

fetch

DOG PARK
IN ESPENSCHIED PARK, DANVILLE, IL

Rules and Guidelines



On Kimball, north of E. Voorhees

FetchDogPark.org

Fetch Dog Park Membership Group

Fetch Dog Park is a member-supported facility, with membership open to the general public. Membership in the group is required to use the dog park.

The Fetch Dog Park Group exists to encourage, develop and support this off-leash dog park which was formed in conjunction with the City of Danville. All active members are invited to attend its scheduled meetings and participate in the selection of a Fetch Dog Park Leadership Team. For additional information, please visit www.FetchDogPark.org.

Fetch Dog Park cannot be responsible for any damage or injury that occurs. Owners are responsible for their dogs.

Annual Membership / Dog Tag

Area dog owners/handlers are welcome and encouraged to join the Fetch Dog Park Group and use the facility.

- For membership, purchase of an annual, color-designated dog tag is necessary to use the park. Tags may be purchased each year for \$10 (\$5 for the second dog and \$3 for the third or more dogs) plus city dog license fees, if applicable.
- At the time of purchase, proof of rabies vaccination is required for each dog.
- All preventive therapies such as kennel cough, distemper, heartworm are recommended. Please consult your veterinarian for your dogs' specific needs prior to coming to the park.
- Dogs visiting the dog park must display their Fetch tag.
- Tags are available at the Humane Society of Danville, 1225 N. Collett St., Danville (corner of Collett and Voorhees Streets). Please purchase as early as possible each year.

Honorary Membership

Interested members of the community who wish to donate funds to support Fetch Dog Park (at the level of at least one dog park tag) may do so by mailing contributions to the City of Danville/Dog Park and claim a charitable donation. Honorary members may attend meetings of the Fetch Dog Park Advisory Group and may vote at the meetings, but an honorary member cannot participate on the Leadership Team.



Dog Park safety

We share these wonderful guidelines on dog park safety originally written by Sandy Golding and adapted for Danville's Fetch Dog Park which is located in beautiful Espenschied Park.

What is a Dog Park?

A dog park is a fenced public area where dogs can legally run off-leash and play with other dogs under the supervision of their owner/handler. In other words, a dog park is a playground for pet-loving people and their dogs!

Your First Visit

- Make your first visit without your dog. Familiarize yourself with the rules and how the dog park works.
- Before your dog's first visit to a dog park, make sure he/she is legally licensed, vaccinated and wearing a collar and tags. Be prepared to show vaccination/health records if asked.
- The first few times you take your dog to a dog park, choose a time that is not busy. Week-day evenings, weekends and holidays tend to be peak times.
- The first visit can be a little stressful for both you and your dog, so keep it short and happy. Gradually work your way to longer visits.
- A first visit without a lot of other dogs or people around can be a good time to determine how your dog will react in a group-dog setting. Watch your dog carefully for signs of stress, agitation, or harassing behavior toward other dogs and only stay a few minutes at the park if you see any of these signs. If your dog gets stressed, don't push things. Come back another slow time and try it again. Another option is to take your dog to the other side of the park, away from other dogs and give your dog a chance to calm down and become familiar and comfortable with the dog park.

How To Enter the Park

- There are two entry gates, do not open the outside gate if the inside gate is open. Be patient. One dog at a time is a good policy.
- Remove your dog's leash inside the double-gated entry area. When you enter the park, close the gate and move your dog away from the entrance and latch the gate behind you.
- Do not leave a leash on your dog in the park. This may actually cause an altercation as your dog may feel restricted in his/her ability to protect himself/herself. Also, dogs feel more protective of their owner/handler when they are leashed.

While in the Park • Minding Your P's & Q's • and Fido's Too

- **BIG RULE #1:** Dog owners/handlers are solely liable for injuries or damage caused by their dogs. This rule is posted at the entrance to most dog parks. If your dog hurts another dog or person, give the other person your name and contact information and ask for their name and contact information. You are solely liable and should pay for any bills related to the injury. If you are not prepared to do this, you should not go to the dog park.
- **BIG RULE # 2:** Do not bring an aggressive dog to a dog park. Simply put, if you believe your dog is aggressive, do not bring your dog to the dog park! With respect to "aggression", this term is used very loosely and what someone may call aggression may actually be fear, rough play, domination, herding behavior or some kind of harassing behavior. If you are not sure and you think your dog may be dangerous to another dog or person (i.e. may cause injury), you should not bring your dog to the dog park!



