDP Watch List

Dogs involved in incident reports or that continue to pop up as troublemakers via member concerns are added to Watch List. Most trouble stems from mismatched play styles; some dogs just don't like each other or are having a bad day – all of which can usually be corrected with more human over sight. Rough and tumble play and occasional scuffles are not always welcomed but are normal dog park situations. SAIC does not publish list to protect dogs from being known as “bad dog” but SAIC does monitor the list watching for trend lines of increasing problems and necessary corrections.



A Special Word About Treats

SWCDP Rules and St Louis City Ordinance 66595 both clearly state that no food (human or canine) is allowed in the dog park. The rules also specify no alcoholic beverages and no smoking. You agreed to abide by these rules when you signed your SWCDP membership registration. SWCDP expects all members to stay in compliance. Thank you for your cooperation.

Exceptions

We ask members to use good judgment during the following

Special Events, SWCDP sanctioned/managed
Special On-Site Training/Educational activities, SWCDP sanctioned
Agility Course, Self-managed*

EVENTS If you have a dog who is resource aggressive (with either food or toys) – the group events, which sometimes include doggie treats or toys – will not be a good venue for you. Stay home that day or at least do not enter the Alternate Dog Park or wherever the event is held; if you attend, and then discover an issue, go home immediately – before an incident happens. Unfortunately, not all of our 4-Legged members will be suited for events where treats are served.

AGILITY If you choose to use SWCDP agility course, remember, treats are not mandatory – your dog will respond well to praise, hugs, or a quick play with favorite toy. But if you choose to use bait, please do so by following these guidelines:

- **Use agility space solo, your dog only; keep gate closed**
- **Keep treats in tightly closed bag and keep in your tote, pocket, purse until you are inside agility area**
- **Bring only enough bait for the agility session for that day**
- **Take any remaining treats to your car; do not walk around the grounds with left-over treats**
- **Never, ever, give treats to other dogs**

Please, remember . . .

Many members do not want their dog to be given treats at the dog park

Many 4-Legged members may become aggressive if they smell or see treats; don't start trouble

SWCDP Rules

KNOW
THE
RULES

1	Only members who have signed the waiver enclosed with SWCDP application will be allowed to bring dogs into the dog park – and such dogs <u>must</u> be registered through the SWCDP application process and have a current membership. Members may bring a human guest with them. Members <u>may not</u> bring canine guests into the dog park, ever.
2	Members agree to abide by the “ No SWCDP tag, No admittance, No exceptions ” rule. All dogs must wear the SWCDP current season tag at all times. <i>If there is a valid reason for the dog not to wear the tag, this must be approved by SWCDP Secretary – and the member must agree to carry the tag while the dog is inside the dog park.</i>
3	Members are assigned a SWCDP fob unique to their membership upon registration (a second one may be requested) ; the fob is non-transferable. Members understand the responsibility implied by membership and further agree not to allow anyone, members and non-members, into the dog park using their fob . Violation of this agreement is grounds for membership termination. A 25.00 will be charged for lost/stolen fobs. Only vetted / registered members are allowed to use the dog park.
4	No children under age 8 allowed inside the dog park. Children under 14 must be accompanied by an adult. Member dogs may, or may not, have experience being around children; being child-friendly is not a requirement for dog membership and experiences will vary.
5	Dog owners are responsible legally and financially for any injury caused by their dogs.
6	Dog owners must pick up their dog’s poop and place in grey or tan trash cans – <u>not</u> in blue recyclable cans. SWCDP provides bags for poop pick up throughout the park and a poop scooper is provided in the Main and Alternate play areas.
7	Dog owners must stop dog from digging and must fill any holes caused by their dogs. Extra dirt available in the Dirt Bin.
8	Collars: Dogs must wear a buckle, snap, or Martingale-style (nylon or leather) collar. Choke, prong, pinch, spiked, loose-fitting collars are not permitted.
9	Leashes: Dog owners must have dog’s leash in their possession at all times. If a situation arises in which the dog must be leashed and taken out of fenced area, owner is ready to take immediate action. Retractable “Flexie” leashes are not permitted.
10	Control: All dogs must be under visual and voice control by owners; excessive barking is <u>not permitted</u> , uncontrollable dogs must be removed. Having a bad day? Go home, come back later. Humping is not permitted. Dogs shall not be left unattended.
11	Capacity: No member may bring more than three dogs into the dog park at any one time. No more than 100 dogs may be on SWCDP grounds at any given time (<i>unless a SWCDP sanctioned event</i>).
12	Gates & Equipment & Pools/Hoses: All gates must be closed, including gates to agility or other game areas. Members must follow guidelines for pool, hose, and other resource use, as directed by emails and/or signage, per season, as needs arise.
13	Courtesy – Resources: Be respectful of other member’s wishes; if your dog is creating angst for a member dog or human, adjust the behavior or leave. Do not take supplies or resources from the grounds, including, not limited to first aide, toys, tools, lawn equipment, etc.
14	Professional dog trainers may not use the facilities in the conduct of their business; however, SWCDP may from time to time bring trainers to a sanctioned SWCDP event.
15	<p><i>The following are <u>not permitted</u> inside the dog park:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dogs under 4 months old • Female dogs in estrus (heat) • Sick or injured dogs or dogs with external parasites • Aggressive, uncontrollable dogs • Bicycles, roller blades or skates, skateboards, strollers, etc (Wheelchair access in Alternate Dog Park) • Children under 8 years old • Glass of any kind • Alcoholic beverages and smoking • Food (<i>human or canine</i>), see User Guide for details • Unsolicited sales activity of any kind • Firearms (<i>weapons of any kind</i>)
16	<p><i>Additional actions <u>not permitted</u> inside the dog park:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Run, wave arms, shout, scream, or cause unnecessary excitement which may antagonize dogs • Sit, stand, climb on or over the fence, gates, trees, water stations, or pools or agility equipment

