

All dogs have certain basic drives, which are internal mechanisms that push the dog into taking specific action or to behave in a certain way. Drives are the energy that stimulates a dog to act instinctively, for example, when you throw a ball and your dog chases it with enthusiasm, the dog is displaying prey drive. The differences you see among dogs are due to the great variations in drive intensity and thresholds-threshold meaning how long it takes for the drive to kick-in. For example, some dogs will respond quickly if a ball is simply rolled in front of them; other dogs you may have to bounce the ball or stimulate the dog more. A dog with LOW threshold reacts quickly, a dog with HIGH threshold requires more stimulation before it goes into drive mode. It is cute for a puppy to chase a ball, toy or play tug. But remember what you start with them when they are puppies you will have to do the entirety of their lives. They will need that and require that from you.

PREY DRIVE represents a dog's natural desire to chase and capture prey. If you throw a ball and it falls out of sight, a dog with high prey drive will not stop until he finds it. This type of schnauzer with what I refer to as over the top prey drive needs a JOB!!!! This requires everyday interaction with a ball, tug a war or needs to be involved in agility, fly ball, dock diving, etc. I will always be upfront and tell you what kind of drive my puppies will have in them. You need to be prepared to commit to a puppy that needs this outlet so they can be tired mentally and physically at the end of the day. Occasionally I have these puppies. They get bored easy and can become relentless barkers, diggers, fence aggression, wanderers and chewers! If your schnauzer has chewed on something inappropriate it is YOUR JOB to take a step back and look at why they did it. Are they not trained? Bored? Need more doggy daycare days to have an outlet for their drive?

DEFENSE DRIVE refers to a dog's instinct to defend itself and its pack. When a dog is in defense drive it's because it perceives something as a threat and displays it by barking and biting. The ultimate goal of a dog displaying defensive drive is to push the threat back or away. Here again we must consider two important issues: drive strength and threshold. Strong defense drives must be balanced with strong nerves. A dog with strong nerves doesn't scare easy with noises or sights. If a dog with a strong defensive drive has low threshold or weak nerves and its easily frightened it could be a menace. In other words, the dog may perceive a threat that does not exist and over reacts with aggression. This is not a good scenario!! This means you have not done your part in their proper positive socialization, instilled good confidence with proper upbringing, given them clear rules and guidelines to live by and trained them. Obedience helps you bond with your schnauzer! Use it as a tool to instill confidence and a well-established foundation.

FIGHT DRIVE could be described as prey drive & defense combined. Fight drive cannot be trained into a dog, it's a genetic trait that can be seen when the dog has matured. These dogs can be very social but when it's on, it's on. A dog with high fight drive will engage his opponent with intent and purpose and its confident that it will win. Fight drive is just that, a fist to fist, mano a mano, between the dog and its opponent.

RANK DRIVE is related to the hierarchy in a pack of dogs. A dog with a high rank drive is referred to as a dominant dog. These dogs are usually very confident and demanding (of your time and attention) but can actually do very well in obedience. The other side of the coin is a dog with a low rank drive which is referred to as a submissive dog.

There are always 3 ranks in a pack. Alpha-dominant, middle-relay and submissive-rear. Your puppy will fall into one of those areas. I can tell you where they are in their litter "pack".

PACK DRIVE is a dog's natural desire to be part of a group. A dog with a low pack drive is referred as independent. At the other extreme, dogs with a high pack drive often suffer from separation anxiety. Pack drive is very important in retrospect to the training of a dog. With enough pack drive the dog is very eager to maintain its place in the pack, which requires pleasing the higher-ranking member of the pack-you. On the other hand, dogs with low pack drive are difficult to train because they could care less. Most miniature schnauzers want to please their owners. **If you have properly established a bond of trust, alpha-rank and portray a strong leadership role for them to follow.**

Cesar's Way~

Cesar's Fifth Natural Dog Law says, "[Dogs are social pack animals with a leader and followers.](#)"

They are happiest when they have this structure because the followers want to be told what to do and know what the leaders expect of them.

By the time a dog is an adult, it knows its pack position instinctively and is not going to change it. Therefore you can't turn a follower into a leader. If you put a dog like that in charge, it will become anxious or fearful because it won't know what to do.

The source of dominance

This position is so instinctual because dogs begin learning it almost from birth as the new litter jockeys for position while nursing with the mother. The more dominant dogs will get more milk while the submissive dogs will learn to wait. Since this first struggle for position deals with food and the possible difference between life and death, it is very primal and makes a big impact.

There are three positions in the pack. Their traditional designations, especially when describing a wolf pack, are alpha, beta, and omega. There is usually one alpha couple, a male and a female, that lead the whole pack. They have several betas subservient to them, with the omegas subservient to everyone else.

Cesar describes these positions as being at the front, middle, or rear of the pack. The Pack Leaders, naturally, are in the front. Their job is to protect and direct the entire pack. The

omega dogs are at the rear, and their job is to alert the pack to danger. The dogs in the middle of the pack are there to mediate between the front and rear.

Identifying the leader

It's easy to spot the leader and the omega, because they'll let you know. The leader will show it in her body language and interactions with other dogs. This is the dog that other dogs' approach in the park, and not the other way around. The omega dogs will also let you know, because they will show submission to every dog and every person.

The middle of the pack dogs are trickier to spot because they have their own hierarchy of dominance and submission, and that can even change among them if they're all at about the same level. So, one day a dog in the middle that seems dominant to most of the other dogs may suddenly be submissive to some of them or to different dogs than usual.

We mentioned before that a dog's pack position doesn't change. This behavior isn't a contradiction because these dogs are still betas. They just negotiate dominance amongst themselves while staying at the same rank.

Dog pack hierarchy in the human pack

When we bring dogs into our lives, we must be aware of this pack hierarchy. With one dog, it's simple. All the humans are [Pack Leaders](#), and the dog is subordinate. But how does it work if you have more than one dog?

In this case, you effectively have two packs. One is the pack of humans and dogs, with all the humans in charge and all of the dog's subordinate. The other is the pack of dogs, who will have their own hierarchy and they're going to figure it out long before you do. You're going to figure it out by watching the signs that the dogs give you.

The dominant dog may:

- Push her way to be first in or out of doorways
- Claim the best sleeping area or nudge other dogs out of theirs
- Not give much attention to the other dogs
- Appear to be jealous when you give the other dogs attention
- Mount the other dogs

The submissive dogs may:

- Tend to follow behind the other dogs
- Give up his place or toys when the other dog claims them
- Give a lot of attention to the other dogs
- Not sustain eye contact with dogs or humans
- Exhibit submissive urination when excited

The important thing to remember is that you need to honor these pack positions and never try to make the submissive dog dominant or vice versa. This means that the dominant dog always goes first – after all the humans, of course. She gets fed first, gets first choice of toys or treats, gets her leash on for the walk first, and gets attention first.

When you have two or more dogs

If you have more than two dogs, then you need to do these things in pack order – alpha dog first, then the betas, and omegas last. This will reinforce the dog pack hierarchy and make all of your dog's feel confident that they are in their proper place. If the alpha dog begins to feel insecure in his position, then he may compensate for this by exaggerating his dominance, which can lead to aggression.

And remember also that this hierarchal approach does not mean that the omega dog gets less attention, or fewer treats than the alpha dog – she just gets them afterwards.

You can't change a dog's position in the pack unless you remove the more dominant dogs from that pack. But you can listen to Mother Nature – and your dogs – and use your dogs' natural pack positions to create balance and harmony by letting them be a pack.