

Dogs in Parks: A Guide

We welcome you and your dog to New York City's parks. This guide outlines rules and suggestions so that all New Yorkers can enjoy our nearly 29,000 acres of parkland.

The Parks Department's long-standing "courtesy hours" policy is now a formal part of Park Rules and Regulations. The policy states that with proof of a current rabies vaccination and license information, owners can allow dogs to run off leash in certain designated areas from the time the park opens until 9 a.m. and from 9 p.m. until the park closes. Parks with designated areas are listed on the Parks website at www.nyc.gov/parks/dogs.

Over the past twenty years, this policy has kept parks and neighborhoods safer, allowed owners to exercise and socialize their dogs, and reduced the number of dog bites. This guide contains more information about rules and regulations regarding dogs in parks and is part of an education campaign around this change.

Enjoy the park!

Adrian Benepe

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Commissioner

New York City

Department of Parks & Recreation



RESPECT THE PARK AND OTHERS

Keep an eye on your dog at all times. You are responsible for your dog's actions. Please remember that other park visitors may be afraid of your dog.

Do not allow your dog to run and jump on other people or dogs without an invitation.

Do not allow your dog to drink from park fountains, unless a special dog fountain is provided.

Be good to the grass. Heavy use in a given area compacts soil and damages the turf. Keep walking – you'll see more, get more exercise, and do less damage to the landscape.

Please keep off wet grass. During and after a rainfall, topsoil is 20 times more vulnerable to compaction.

OBEY THE RULES AND REGULATIONS

Dogs must be on a leash (no more than six feet long) at all times, except in designated off-leash areas at prescribed times.

You must pick up after your dog and dispose of the waste in containers provided throughout the park. Remember: Urine damages the grass and trees, and people use the park for picnicking and sunbathing.

You must prevent your dog from chasing birds, squirrels, and other animals.

RABIES VACCINATION AND DOG LICENSING

IT'S THE LAW. New York State law requires that dogs be vaccinated against rabies and the New York City Health Code requires every dog owner/attendant carry with them proof of current dog license and rabies vaccination while in public. Dog owners may be fined for violation of these laws.

To obtain an application for a dog license, contact the Department of Health & Mental Hygiene at www.nyc.gov/health or call 311. You may also obtain an application from a veterinarian, animal shelter or pet shop.

BE SAFE

Do not leave your dog unattended.

Do not tie your dog to benches, fences, or light poles.

ALWAYS leash your dog on roadways.

Keep aggressive or unsocialized dogs leashed and separated from other dogs at all times.

Do not put yourself between fighting dogs. Throw water, toss a blanket, or create a loud noise.

Guard against animal theft by considering the use of a microchip I. D. or tattoo identification for your dog.

Call 311 about lost or found dogs.

With good stewardship and courtesy, you can play a role in keeping parks clean, safe, and beautiful — a place where you and your dog are always welcome.

DESIGNATED OFF-LEASH AREAS

DOG RUNS: Dog runs are large, fenced-in areas for dogs to exercise unleashed. Created with the expertise of a Parks Department landscape architect and volunteers, the runs encourage play while supplying good drainage, safe lighting and healthy plantings. For a list of dog runs, visit www.nyc.gov/parks/dogs.

DESIGNATED OFF-LEASH AREAS: Certain park areas allow dogs to be off-leash from the time the park opens until 9 a.m., and from 9 p.m. until the park closes. For a complete listing of sites, please visit www.nyc.gov/parks/dogs.

Dog owners/attendants with dogs off-leash in these designated areas must obey all general rules, including having their dog under control at all times, licensing the dog, and carrying proof of the dog's rabies vaccination.

Dogs are never allowed in playgrounds, zoos, swimming pools/facilities, bathing areas/beaches (see park website for off-season exceptions), fountains, ballfields, or on basketball/handball/tennis courts.

For more information on specific rules, visit www.nyc.gov/parks/dogs.

FOR MORE INFORMATION



Resources

Keep your dog healthy and happy. Take your dog to a veterinarian for annual physical exams and inoculations against rabies and other diseases.

- To report a problem or make a suggestion, call the Citizen's Service Center at 311
- Contact Animal Care and Control at 212.788.4000 for information about lost or found dogs, or pet adoptions, visit www.nycacc.org
- To report animal cruelty or for more information about spaying/neutering your pet, contact the American Society For The Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA) at 212.876.7700 or visit www.aspca.org
- To find Dog Runs and Designated Off-Leash Park areas, visit www.nyc.gov/parks/dogs
- For pet adoptions, contact Mayor's Alliance for NYC's Animals at 212.252.2350 or visit www.animalallianceny.org

City Dog Groups

- New York Council of Dog Owner Groups, www.nycdog.org
- FIDO (Fellowship in the Interest of Dogs & their Owners) 888.604.3422, www.fidobrooklyn.org
- Central Park Paws, www.centralparkpaws.net
- PUPS (Park Users and Pets Society), www.fortgreenepups.org
- Juniper Valley Dog Association, www.jvpda.com

You can help keep parks safe & clean.
Obey park rules.
Respect the rights of others to enjoy the park.



City of New York
Parks & Recreation

Michael R. Bloomberg, Mayor
Adrian Benepe, Commissioner

"Every dog must have his day." - Jonathan Swift

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