



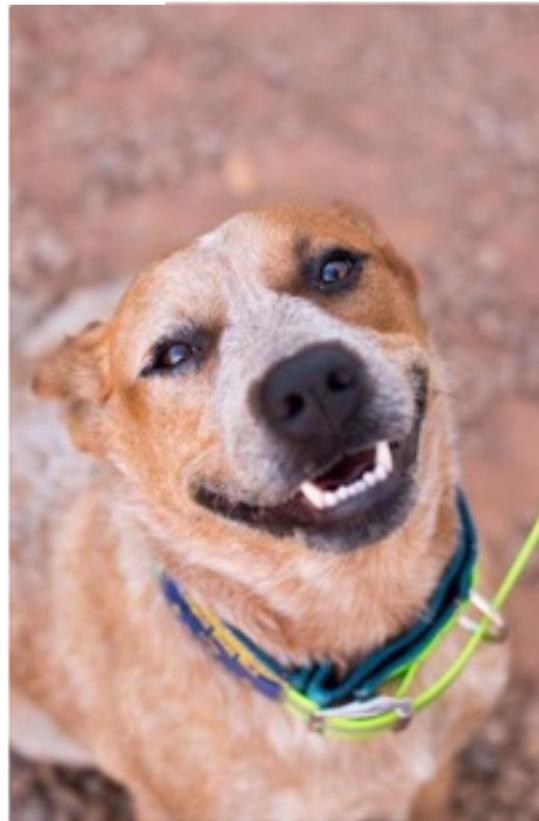
It can be easy to misinterpret a dog's energy, so develop a habit of close observation of their body language. For example, many people are afraid when a dog shows its teeth, but an acute observer knows that when the teeth are together, with the ears pulled back along the head, eyes squinting, and the body is lowered and leaning away, the dog is actually showing submission. Likewise, a dog may come charging at you, but if its body is relaxed, its tail is level and wagging, and there's no tension in the body, then it is showing excitement, no aggression.

Dogs can't tell us in words what they're thinking and feeling because they don't have to. They're expressing themselves constantly through body language. Once we learn how to understand this, a whole world of communication with our dogs opens up.

**PAWS DARWIN: MORE THAN JUST REHOMING**

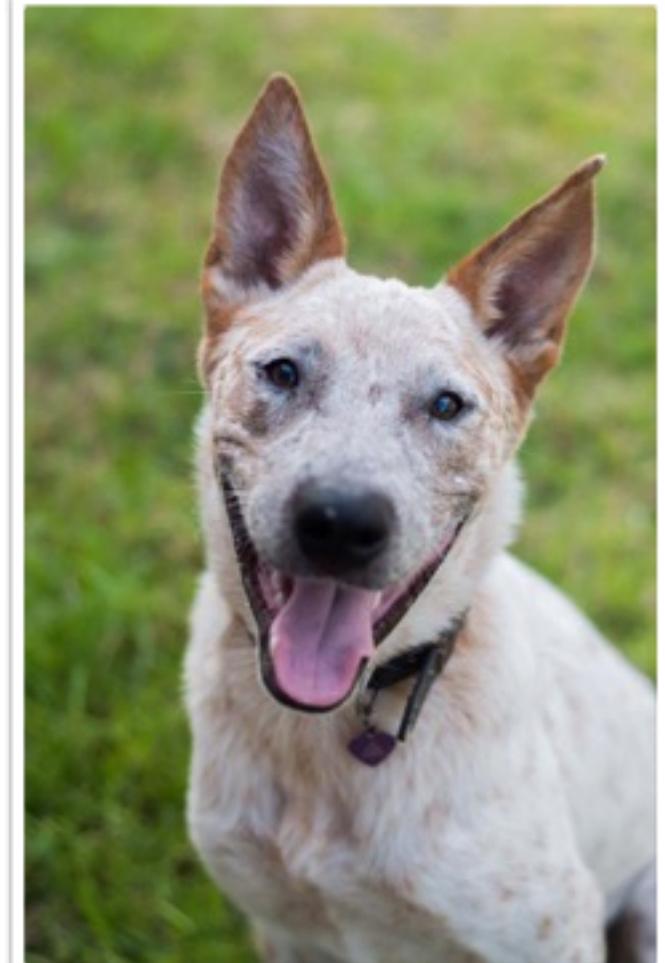
**DESEX, REGISTER, MICROCHIP AND TRAIN**

While humans primarily use words to communicate, dogs use energy to communicate, expressing it through body language. To communicate with our dogs, we need to learn and adopt their 'language' rather than expecting them to learn ours. There is no point speaking Chinese to an English only speaking person, there is no way they are going to understand. So communication with a dog is a skill you need to learn.



# PAWS DARWIN

READING YOUR DOGS BODY LANGUAGE



The biggest issue we have is that we over communicate or mis-communicate, causing the dog confusion or frustration.

For the best results we need to communicate through the lead and nonverbally when we are asking a dog to behave better (correcting) and using verbal rewards when we are getting behaviour we really like.

Tight leads communicate stress and pressure, a loose lead communicates good behaviour. A correction should be a short sharp flick of the lead.



One way to decode a dog's language is to remember that Energy = Intention and Emotion. A dog's energy (his intention and emotions, working together) are communicated by his body language.

A dog's play bow to another dog illustrates how this works. The motion is forward, but the front of the dog's body is low to the ground. The intention (the forward movement) is excitement but the emotion (the low body) is friendly, so the energy is playful.

Similar behaviours can mean different things. For example, a happily excited dog and an aggressive dog may both move forward towards a person or other animal, but one of them is playful and the other one is threatening. Likewise, a dog may run away in fear or it may run away to start a game of chase with another dog.

The important parts to watch are the head, ears, tail and back. The higher these are, the more dominant a dog is feeling, and the lower they are, the more submissive or uncertain of her feelings. Look also for tension in the dog's body particularly in the back and legs. The more tense a dog, the higher its energy level.



## MORE INFORMATION

(08) 8947 1272

@TrainatPAWSDarwin

[pawsdarwin.org.au](http://pawsdarwin.org.au)

Classes are \$15 per dog, per class.

Unless you have a voucher.

### **Classes held at the following times and locations:**

Saturdays at 10:30am at the the Paws Darwin Shelter:  
2/3 Moo Street Berrimah.

Monday nights at 6pm at Salvation Army Church Hall:  
Cnr of Temple Terrace and Woodroffe Avenue.

