

## Training the Overly Playful Dog

**Teach your excited, overly playful dog that your other dog doesn't always want to play with her.**

*By September Morn*

Q. I have two female Lab-mix dogs, Isabella and Alexandria, who will be 2 years old the end of this month. They get along fine with each other. They are not introduced to other dogs, though, because one of them is allergic to vaccinations and I'm not willing to take the chance of her getting sick. As a result, they are each other's only friend. When my husband and I take them for a walk, Alexandria just wants to play with Isabella. She will run alongside her and nip at her back behind her neck, growling and snarling, while her tail is wagging the whole time. Isabella will play for a while, but she wants to run around and not constantly play with her sister. How can I properly train Alexandria to stop this type of behavior and allow Isabella to enjoy her walk?

A. In most cases, same-age dogs who live together and normally get along well will work it out between themselves if one annoys the other. Usually this will involve the one who is being annoyed directing a sharp growl and a snap (without a bite) toward her over-playful companion. If Isabella snaps or growls at Alexandria when she's being over-playful, just keep walking and don't intervene.

But if Isabella does that and it has no effect on Alexandria's behavior, then you could help Isabella get her point across by calmly leashing Alexandria and keeping her with you for a few minutes while Isabella freely explores the property. After several minutes, if Alexandria has calmed down a bit, un-leash her and let her run loose again. If she goes right back to annoying Isabella with that over-the-top playfulness, leash her back up and finish the walk with Alexandria on leash.

It may take several walks, with you doing this, for Alexandria to get the message that you support Isabella, and that if she plays too hard for her you'll intervene.