



HUMPING & MOUNTING

Dogs hump one another and people for various reasons; it's usually not due to a medical concern (but it's always important to rule out medical concerns first), and can occur regardless of whether the animal is spayed or neutered. Some dogs hump because it's how they play; some dogs hump when they get excited; some dogs hump due to sexual urges; some dogs hump to assert themselves over another animal; and some dogs hump due to an obsessive compulsive disorder. Below is some additional information about mounting & humping behavior and how to discourage the behavior if it's becoming an issue:

- Studies have shown that male dogs are much more likely to hump another male dog during play than any other male/female or female/female playgroup combination. We as people seem to be bothered by it because it's a taboo behavior in our culture, but it occurs frequently in the dog world for all the reasons listed above. Spaying and neutering your dog at a young age will greatly decrease the chances that your dog does this behavior for sexual reasons (see article on the benefits of spaying and neutering your dog), but it will not affect the prevalence of this behavior if they are doing it during play or to assert themselves.
- If you want to discourage humping behavior between two dogs, the second that your dog starts humping your other dog, interrupt the behavior by getting their attention and then redirect their attention to a toy or bone or training the "leave it" command. Redirecting them to a more appropriate activity will teach them what they should be doing in place of the humping behavior. If both dogs are not annoyed by it and it only occurs while they're playing, there is no major behavioral concern to address, so you could also just ignore the behavior. If the humping causes fights between your dogs, you will need to supervise your dogs while they interact together and keep them separate when you're not home or around to watch them. Making sure your dogs are well exercised will also decrease their rambunctious energy, which should ensure that play doesn't get out of hand.
- If your dog is trying to hump a member of your household, have them stand up and walk away; that way, your dog doesn't get a chance to rehearse the behavior over and over again, and they learn that they can't get that person's attention by humping but that it, in fact, has the opposite effect and makes that person ignore them more. Then teach your dog another, more desirable way to get that person's attention, such as sitting at their feet while looking up at them quietly. Make sure you have a treat nearby to help reinforce that more desirable behavior. If you can catch your dog *before* they start to mount and ask your dog for a more desirable behavior, you will see this behavior decrease even faster.
- What not to do: Don't punish your dog for humping by yelling at or hitting your dog; they may have no clue why they are being punished, and it has the potential to make them fearful or aggressive. Set your dog up for success by teaching them what they should be doing in place of what they shouldn't be doing.

*If, after trying these suggestions, you are still experiencing undesirable behaviors in your dog, **SUBMIT QUESTIONS** by clicking the link under Ask A Trainer on the Behavior and Training page of the Wayside Waifs website: www.waysidewaifs.org.*

Written by the Wayside Waifs Animal Behavior Team
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Here is additional information about dogs and the humping/mounting behavior and how to address it:

<http://www.aspca.org/pet-care/virtual-pet-behaviorist/dog-behavior/mounting-and-masturbation>