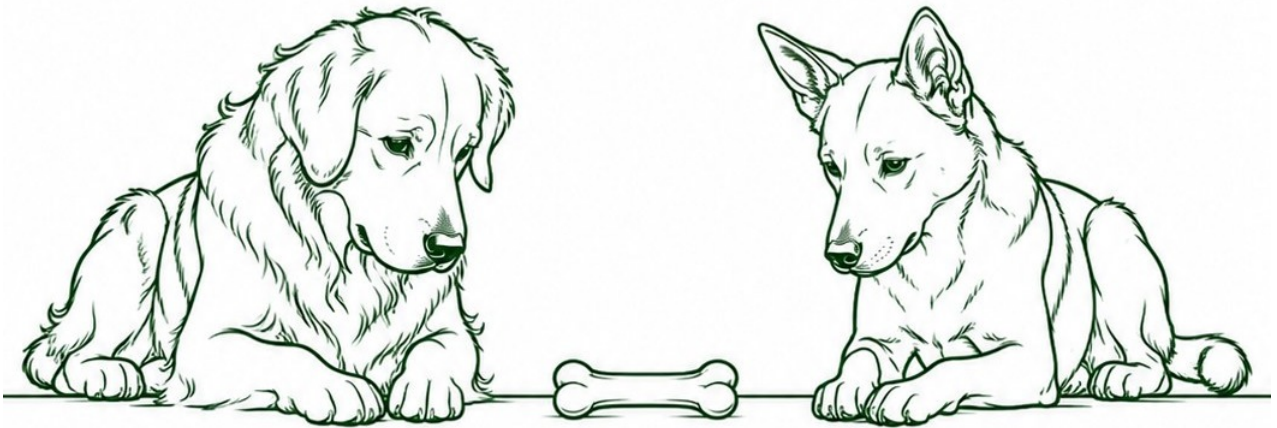


When Two Dogs Can't Share

Understanding competition in a multi-dog household
and bringing calm to everyday life



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This workbook is for you if

One of your dogs waits to eat until the other one is done.

You've long been handing out chews only separately, without ever actually deciding that this is how it should be.

Things regularly get tight at the door, in the hallway or on the stairs.

One of them pushes in between you and the other whenever you pet one of the two.

The mood tips before a walk, before you're even out the door.

You don't know whether to step in or let it run its course.

You don't have to recognize everything. Two points are enough.

And when it isn't the right workbook

Your dogs have already injured each other, or one of them has bitten a person. Then you start with Part V.

The fighting happens outside, with unfamiliar dogs. That's a different topic and it isn't covered here.

There are young children in the household and at least one of the dogs guards things against them too. That also belongs in Part V—and right away.

This isn't a brush-off. It's the difference between a process you can build on your own and a situation where someone needs to take a look.

Part I • Two bowls and a hallway

The question this part is about:

Why do things get tight between them?

The moment when one of them waits

Two bowls sit on the kitchen floor, a meter and a half apart, the way they have for years. You fill both, set them down and move on.

One dog eats right away. The other doesn't.

He stands beside his bowl, glances at it, then at the other dog, and stays put. Only when the first one is finished and leaves the kitchen does he go over and eat.

To you, that's not a problem. He's just the calmer one, the polite one, the one who doesn't let things bother him. And since nothing ever happens, there's nothing to sort out.

It's still a solution—his. He found it because the other one isn't available to him.

That kind of solution is what this workbook is about. Not the scuffle, but everything two dogs do so there isn't one.

What this workbook does

It sorts your everyday life by place.

Competition between two dogs doesn't happen everywhere. It happens at specific spots and at specific times. At the bowl, over a chew, in the entryway, on the couch, at the door. You'll write these spots down and count how often things get tight there.

That becomes a rearrangement plan. One trouble spot per week, set up so that the situation no longer arises at all.

That sounds like very little. It's the measure that achieves the most with this topic, and it regularly gets skipped because it doesn't look like training.

What it doesn't do

It doesn't make a diagnosis, and it doesn't tell you which of your dogs is the difficult one. That question leads in the wrong direction anyway.

It isn't a workbook for dogs that have already injured each other. If blood has already been drawn in your home, or one of the two has gone for you, read Part V first.

It doesn't cover conflicts with unfamiliar dogs outside. That's a different topic with different causes.

And it doesn't promise that your dogs will become friends. Some aren't and won't be. The goal is an everyday life in which they don't have to be.

What you need

A way to separate the two. A door is enough, a gate is enough, a crate if need be, if one of them is used to it.

Two feeding spots that aren't in the same room.

The worksheets from the appendix and a pen.

And a week or two in which you watch before you change anything.

How to read on

Part II describes what goes on between your dogs, even when nothing happens. This is the part that surprises most people.

Part III is the big one: the trouble spots, one after the other, with what specifically needs to change at each.

Part IV sets the rules for access—who gets what, and when. Without this part, Part III stays a collection of individual measures.

Part V is for when more is needed than a workbook can give.

The statements in this workbook are based on research. To keep the text readable, the sources aren't scattered through it; they're collected at the end under "Where the knowledge comes from." If you don't need them, just skip them.

Why dogs in the same household compete

Because they share the same space, not the same interests.

An animal that has access to something valuable and keeps that access is better off than one that loses it. That applies to food, to chews, to a good resting spot and also to the person's attention. It isn't a defect, and it isn't anything personal between the two.

The word you almost always hear in this context is "rank." It gets you nowhere here. Your dogs aren't fighting over a position that one of them eventually wins and that is then settled. They have a problem at specific spots, and the same two dogs can be completely clear with each other in one place and not in the next.

It's not about who's the boss. It's about who gets to this thing in this situation.

Of the two, that's the better news. You can't change a rank order. You can change situations.

Why stepping aside doesn't work here

Dogs normally resolve disputes like these by one of them leaving.

That's the default solution, and it's cheap: no injury, no risk, the matter is closed. Outdoors it almost always works, because there's enough space and because two dogs can then stay out of each other's way.

In your home, that path isn't open.

The hallway is one meter wide. The bowls sit in the same spot every day. The armchair you sit in is the only one. And the dog who stepped aside meets the same other dog again two hours later, at the same door.

Worksheet A • The trouble-spot list

For one week, before you change anything at all. Record every situation in which things got tight between your dogs. Including the ones where nothing happened because one of them stepped aside.

Dogs: _____ Week of: _____

Place or situation	How often	Who gives way	What I saw

At the end of the week, add up the middle column. The place with the highest number is where you start. Not the one where it was loudest.

This is the end of the preview.

When Two Dogs Can't Share

The complete workbook has 31 pages and 7 worksheets to print out. You get it as a PDF right after purchase.

€9.90, one-time payment, no subscription.

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