

Dog Exercise



*The No-BS Guide to a
Healthy Pet*

www.nimblepet.app

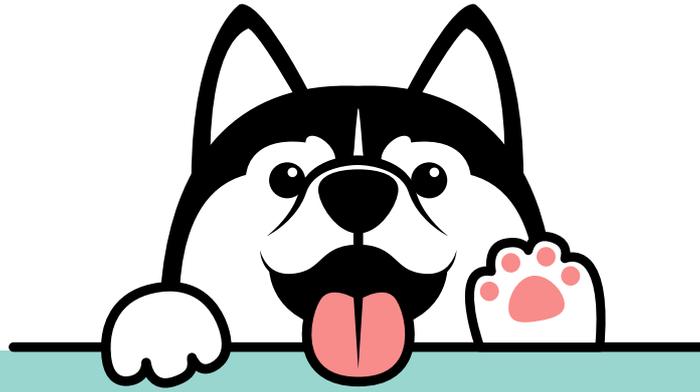


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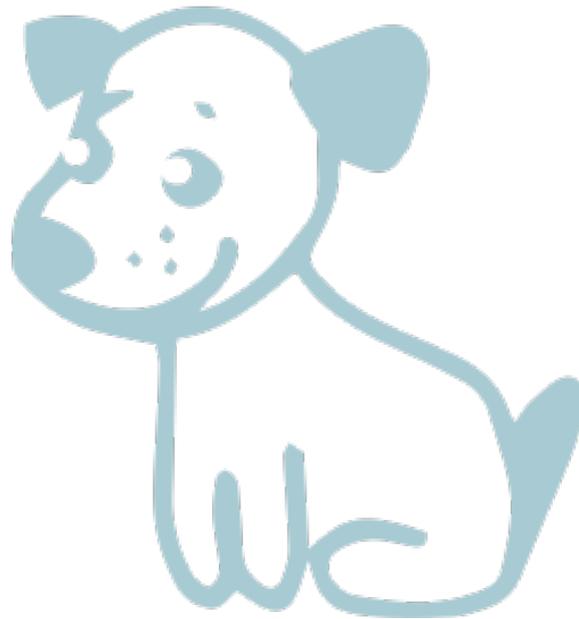
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Introduction to dog exercise

Dogs need daily exercise to remain physically and mentally happy and healthy. Just how much exercise, and what kind, depends on a seemingly unending number of factors. Factors like the age, breed, temperament, and the health of your dog play into their exercise needs. In addition to your dog, determinants such as the weather, facilities, toys, tools, and training play a large part in the daily exercise routines of both you and your dog.



How much exercise does a dog need every day?

Between finding the best food, visiting the best veterinarian, and caring for our dogs like they are our children, it's clear that we want what's best for them. To live a happy and healthy life, we know our dogs need to exercise just like we do, but how much exercise do they actually need?

Factors That Determine Exercise Levels

There are many different factors that determine how much exercise your individual dog needs, so, unfortunately, the answer is really simple. Here are just a few:

Age

Puppies, adult dogs, and senior-aged dogs all have very different exercise needs. Puppies are growing into their bodies and bladders, as such they need frequent but short play and potty sessions throughout the day. A good rule is that for each month of age, your puppy needs five minutes of exercise twice daily. So if your puppy is 3 months old, they need up to 15 minutes of play (3 months x 5 minutes = 15 minutes), twice a day, for a total exercise time of 30 minutes a day. Once a dog is fully-grown, at around 2 or 3 years of age, their play sessions can become much longer. Adult dogs typically require between 30 minutes and 2 hours of daily exercise.



How much exercise does a dog need every day?

Seniors may develop health issues, such as arthritis, that make exercising difficult. **Senior dogs often enjoy a short, leisurely walk for around 30 minutes each day.** Catering exercise to your dog's age is vital, and if you aren't sure how much exercise your dog should be getting, consult a veterinarian.

Breed

Between 30 minutes and 2 hours of daily exercise is a pretty large span. How do you know where your dog falls? One indication of how much exercise your dog may need depends on their breed (or their mixture of breeds). In general, smaller breeds do not need as much exercise as larger breeds and more [active breeds need more exercise than the "lazier" breeds.](#)

Here are a few examples:

Smaller, toy breeds such as Chihuahuas, Miniature Poodles, and Yorkshire Terriers tend to be less active and will likely **only need about 30 minutes of exercise each day.** Giant breeds, despite their size and strength, are known to be less energetic as well. These breeds include Great Danes, Mastiffs, and Newfoundlands.

Flat-nosed breeds such as Bulldogs, Pugs, and Shih Tzus, have poor breathing and respiration, so heavy and long bouts of exercise can be problematic. They also will benefit from shorter daily exercise: **perhaps between 30 minutes and 1 hour each day.**

Active breeds such as Collies, Shepherds, Terriers, Hounds, and Retrievers were bred to be working dogs. As a result, **they require between 60 and 120 minutes of daily exercise.** This is not only to maintain their physical health but their mental health as well. It's worth noting that Working breeds who are not given adequate exercise often develop severe behavioral issues.