Conversely, it is easy for people to classify many dog behaviors as aggression when in actuality they are not. If you're unsure, talk to your vet or a trainer and ask them to help you determine if your dog's behavior could be a problem. With some professional help, you may be able to improve your dog's behavior so they can enjoy the park.

If another dog owner/handler is concerned about your dog's behavior and asks you to control your dog or take your dog away, please do so without question and take your dog to another part of the park. You may not think your dog is aggressive or behaving badly, but your dog's behavior may be upsetting or harassing to the other dog and/or owner/handler and that can cause the situation to escalate to injury. Remember, the other owner/handler can attempt to take their dog to another area of the park, but you must do your part as well to get the situation under control. Please respect the other park users and take their concerns seriously, whether you agree with them or not.

- **BIG RULE #3:** No female dogs in heat permitted in the park. (A thought: If you wish to socialize your dog in a dog park on a regular basis, you should consider having your dog spayed or neutered. Spaying and neutering can prevent poor behavior, plus it offers many health benefits for your dog.)
- **BIG RULE # 4:** No dogs under five (5) months of age permitted in the park.
- **BIG RULE # 5:** Dogs must wear collars, but choker chains or prong collars are not permitted on dogs inside most parks. These collars can actually cause injury to your dog or another dog when dogs are playing.

Dogs must be leashed when entering and leaving the park and dog owners/handlers must have a leash in their possession at all times.

Dogs must be off-leash while inside the park, but owners/handlers must have the leash ready for use in case it's necessary to get your dog under control. Then, if your dog attacks another dog or person you can leash them immediately and remove them from the park.

Dog owners/handlers must be in the park and within view and voice contact of their dogs at all times.

- **BIG RULE #6:** Most dog parks have separate areas for large and small dogs. It's very important to keep small dogs in the small dog area and large dogs in the large dog area.

There may be times when the large dog area is closed and there are no small dogs in the small dog area. At such time, the small dog area may be used as an alternative area for large dogs ONLY if there are no small dogs in it.

If you choose, the small dog area to be used as a timeout area for large dogs (i.e. large dogs that need to calm down or de-stress because they are having a problem in the large dog area), ONLY if there are no small dogs in the area. If a small dog arrives, you must remove your big dog from the small dog area.



For their own safety, small dogs should not be in the large dog area. There is a greater risk of a small dog being unintentionally hurt by a large dog while playing. Think about it: a small dog playing with a large dog is like a 100 pound woman playing with a 300 pound football player. The large dogs do not real-

ize that they can hurt the smaller dogs, yet small dogs have been seriously injured (even killed) while playing with large dogs. Furthermore, a large dog that becomes aggressive with a smaller dog is likely to do more serious damage than would a dog of the same size.

Some people prefer to let their small dogs play with large dogs or they believe that their small dog plays "better" with large dogs. But if you choose to let your small dog play in the large dog area, realize that you do so at YOUR SMALL DOG'S RISK. Stay close to your small dog AT ALL TIMES and watch the play very closely. If you detect that the large dog is getting too rambunctious or rough, immediately go to another area of the park or leave the large dog area and go to the small dog area. Keep in mind it's not uncommon for other dogs to join in on the play, so your small dog playing with multiple large dogs means the opportunity for injury is even greater!

- No food, treats, alcoholic beverages, glass containers, strollers, bicycles or children's toys allowed in the park. Food and treats can become a source of conflict between dogs.
- No animals other than dogs are permitted in the park.

