

## If Your Dog Could Talk

**Petsmart launches online guide to help pet owners understand what their pets are saying.**

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Tail wagging means your dog is happy, right? Maybe not.

A recent Petsmart survey, which asked 1,000 pet owners questions on common animal behaviors, revealed that the majority of participants incorrectly interpret their pets' actions, such as tail wagging, purring and yawning.

For example, 96 percent of those polled believed that tail wagging means the dog is friendly. However, according to animal behaviorist Dr. Suzanne Hetts, a very deliberate side-to-side tail wag is a type of threat.

Hetts has teamed up with Petsmart to help pet owners better understand such common behaviors. "If Your Pets Could Talk," an online guide launched July 29, presents pet owners with typical behaviors that their cats or dogs may exhibit and provides them with information on how to better interpret and respond to those behaviors.

"Most pet parents today assign human interpretations to their pets' behaviors," Hetts said. "Animals 'speak' in a different language, and by understanding what their pets are really saying, pet parents can help their pets to be happy and healthy."

Hetts worked with Dr. Robyn Jaynes, Petsmart's veterinary and pet care expert, in developing "If Your Pets Could Talk." The guide offers a variety of tools, including quizzes, videos and exercises, for testing and building pet owners' knowledge on common animal behaviors.