

Dog Safety for the Outdoor Lover

Karen Peak
The Safe Kids/Safe Dogs Project



Though many of us love to be outdoors while exercising or playing sports, we have to remember it is up to us to be safer when there are dogs about. Here are some tips to help:

You need your vision and hearing clear to help look for possible danger. Keep your eyes up and ears OPEN! Be alert for loose dogs, dogs behind electric fences, dogs on extending leads and dogs whose owners appear to have no control.

Fast motions can trigger a chase. Slow down if you see a possible loose dog.

Put distance between you and dogs: cross the street, take a different route, turn around the way you came.

If the dog begins moving after you, STOP, remain still. Dogs tend to go for exciting things – be boring.

If the dog approaches be as still as a tree. If you are on a bike, scooter, or skateboard, get off and position it between you and the dog. Put balls you are playing with down. If you have food, toss it away from you and hope the dog is distracted. Now slowly back away and do not stare at the dog.

If the dog attacks curl up like a turtle, chin to knees, hands behind your neck. Call for help. Yes, your yelling could excite the dogs but you need to draw attention to your situation.

Report all dog incidents. Carry a cell phone with the main number for animal control programmed in.

Ask your local parks department to make some trails for humans only and others dog friendly.

Never assume a dog owner will give you right of way. Responsible ones will respect others on outings but not all dog owners are responsible.

Push for enforcement of regional leash laws.

Karen Peak is the developer of The Safe Kids/Safe Dogs Project with the goal of reducing dog-related incidents through educational programs and materials for all ages. For more information visit www.SafeKidsSafeDogs.com or www.WestWindDogTraining.com ©2104.