- Dog owners/handlers must immediately fill any holes dug by their dog.
- Park gates must be kept closed and latched at all times.
- Help keep the park clean! Owners/handlers must clean up after their dogs. Most dog parks provide some sort of plastic bags and trash receptacles for this purpose. All humans must wear shoes while in the dog park.
- Do not bring to a dog park any toys to which you or your dog may be particularly attached. These items may provoke possessive or aggressive behavior or may be destroyed through rough play.

Children In Dog Parks

- Children under the age of 12 are not allowed in the dog park unsupervised. All children should have close and constant adult supervision. This is your decision and responsibility.
- A dog park is a dog park. Not all dogs are child-friendly. Not all children are dog-friendly. Never allow your child to approach or pet a strange dog without the owner/handler's presence and approval.
- Please understand that a running, squealing or screaming child may incite dogs to behave aggressively.
- Children should stay away from dogs at play. Even a friendly dog may unintentionally knock down a small child when engrossed in playful behavior.
- Direct eye contact is confrontational to dogs. An interested child staring into a dog's face may provoke a dog unintentionally.
- Do not let children bring toys or food to the park. Even a friendly dog might knock down your child to get a toy or food.

Dog Conflicts · Learn the Four Warning Signs

- Posture: A dog's body language can communicate fear, hostility or submission. Learn to read and respond to your own dog's body language.
- Packing: More than 4 or 5 dogs packed together can lead to trouble. Break it up before it starts by leading your dog to a neutral area at least 30 feet away.
- Possession: Whether it's you, a ball or a treat, most dogs will protect what is theirs. Remain aware.
- Provoking: If your dog is continuously annoying another dog or dogs, or provoking attention, it's time to leave the park.

What You Can Do To Prevent a Fight

- Speak up if you see something serious happening (i.e. bad dog behavior that may escalate to a conflict). All park users need to help make sure the park is safe and enjoyed by everyone. It is better to speak up and prevent an injury to a person or dog.

- Pay attention to your dog and be aware of where he/she is and what he/she is doing at all times.
- Stay close enough to control or protect your dog in the face of a potential fight.
- Keep a collar on your dog at all times to have something to grab if needed.
- Keep walking. Walking defuses defensive behaviors and helps keep the off-leash area neutral territory. Avoid the temptation to stand around and chat or sit in one place for very long. When humans congregate, many dogs may become protective of their people and their space, making scuffles more likely to occur.
- Leave the park if necessary. Some days it's just a bad mix. Go for a walk or come back later. You and your dog will be better off.

What You Can Do if a Fight Occurs

- Never reach your hands into the middle of a dog fight. You may get bitten, possibly by your own dog.
- Distract the dogs and divert their attention. A blast of water from a water bottle or a loud whistle may work. See below for more suggestions.
- If your dog is not in the fight, make sure he doesn't join in.
- If a fight occurs, leash and control your dog and remove him to a neutral area.
- Maintain a cool head. Getting upset and yelling will only add to the frenzy.

How To Break Up a Conflict or Attack

There are numerous things that are used at dog parks to break up a fight or attack. If you think your dog may be aggressive with other dogs, consider one of these suggestions:

- Carry a squirt bottle with lemon water in it and spray it (stream, not mist) in the face of the attacker or the fighting dogs. This will startle the dogs, sting their eyes and will take their attention away from the situation, but will not injure the dogs. This will give the dog owners/handlers a chance to remove their dogs from the setting.
- Carry a small citronella spray called Direct Stop (a pepper-spray-type dispenser that is made by Premier Products) and spray this in the dog's face. This will not injure dogs. Note that some people do not recommend pepper spray because it is believed to make the dogs more aggressive and make the situation worse.
- Carry an air horn. The loud noise will startle the dogs and will stop the situation long enough to get control of the dogs. The downside to this is that the air horn can scare other dogs in the park.
- Carry a whistle. Some people have had success blowing a whistle loudly to startle the dogs so you can get control of the dogs. However, some people feel that it is not very effective because it is not as loud as the air horn.