Other Factors Affecting Exercise

There are numerous factors that may contribute to how much exercise your pooch requires each day. Another important factor is health issues. Dogs with physical maladies such as arthritis or hip dysplasia will need much calmer, short bouts of exercise than a dog who is completely healthy.

How to Trick a Lazy Dog into Exercising?

Whether it's old age, health issues, or plain laziness, some dogs just don't seem interested in exercising.

Most times a dog we think is lazy is really just unmotivated.

To engage your dog in exercise, sometimes you have to get a little creative and make physical exertion fun. Here are a few considerations to get your dog up and moving.

Rule Out Medical Issues

Before encouraging your dog to exercise more, rule out health problems first. If your dog's disinterest in physical activities is sudden, take them to a veterinarian to make sure there isn't something medical going on with your dog. Any sudden change in a dog's behavior should be treated with caution. If you plan on starting a new exercise regime or activity, consulting your veterinarian is a good idea anyway.

A few medical issues associated with sudden laziness include:

- Thyroid issues
- Arthritis
- Anemia
- Lyme disease

Overweight dogs are often found to have thyroid issues that can be corrected with medication. Arthritis leads to musculoskeletal pain that makes exercise painful. Tick-borne diseases like Lyme disease cause extreme fatigue.



Modify the Activity

Once you've gotten a clear bill of health, exercise activities should be catered to the needs of your individual dog. Not only should the physical activity be engaging and fun, but it should also take factors such as your dog's age, weight, and size into account. For example, "low-rider" breeds like corgis and basset hounds are not well-suited to long jogs.

New workout plans should start slow; just like with people, your dog doing too much too quickly can lead to injuries. Begin with low-impact activities, such as slow walks around the neighborhood or swimming, and work your way up from there to more rigorous activities.

Exercising should be fun: if you notice your dog is not enjoying the activity, consider how you could modify your plan so they become excited to engage in exercise.

Common Issues and How to Address Them

Your Dog Hates Walks

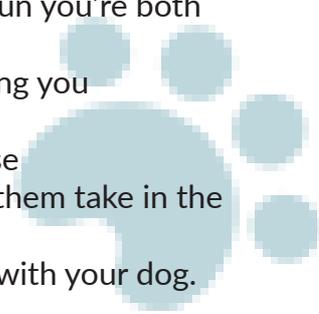


Maybe your dog prefers to be sedentary or even sits down instead of walking around the block with you. No one wants to have to drag their dog down the sidewalk to get them to exercise.

Don't force it. If you know your dog hates walks, trying to get them to exercise for 30 minutes this way is setting yourself up for failure.

Try to turn walks into a fun game and start out small. Take your dog out for a 5-minute walk to the end of the block and back. Here are some other tips to improve your walk:

- Use excited body language and voice to convey how much fun you're both having
- Use treats sparingly if needed to motivate them into following you
- Try sudden changes in direction to keep their attention.
- Celebrate small victories with rewards of attention and praise
- Let your dog sniff. While you may have places to be, letting them take in the sights and smells will increase their enjoyment.
- Put your distractions (i.e. cell phone) away and fully engage with your dog.



Your Dog Is Uninterested in Toys



Some dogs aren't very motivated by toys. Maybe they weren't introduced to toys when they were younger or they've become bored with the toys they have.

Playing with toys can be an excellent exercise for your dog, as they won't view it as exercise; Toys can facilitate both training and games. So how do we engage a dog with dwindling interest in toys and play?

Fixing this issue requires you to become your dog's trainer: you need to teach (or re-teach) your dog that toys are fun.

Here are a few recommendations to get your dog interested in toys:

- Buy a variety of toys to find what will interest your dog.
- Feed your dog out of puzzle-feeder toys.
- Put toys away when he or she isn't using them.
- Designate some toys as "outside only."
- Use interactive toys you can use with your dog such as tug-of-war rope toys.
- Encourage play by getting excited and praising your dog for interacting with toys.



Your Dog Does Not Play Inside:

Bad weather, lack of time, or no fenced-in backyard can all contribute to your dog spending more time inside. Many people don't realize that there are plenty of activities you can do with your dog inside your home to get them mentally and physically engaged.

Hide and Seek: While one person hides, another holds the dog in another room. Initiate the game by calling your dog. When your dog finds you, reward them with praise and pets.

Hide Their Food: Let your dog hunt for his or her food by hiding it all over the house. Kibble can be placed under the corners of carpets, behind furniture, on shelves: anywhere your dog can easily access. Just remember where you hid the food in case your dog doesn't find it all!

Obstacle course: set up an obstacle course for your dog. Have them jump over chairs, crawl under tables, or run around pillars.

Keep Away: have a catch with another person using one of your dog's toys.

Fetch: if you have a large room or long hallway, you can easily play fetch with your dog indoors.

Tug of war: tug of war is a great game that both you and your dog can use to exercise inside.



