

Let's talk about...

"MARS"

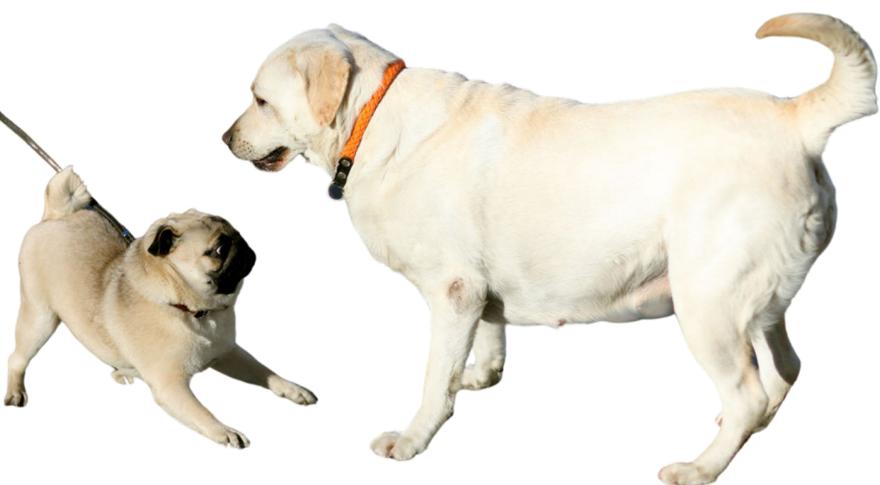


MARS encompasses the building blocks of good dog-dog play! It stands for:

META SIGNALS
ACTIVITY SHIFTS
ROLE REVERSALS
SELF-HANDICAPPING

What is a meta-signal?

Communication between dogs signaling that what follows is play and not the real thing. (Think of them as a wink!) Not all dogs play equally well and not all dogs enjoy play, especially as they mature.



**THE PUG'S PLAY BOW
IS A META-SIGNAL**

Avoid mixing on and off-leash dogs in greetings or play!

Chase!



Watch big on small dog play extra closely for safety reasons!

Dog play is understandably triggering for many people. During play, dogs rehearse life skills, including biting, fighting, chasing, pinning, mounting, barking, and even growling. These can look like the real thing!

Both dogs consent to what's happening in good, healthy play, and everyone is having a good time! (If that's not the case, calmly intercede.)

Rowdy play fighting!



We trainers call this "play face."

Mounting is also rehearsed during play. Yes, it's sexual behavior, but it's not inappropriate!



Growly bitey face is big in our house!

