



IN-HOME DOG ENRICHMENT

Dogs, just like humans benefit greatly from mental as well as physical exercise. In fact, much of the behaviors that dogs were built for are often inaccessible to them as pets and sometimes thought of as an inconvenience to us.

Things like:

- Digging
- Sniffing
- Chasing
- Tearing
- Chewing
- Dissecting

Luckily, we can find all sorts of creative and appropriate ways to fulfill those canine needs without it compromising our yard or our favorite shoes! In addition, we get to see how smart our dogs truly are and have fun bonding with them over a game or puzzle. Given the chance, dogs will always prefer to work for things of value and the bonus for us is that we get to work daily manners into the mix.

Food Dispensing Toys to Purchase:

These can function for small snacks or entire meals. For high energy dogs, puppies, adolescents or working breeds ditch the food bowl completely and watch the joy that ensues! Other uses for food toys are:

- Alone time
- Crate Time
- When you have guests
- When you have chores to do

CLASSIC KONG



- Great beginner level toy
- Perfect for lick-able treats
- Won't hold a full meal for large dogs
- Use bottle brush to clean
- Works well when dog has to be somewhat stationary e.g. crate time
- Comes in multiple sizes and levels of durability
- Hardy rubber, great for teething pups and heavy chompers!

ORBEE TUFF SNOOP



- Holds a full meal well
- Not appropriate for wet food or treats
- Quiet play
- Comes in size large and small
- Hardy rubber for low-medium level chewers



STUFF-A-BALL

- Great for small and medium sized dogs
- Enables both dry and lick-able food items
- Encourages additional movement, nose and paw action
- Durable rubber for medium level chewers

KONG WOBBLER



- Best for slightly more confident dogs due to rocking movement
- Not appropriate for wet food items or treats
- Won't hold a full meal for large dogs but will allow for prolonged play
- Very hardy for medium – high level chewers, grabbers and bashers!
- Easy to clean

MAZEE BALL



- Encourages more active play but rolling is quiet
- Good for confidence building after foundation levels
- Will hold an entire meal for large dogs
- Good for all sized dogs but only comes in one size itself
- Not appropriate for wet food or treats

BUSTER CUBE



- Higher level of difficulty
- Good for confident, high energy dogs
- Not appropriate for wet food or treats
- Will hold an entire meal for large dogs
- Comes in large and small sizes
- Noisy play on hard surfaces
- Not the easiest to clean

SNUFFLE MAT



- Works for well for beginners and more advanced dogs
- Will hold an entire meal
- Comes in all sorts of sizes and variations
- Not appropriate for wet food or treats
- Good for stationary, focused play
- Laundry appropriate

Home-Made Food 'Toys'

Cheap, easy, throw-away items that can hold entire meals or snacks for stationary or slightly more active play.

- Egg Cartons
- Cereal Boxes
- Paper Towel Rolls

Human Interactive Puzzle & Games:



THE MUFFIN TIN GAME

- Start by placing loose treats in the hole of the tin then covering them with tennis balls to add an extra challenge.
- If the sound of the tin is scary, place a mat or towel underneath to keep it steady and quiet.



PAPER CUPS OR BOXES

- Start with one cup/box and place treats just next to or inside.
- Increase the challenge by adding multiple empty cups/boxes so the dog has to find the one containing food. Adding height or obstacles can be fun too once the dog becomes really confident.
- Canine scent work classes are fantastic for shy, reactive or high drive dogs.



TOWEL/BLANKET ROLLS

- Scatter treats or kibble in a towel then roll it up like a burrito for the dog to sniff out and unwind.



PUZZLES TOYS WITH FLAPS & SLIDERS

- Hide the treats in different compartments for prolonged focus and plenty opportunity to keep raising the difficulty level.

My dog isn't food motivated you say...

- Dogs that are on a 'free feed' routine and have the opportunity to access food whenever they want are less likely to see the value in it for training. Try switching to scheduled feeds to allow for more creative use of food.
- Start really easy and really yummy! Your dog may simply need a little help and a chance to build some perseverance. The human interactive games are a perfect foundation.
- Make sure your dog is hungry beforehand so you're not trying to have him play on a full belly.
- Very shy dogs may be feeling other pressures that are not necessarily related to the food specifically. Think about the item containing the food, the environment and your own behavior in this case.
- Some dogs prefer to work for toys or even humans! Think about playing hide and seek with their favorite family member or sending them to search for the ball or plushie instead 😊