

Modern Manners

Petiquette Questions Answered



Dear Miss Petiquette,

I have a wonderful bouncy Lab who is the friendliest dog ever. He just loves everybody and wants to play with all the dogs in the park. I walk Jasper in the mornings and in the evenings when there are plenty of dogs for him to rumble and tumble with. On the whole the regulars and their dogs are very friendly at the park. Most of the dogs are off-leash and it's a great way for us to socialize and unwind.

For all the lovely dogs and their owners there are always some grumps. Two ladies in particular are very rude and shoo Jasper away from their dogs. Sometimes they even go so far as to snub us and walk the other way. Jasper only wants to be friends and I can't understand why they should be so rude. What more can I do to be more friendly and make them understand that we're only there to have some fun and get to know people? He's a big boofer who wouldn't hurt a fly - LOL!

C ya

Lab Lover

Dear Lab Lover,

Jasper may well be the sweetest dog you know and could very well be the most social and outgoing dog at the off-leash park. But that doesn't mean that everyone will share your enthusiasm for his enthusiasm. Off-leash parks are wonderful places for social interaction. They're also wonderful places where people want to walk their own dogs without another dog bowling up to their dog/s uninvited and unannounced.

Proper park petiquette dictates that you should have voice control over Jasper, meaning that he should be able to return to you on recall. It's good manners to ask if it's okay BEFORE your dog approaches another.

These ladies you mention may have very valid reasons to walk the other way. They could have dogs with aggression issues or dogs that have a medical condition that would preclude them from direct physical contact with other dogs. Or they may just not like the advances of a rambunctious 30-kilo Labrador bounding their way to 'rumble and tumble'. There are many reasons why the advances of a dog, large or small, are not welcomed by other dog people. You should respect these.

What's cute about Jasper's behaviour to you may well be interpreted as poor behaviour, poor training or plain bad manners by another dog person. Jasper may well have more ounce to his pounce, more pound to the hound and more flab in the Lab, but to weary or leery dog-walkers he's just viewed as being annoying and out of control. Off-leash parks are there to share, but we all have to be mindful of other people's space and safety.

Miss Petiquette (not her real name) lives in a cramped urban cottage with her dog and two cockatiels. Her partially blind bunny has since crossed over the rainbow bridge. One pet down, Miss Petiquette has even more time on her hands to answer your questions regarding manners in the modern age for pet lovers. Miss Petiquette is on hand to deal with your perplexing petiquette and personal problems - when she's not at local dog parks breaking up stupid dog squabbles.

Email her at behaviour@urbananimal.net

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Absolutely NO Microsoft Word or Powerpoint documents, please—JPEG or PDF ONLY.

Urban Animal Contacts

Bookings: Phil Tripp, Phone: (02) 9557 7766, Email: topdog@urbananimal.net
 Artwork: Mark Berry, Phone: (02) 9557 7766, Email: artwork@immedia.com.au

Booking and Artwork Deadlines

Issue Number & Street Date	Booking deadline	Artwork deadline
Issue 16, August 15, 2008	July 25	August 1
Issue 17, November 15, 2008	October 25	November 1
Issue 18, February 15, 2009	January 25	February 1
Issue 19, May 15, 2009	April 25	May 1



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