SWCDP Waiver

By entering Southwest City Dog Park I agree to indemnify, defend, hold harmless City of St. Louis ("City"), and Southwest City Dog Park ("SWCDP"), and their officers, agents, employees, volunteers from any/all lawsuits, damages, claims, judgments, losses, liability, or expenses arising out of:

Any personal injuries, property damage, or death (including any and all injuries suffered any dogs) which I may sustain while I am using this park or any associated equipment owned by, donated by, or under the control of the City or SWCDP, or which I or my animal cause while I am using this park or any equipment owned by donated by, or under the control of the City or SWCDP, or while participating in any activity in Southwest City Dog Park sponsored by the City or SWCDP.

Any injury or death which results or increases by any action taken to medically treat me for any injury I may sustain or which I or my animal may cause while I am using this park or any equipment owned by, donated by or under the control of the City or SWCDP, or while participating in any activity sponsored by the City or SWCDP. I understand and agree with the following

- 1) Use of the dog park is self-directed and used with the understanding of "use at my own risk".
- 2) That SWCDP (or The City) does not carry insurance to cover users of this dog park and I understand there are risks associated with any dog park for myself, my dog (s) or other humans who may be my guest (s).
- 3) Unleashing my dog and being physically present at SWCDP involves risks of injury to me, any individual accompanying me, other people, my dog(s) and other dog(s), including but not limited to, risks resulting from aggressive dogs, unpredictable behavior, and lack of training.
- 4) SWCDP does not guarantee that dogs in the park are safe or healthy and that despite the efforts of SWCDP to ensure owners have complied with SWCDP registration procedures, there is a risk that not all dogs present in the dog park are licensed and vaccinated as required by law.
- 5) Additional risks include, but are not limited to, dog fights, dog bites, theft, disappearance or unlawful capture, escape over and under fences, being knocked down, chased or tripped by a dog, and vegetation or standing water that may be unhealthy if consumed.
- 6) I assume all risks associated with using the dog park, including its fixtures and equipment, in an unsupervised manner, including the risk of injury to me, any individual (including supervised children age 8 or older) accompanying me and my dog (s).

I further understand and agree that

SWCDP is not managed by the City of St. Louis or its Parks Department. In accordance to St Louis City Ordinances 66595 and 57335, the dog park management responsibilities are handled through a SWCDP management team who are SWCDP members and who donate their time as volunteers to oversee dog park membership process, adherence to the rules and general operations and maintenance, SWCDP management decisions are final and binding. The SWCDP management does not provide ongoing, day-to-day on-site supervision, except for SWCDP sanctioned activities. Members are expected to adhere to SWCDP rules and assist in monitoring the dog park; be responsible for their own behavior and that of their registered dog (s).

And, I acknowledge that I

- agree not to loan fob or allow non-members to use my membership;
- agree to immediately report any unsafe property conditions or dog fights with injuries or non-member dogs (trespassers) on site to SWCDP;
- attest to the fact that the dog (s) and human (s) being registered for an annual SWCDP membership have not previously had a dog park membership terminated at SWCDP or any other dog park due to inappropriate behavior or for other reasons.

I have carefully read this release of liability and understand and fully agree with its contents. I have received a copy of the rules for dog park usage and agree to abide by these rules. Acceptance of the terms and conditions of this release and adherence to dog park rules are conditions of approval, retention, and renewal of membership to Southwest City Dog Park (SWCDP). SWCDP membership may be revoked at any time for non-compliance.

Name _____

Date _____

Name _____

Date _____

This is a release of liability. Do not sign if you do not understand or do not agree with all its terms. Any dog owner / handler using the park must sign this waiver. This means if you have more than one person in your household bringing your dog to SWCDP, he/she must also sign the waiver. If the applicant has not attained the age of legal majority (18), the signature of parent or guardian shall also be required.