

Advice for DMs of Animal Role Play Events

Of course you'll use your experience and DMA training to ensure a safe and successful event. These notes are for DMs not yet thoroughly familiar with Animal Play events, such as a "Dog and Pony Show".

- ❖ While some Animal Players are experienced in BDSM play spaces, many are not. They may be quite experienced players in their own area. Don't assume they are knowingly violating rules.
- ❖ In animal play, tops are called owner, trainer, handler, wrangler, etc. as appropriate.
- ❖ Experienced bottoms get deep into animal headspace, which is non-verbal. Don't try to engage them in human conversation. Limit your words to things like "nice doggy", "shoo", "come", and "pony want an apple slice?"
- ❖ If an animal is wandering loose, and in danger of entering a scene or other hazard, then shoo the animal away, as you would any other of its species. This doesn't require breaking their headspace. Also, an animal at large generally responds to *any* experienced trainer, so you could say loudly e.g. "Some wrangler needs to get that pony away from the single-tail area."
- ❖ Animals give consent by moving/staying close. They withdraw consent by moving away, growling, barking, stamping, biting or kicking. Words are not required.
- ❖ Safeword in animal play is usually to come out of role. Resistance play is not uncommon with certain dogs or ponies. Usually it's obvious from watching whether it is consensual play, by seeing whether the bottom is trying to stay in role or get out of it.
- ❖ An observer new to animal play may inadvertently pester an animal, either by proximity, or by insisting on human conversation. It is best to intervene, or call a handler to assist. Otherwise, the bottom's scene is ruined.
- ❖ Whereas other bdsm events involve choosing a station and staying there, animal play generally moves around. Some animals may be on leash, reins, or voice control. Others wander about "at pasture" – that's normal. Part of animal play is interacting with other animals, people, and the environment.
- ❖ Small animals (dogs, puppies, kittens) like a place to romp, such as a mattress, wrestling mats, couches, or thick carpet. Often it is vigorous brat play. It may also resemble age-regression play. Beware of small toys rolling as trip hazards.
- ❖ Animal play can involve food. (Not necessarily mess, just feeding.) The negotiated dungeon setup will say what sorts of food and water, and in what locations. E.g. dog treats or apple slices in the hand, oats (Cheerios) and water dish in that corner. Tops and bottoms are both responsible to clean up after scene.
- ❖ Ponies can be ridden 2-leg or 4-leg. Try to keep the way clear during 2-legged riding, including trip hazards and clueless spectators.
- ❖ Grooming is a common part of play.
- ❖ Pony hooves can be regular shoes, metal, or rubber. Watch the pony's traction on different surfaces (concrete, carpet, wood stairs, etc). Be especially wary around wax and water areas.