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## Controlling Dog Fights

Dogs are pack animals, and as such, they maintain a very delicate Alpha order. This order must be understood and respected by humans as well. If you understand the Alpha concept, then, it's easy to understand that most dogfights are really about maintaining dominance over the pack, not aggression.

If you introduce a new dog to the family, the original home dog is almost always Alpha dog. Unless, they decide it is otherwise. If you introduce a puppy to the family, the home dog will specifically be Alpha for a long time --- maybe one day, based on their own dominance, this Alpha order may change, but again, it is dictated by the dogs not the humans. As caring dog owners, accept that the dogs will establish this order for you, regardless of your wishes. Once this is clear in our minds, we can proceed to understand and curve unwanted fight behaviors.

### Tips

- **Build a bond** with your dogs. Be the *Alpha* in the pack.
- **Allow the pack order** to establish, then respect it
- Always praise the **dominant dog first**
- **When going for walks**, always connect leashes on the dominant dog first
  - If a challenger tries to cut-in, ignore them till you're done
- **Puppies should be corrected** from all Alpha behavior around the established dog
- **Feed the dominant dog first** -- always
- **Avoid excitement in confined areas**
- **Don't over excite the dogs**
- **Toy games are allowed** if they play nice --- otherwise remove them till they are better adjusted. In some cases you may never use them together again
- **Allow the dominant dog** to growl or bark at the other one. They are establishing the order. If you correct this, you are only putting off the dominance discussion to another day. They WILL have it, it's best that it be supervised
- **Don't allow a new dog to be an antagonist.** Puppies are great at this. Curve this behavior. They must learn to respect the order of the pack
- **Be consistent.** No mixed messages
- **Reward** good behavior always. Praise passively.
- **Don't lose your temper.** It's not their fault you didn't communicate properly. If you lose your temper, they viewed this as the ultimate pack leader joining the fight, the dominant dog will become more aggressive towards the antagonist in the future
- **Anticipate** the fight, and be ready to curve the antagonist. Learn to read your dogs
- **If a fight starts, try to let them sort-it out first**
  - Learn to **interrupt behavior**
  - Use the **wheel barrow pull** if indeed they are not breaking-it up