

YOUR FREE CHAPTER

A PRACTICAL GUIDE BY

Nicole & Nora

The Dog Language Handbook

*How to read what your dog is trying to tell you —
and stop paying for answers your dog already gave you.*



Step-by-step guides · Emergency numbers · Products we love · Books that changed everything

Inside your free chapter: the tail-wag myth almost every owner gets wrong — plus two phone numbers that can save your dog's life.

This is not medical advice. Everything here is based on research and personal experience, and it is meant to make you a more informed, prepared dog owner — not to replace your veterinarian. When in doubt, call your vet. That's always the right answer.

Read signals early — don't diagnose. That's the point of this book: knowing your dog's language so you notice the first signs and involve your vet sooner — not so you worry over every ear flick or lip lick. No single signal means much on its own. Look for patterns, clusters, and changes from your dog's normal.

Every dog is different. What works for Nicole and Nora may not be your dog's preference. Use this as a starting point and adapt it to your animal.

This free chapter is the real thing. It is Chapter Four of the full handbook, word for word — not a watered-down sample. We picked it because it corrects the single most common mistake dog owners make. We'd rather you learn it today, free, than keep getting it wrong.

Now — let's get into it.

— *The humans of Nicole & Nora*

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04

The Tail: Your Dog's Emotional Thermometer

The tail is the most watched and most misunderstood signal. A wagging tail does not mean a happy dog. Here's what it actually means.

Position First, Movement Second

Most people watch the wag and miss the more important signal: **where the tail is held**. Position is the headline. Movement is the details.

Held high, above spine level: Confidence, assertiveness, high arousal. A tail held very high and barely moving (“flagging”) paired with a stiff body is a warning sign.

Level with spine or slightly below: Neutral, relaxed. This is baseline for most comfortable dogs.

Slightly lowered: Mild uncertainty, submission, or unease. Not distressed — just not fully confident.

Fully tucked between legs: Fear, strong submission, or pain. Always take this seriously. Context tells you which one.

The Wag

Wide, full-body wag: Genuine joy. The whole back end moves. This dog is happy to see you.

Slow, loose mid-level wag: Friendly, relaxed greeting.

Fast, stiff, high wag: High arousal — could be excitement or could be threat. Read the rest of the body before deciding.

Low, slow wag: Appeasement or uncertainty. The dog is not confident. Be gentle.

Tiny, rapid wag held low: Submissive appeasement. This dog is making themselves small.

Research from the University of Trento also found that dogs wag slightly more to the **right** for positive emotions and more to the **left** for negative ones — a subtle asymmetry that other dogs can read.

Tail and Pain — An Often-Missed Connection

A dog in pain will sometimes tuck or lower their tail with no external emotional trigger. If tail position changes and nothing in the environment explains it, consider pain. This is especially important in breeds prone to spinal issues. In dachshunds especially, a suddenly lowered or tucked tail can be an early IVDD warning.

TIP FROM NICOLE & NORA

*Nora wags her entire back half. Nicole moves only the tip of her tail. Same household, same love, completely different wag styles. The first time a new dog sitter met them, she thought Nicole was uncomfortable because “her tail barely moved.” Nicole was ecstatic — that's just her. **Know your dog's baseline, not the breed standard.***

Try It Tonight: The 30-Second Tail Read

You don't need a quiet hour or a training plan. The next time your dog greets you at the door, do this:

1

Position first. Before you look at the wag, note where the tail is held — high, level, low, or tucked. Say it in your head.

2

Then the wag. Loose and wide, or fast and stiff? Whole back end moving, or just the tip?

3

Put it together out loud. “Tail level, loose, full-body wag — that's a happy greeting.” Naming what you see is how the habit sticks.

Do this for one week and you will read your dog faster than most people who have owned dogs their whole lives. That's not an exaggeration — it's just attention, pointed at the right place.

The tail is one of **five channels** your dog uses to talk to you. The eyes, ears and face, body, and voice each have a chapter of their own in the full handbook — each one written exactly like the chapter you just read.

Two numbers that can save your dog's life

In the full handbook, every emergency number, protocol, and checklist lives on pages you can find in seconds — no Googling at midnight with shaking hands. These two numbers are too important to keep behind a cover. Save them in your phone right now.

ASPCA Animal Poison Control

(888) 426-4435

24 hours a day · 365 days a year

Pet Poison Helpline

(855) 764-7661

24 hours a day · petpoisonhelpline.com

And one thing to do today: search “24-hour emergency vet near me,” call once to confirm their hours, and save the top result in your contacts as “Emergency Vet.” The best time to find your emergency vet is not during an emergency.

Chapter Eight of the full handbook walks you through exactly what to do — step by step — for poisoning, choking, suspected back injury, and wounds, so you act in seconds instead of searching in panic.

You've just read Chapter Four — word for word.

Your dog has more to tell you.

The tail is one of five signal channels. The full handbook teaches you all of them — then hands you every resource we use, in one place.

Inside the full handbook:

- All five channels — eyes, ears & face, tail, body, and voice — chapter by chapter
 - Whale eye and the other warning signs most owners miss until it's too late
- Our daily 5-minute health check that catches problems on day one, not day fourteen
 - Step-by-step emergency protocols: poisoning, choking, back injury, wounds
- When to call the vet vs. wait it out — a clear framework that saves money and lives

Plus the complete resource library:

- Every product we use and love — named, explained, with where to find it
 - The home first aid kit list — every item that's actually earned its place
 - The books that changed how we think, and the websites & apps we trust
- Every emergency number and hotline, together on pages you can find in seconds

No more Googling at midnight. Every answer, link, and number in one place — all 56 pages, on your phone or tablet the moment you buy.

And because you read this far: your reader discount is waiting at the button below — already applied, no code needed.

Get the Full Handbook

— with so much love, the humans of Nicole & Nora