- Blast the dogs with a water hose, if you are near one in the park. This will startle the dogs long enough to stop the fight and get the dogs under control.
- If the dogs are small, lift the aggressor (the dog who is on top) up by the rear until the front feet are off the ground. The aggressor will let go and the other dog can be free to get away. Supposedly, in this position, the dog suspended in the air cannot turn on and bite the human.
- Whatever course of action you choose, be aware that many people get bitten trying to break up a dog fight. You should not reach in and try to separate the dogs if you have the options noted above to choose from.

What To Do In Case of An Injury

In the event that you or your dog are hurt by another dog, you should take the following steps:

1. Get the dog owner/handler's name and contact information.
2. Get names and contact information from witnesses, if any. Seek medical attention immediately. In the event of a serious life-threatening injury to a human, call 911. For a serious dog injury after your veterinarian's office is closed, take your dog to the nearest emergency care facility. (Note: This is a good piece of information for all pet owners/handlers to know by heart anyway.)
3. Reporting the incident to the Danville Humane Society at 446-4110 or, after hours, 304-2483.

Reporting the incident is important because if the dog which has caused injury to a human or another dog has been involved in multiple incidents, the Leadership Team has the authority to permanently deny readmission to that dog.



Support Fetch Dog Park

Fetch Dog Park was developed as a community project by a group of volunteers in conjunction with the City of Danville, to provide a fenced-in, off-leash dog park where well-behaved canine citizens can exercise in a clean, safe environment without endangering or annoying people, property or wildlife.

Your help is needed! Fetch Dog Park is a privately funded park. While the City of Danville has designated 5 acres of the beautiful Espenschied Park to be used for a fenced dog park, it is up to the Fetch Membership Group to raise funds to maintain and improve the park.

Please consider donating. All donations are tax deductible and will help maintain and develop Fetch Dog Park. Make checks payable to City of Danville/Dog Park and mail to:

City of Danville/Dog Park
17 West Main Street
Danville, IL 61832

Interested in donating your time and talents? Contact a member of the Leadership Team (listed on our website at www.FetchDogPark.org), or email Info@FetchDogPark.org.



Rules and Regulations

These rules and regulations are in place so people and dogs alike can enjoy the park. Always be considerate of others using the park. Always control your dog and report any concerns to the Danville Parks Department.

1. You, the dog owner/handler, are responsible for your dog at all times. You are solely responsible for any and all damages or injuries caused by your dog. Fill in any holes your dog may have dug.
2. Your dog must be licensed and current in vaccinations: rabies required. All preventive therapies such as kennel cough, distemper, heartworm are recommended. Please consult your veterinarian for your dogs' specific needs prior to coming to the park.
3. While in the park, all dogs must wear the park membership tag. Membership information is available at fetchdogpark.org or the Danville Humane Society.
4. No aggressive dogs are allowed. If your dog becomes aggressive, you are to remove it to another part of the park or remove it from the park entirely. It is every dog owner/handler's responsibility to monitor their dog, always keeping the dog in sight and in voice contact distance. All injuries are to be reported to Danville Humane Society at 446-4110, 6AM to 4:30PM (after hours at 304-2483). If prior numbers are unavailable call 911.
5. Always clean up after your dog and practice good hygiene. Bags are provided for your use.
6. Dogs must be leashed when entering and leaving the park. Dogs must be off-leash while in the park. Owner/handler shall always keep a leash in their possession while in the park.
7. No dogs in heat are allowed to enter the park.
8. No owner/handler shall have more than 3 dogs at the park at a time. They must be under excellent control.
9. No dog under 5 months of age are allowed to enter the park.
10. Small dogs are considered 30 lbs and under. See Big Rule #6 for information on using the small dog area.
11. Dogs must wear collars. No choke chains, spike, or pronged collars are permitted.
12. Dogs are the only animals permitted in the park.
13. No children under the age of 12 are permitted in the park without a supervising adult. See Children in Dog Parks section of this booklet.
14. No food or treats (human or dog), alcoholic beverages, cigarette/cigar smoking, strollers, or bicycles are allowed in the dog park.
15. Dog park hours: dawn to dusk.
16. Guests: Out of town visitors are welcome at Fetch Dog Park and are expected to abide by these rules and regulation. Donations are appreciated (see pg. 9).

