



Not sure if your dog is a "dog park type of dog"??? Some tips for people who are not sure if their dogs are ready for a dog park environment:

- Start with neighborhood walks and see how your dog reacts when meeting up with another dog or passing another dog in a yard.
- Take walks near playgrounds and neighborhood sports games. Start from a distance and let the dog get accustomed to the sights, sounds, and smells, gradually getting closer.
- Talk with owners of well socialized friendly dogs and arrange to take walks together, then try for short play sessions in a backyard.
- Visit local pet stores with your dog during slow times. As behavior and confidence improves, visit the store when there is more activity. Practice greetings with other people and dogs.
- Take some walks near and around the dog park during slow times without actually going into the park.
- Visit the park when no other or very few other dogs are there. You can also try to arrange the first visit with a dog your dog already knows and is comfortable with.
- Always supervise your dog. If your dog does ok at first then begins to get stressed or anxious, it's time to leave the park. You can always try again another day. Try not to end your visit on a bad note.

Etiquette for Dog owners & Visitors (Human Behavior):

- Watch park lay for several minutes before you take your dog into the park to be sure there are no dogs present that are inappropriate play partners for your dog.
- Don't ignore your dog while socializing with others (dog or human). You shouldn't be stationary, but move around with your dog. (It is a big area and you want to be somewhat near your dog in the event you need to get to your dog quickly). Call your dog to you several different time while at the park and play for a big or give attention then release for recall practice.
- Make sure your dog is ready for a dog park environment, but just as important, make sure you are also ready. If you are too nervous or unsure about being there, it will affect your dog's behavior.
- Always keep an eye on your dog (obviously we can't stress that enough). If you are uncomfortable with a situation, whether it is with another dog or owner – LEAVE. Your first responsibility is to keep your dog safe. Please remember that you are responsible for your dog's actions and behavior!
- Obey all posted park rules, even if you might disagree with them.
- Speak up to other owners, politely and respectfully, if they are not following the rules, Use a helpful and informative approach; people will be less likely to get defensive.



- As a new park user, visit the park without your dog to observe the park culture and practices. Arrange to take your dog to the park the first time at non-peak use hours to allow both of you to acquaint yourselves with the environment without the stress and distractions of multiple dogs.
- Remove your dog's leash as soon as you enter the off-leash area and closed the gate behind you. Mixing on-leash and off-leash dogs can cause stress in the leashed dogs, which may lead to aggression.
- If someone complains about your dog's behavior, be prepared to consider his/her perspective before defending your dog or just blowing off the complaint. Apologize if your dog has been inappropriate, and be willing to leave the park if your dog is being too rough. If you really disagree with the person's assessment of your dog's behavior, ask someone you respect for his/her honest and frank opinion.
- Be polite, even if someone else's dog is inappropriate and the owner isn't controlling his/her dog or is unwilling to take his/her own dog out of the park.
- Remember, not all dogs enjoy playing with others. Be willing to leave if your dog isn't having a good time. Some dogs enjoy a small circle of intimate friends but aren't keen on crowds. Some enjoy park play as youngsters, but less so as they mature. If you love going to the park but your dog doesn't, go without him/her! Go with a friend who has a more gregarious canine, or go dog less and socialize with other owners.
- Avoid disciplining another park user's dog. If you must use force to break up a fight, so be it, but do not attempt to punish someone else's dog once the conflict has ended. If you find another dog's behavior unacceptable, take your own dog out of the park rather than correcting someone else's dog.
- Honor the posted dog park hours. They are set for a reason, often your own safety, or to maintain peace and harmony with nearby neighbors.
- Of course, as always, clean up after your dog religiously, both inside and outside the park. Waste bags are provided for your convenience, please use them. This is the primary reason that dog parks get complaints, so please pay close attention to your dog and properly pick up and dispose of their waste before you leave the park.

**Welcome to the Morrisville Dog Park!
Enjoy!!**