

# DOGGY ENRICHMENT IDEAS



Daily enrichment is vital to every training and management plan, as well as being mentally rewarding. It builds your dog's self-confidence and is a wonderful way to bond with your dog.



## TUG OF WAR

This is also a GREAT time to work on teaching/reinforcing 'drop' cue so not only are you playing with them, but you're training so mental and physical exercise and stimulation at once.



## HALLWAY FETCH

Close doors to make it easier, and again you can up the mental exercise with this by adding in the 'sit' and 'wait' cues. So you ask them to sit and wait, you throw the ball, then they have to wait for your release cue to go get it. You might want to practice with a collar on them at first so you can reinforce the waiting part. Just hook your finger gently in the collar until you give the release cue, then let them go. This will also work with treats instead of a ball, just asking them to sit and wait while you toss a treat.



## SCATTER FEEDING

Toss a handful of kibble or medium-high value treats into the yard. Make sure to scatter them in a small area at first, then when they get better at the game you can start spreading the food out in larger areas.



## WHICH HAND

Sit on the floor with the dog and a bowl of kibble or treats. Hide a treat in one fist, hold both fists out, and ask the dog "Which hand?" Only give them the treat in your hand when they guess right.



## HIDE AND SEEK

I've never met a working dog of any age that doesn't love playing this. Start with a small handful of kibble or treats then just walk into a different room alone, wait a beat, then call the dog to come find you. Over-the-top praise and reward for finding you. Gradually make it more challenging for them by finding less obvious places to wait and hide.



## FLIRT POLE

Basically an oversized cat toy, you can use this to safely engage their love of hunting and chasing prey. Just drag the mouse on the floor in front of them, just out of their reach, encouraging them to chase and pounce and jump to try to 'kill' the mouse.



## FROZEN FOOD BOWL FOR MEALS (SEE ATTACHED LIST FOR FOOD IDEAS)

This is a great way to start the morning or end the day. I spread a few layers of different yummy ingredient, then add in slightly less than one meal's worth of kibble, then cover it with low sodium broth or water, then freeze.



## GET SOCIAL

Visit a local park, or dog friendly business/cafe/restaurant. This is not only mentally rewarding for your dog, they'll love the attention. Not to mention all the new smells!



## TRAIN, TRAIN, TRAIN

Training should ALWAYS be as fun for you and your dog, but mentally challenging for them as well. But you don't always have to be teaching new things--remember distance, duration, and distraction are great ways to keep training fresh and fun, while making these behaviors bullet proof.



## GO FIND IT

Hide and Seek with treats. Just randomly toss a treat away from you, then ask dog to go find it. When they get better at this, you can up the enrichment level by hiding treats under clothes, leaves, rugs, boxes.



## DOGGY ENRICHMENT LAND

This is my favorite way to help a stressed dog decompress. Stock a room or small area with their favorite things they don't get often: favorite chew or bones, Kongs, toys, treats wrapped in cardboard rolls &/or blankets/towels, treat dispensing toy. If they enjoy shredding, toss a few cardboard boxes in there, and if they enjoy digging, add the treats wrapped in blankets in there for them to dig out first. Make sure the area is a safe space for them where they can relax and let them have fun!



## TREAT DISPENSING TOYS

This is a very easy, low effort way to let your dog have fun while wearing out their mental and physical energy. Just add a meal's worth of kibble or a small handful of low calorie treats, and watch them have fun!



## ASK YOUR DOG TO MAKE CHOICES

Hold out two treats, one in each hand, and ask your dog which one they want. Dogs thrive when given chances to make their own decisions-especially when they get rewarded for it with a yummy treat!



## PRAISE AND REWARD

Every dog wants to know they're doing good and we're proud of them, so make sure to acknowledge their good behavior as often as possible. It doesn't have to be rewarded with treats, just an excited voice to let them know how proud you are.



## REWARD THE BEHAVIOR YOU WANT TO SEE

If your dog struggles with learning a new behavior, start rewarding them with praise every time you see them do it—even unprompted . (Ex: every time you see them sit instead of jumping or begging while you're cooking, reward them with plenty of excited praise. Remember: what gets rewarded gets repeated.

# DOG-SAFE FOOD



*Always double-check with your vet first before introducing new foods)*



Peanut butter



Non-fat plain yogurt



Sugar-free applesauce



Fresh, frozen, or pureed fruits and vegetables.  
(Green beans, carrots, lettuce, apples, bananas.  
NO grapes or raisins!)



Canned pumpkin (make sure it's not pumpkin  
pie filling)



Liverwurst (this is a great option to hide medicine  
in)



Low fat cream cheese



Marshmallows (another great  
option to hide meds in)



Coconut water



Eggs (raw, scrambled, hard boiled. They can even eat  
the shell.