

"How can I help my dog get along with family and friends?"

Question: *My dog gets along great with everybody except my brother, who's never mistreated her. What's wrong?*

Answer: *Just like with people, dog behavior doesn't always have a logical explanation. Dogs can sometimes simply dislike a person for no apparent reason. Maybe your brother has a deep voice that makes your pup nervous; maybe he has the scent of another animal on his clothes. Most likely, you'll never know what it is about him that sets your dog on edge.*

But don't lose hope; you can make your dog happier to see your brother by making sure his visits are associated with something pleasant. First off, you can ask your brother not to stand directly over your dog in a dominant position; this can be threatening to some dogs. Ask him to approach her from a sitting or kneeling position.

Supply your brother with a special treat that your dog particularly loves, and have no one but him give her that treat. He shouldn't make a fuss over giving her the treats; the commotion might make her more nervous around him. Instead, he can just place the treats in front of her whenever she is calm and behaving well. Once she comes to associate him with getting an extra yummy treat, he can start giving her simple commands and giving her the treats as rewards. Over time, she should come to accept him. Who knows? She may even start to like him.