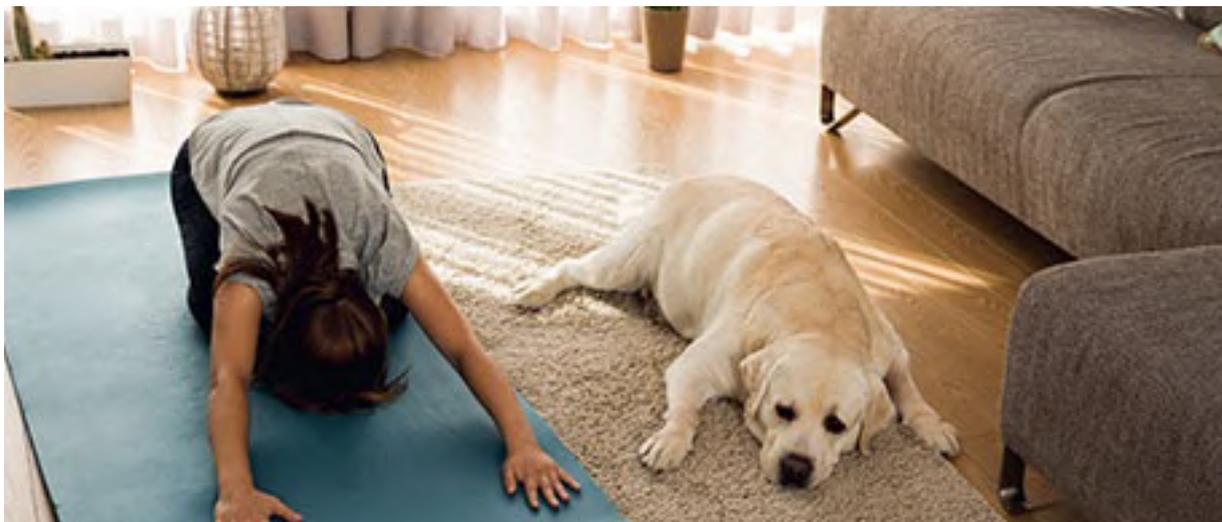
Your Dog Only Plays With Other Dogs

Some dogs only want to play with other dogs. This can be a problem if your dog is in a single-pup household. The solution: get your dog to play with you. The best way to get your dog engaging with you is to further develop your bond. Spend time with your dog to get to know what he or she likes. Walks and playtime are an obvious way to spend time together, but try adding picnics, errands to dog-friendly establishments, dog parks, or playdates with friends to your weekly schedule. Deepening your bond with your dog will have them playing with you in no time.



Exercise For a Healthier Dog

Though we can't stop our dogs from getting older, we can ensure they have optimum health and happiness in their golden years. Making sure our dogs exercise regularly is the best way to keep them happy and healthy all their life.



Best Dog Exercises By Breed

The individual exercise needs of a dog are extremely variable and dependent on multiple factors. That being said, the breed of your dog can provide some indication of how much and what kind of exercise will best suit your canine companion. Here are a few considerations for exercise based on breed.

Types of Exercise By Breed

While not a perfect rule, your dog's breed (or their mix of breeds) may indicate what types of exercise are best for them. Here are a few guidelines for what exercises may be best for your dog.

What job was your dog bred for?



Is your dog a herding breed like a border collie? Or a ratter like many terriers? There are numerous activities and sports that can imitate the job your dog's breed what created to do. Here are just a few.

Herding Breeds

Herding breeds such as Australian Cattle Dogs, Australian Shepherds, and Border Collies want, and even need, a job to do. These dogs are quick and agile, bred to herd animals over long distances.

As a result, they have quite a bit of energy to burn and the endurance to maintain high energy levels for long periods of time. In some areas, herding classes and competitions are held where your dog can do exactly what they were bred for. Agility, where contestants navigate a series of obstacles at high speeds, is another great activity for herding breeds.



Terriers

Most terrier breeds were bred to sniff out and dig problematic prey out of underground burrows. To imitate this job, a sport called “Earthdogging” was born. Earthdogging entails dogs navigating a maze of tunnels constructed underground in order to reach their “prey.” The prey is safe from contact with the dog but still simulates the hunt.

Working Breeds

Working breeds spans a myriad of types of dogs and the equally numerous jobs for which they were bred. The group includes sled dogs like the Alaskan Malamute and cart dogs like the Bernese Mountain Dog. To create a job for these powerhouse breeds, consider engaging in activities similar to what their breed was created to do. If you live in an area that enables sledding, have your dog pull a small sled. Similarly, a cart dog could easily pull a cart. If you have one of these breeds but do not have access to sleds and carts, consider simply taking your dog on hikes while wearing a backpack.





Hounds

Members of the hound category are renowned for their keen senses. Scenthounds like the Beagle and Bloodhound can participate in scent-work classes and competitions, where they put their impressive noses to the test. Sighthounds like the Greyhound and Afghan Hound can attend competitions and races with “lure coursing,” where dogs chase a mechanically-operated lure to simulate a hunt chase.

Retrievers

Retrievers, pointers, setters, spaniels, and some poodles were bred to find and retrieve small game. If you don't plan to use your retrieving dog for actual hunting, consider a sport or competition that simulates these activities. Sports such as dock diving, where dogs jump long distances off a dock into the water after a toy, and disc dog, an ultimate frisbee endeavor, allow your dog to pursue their love of retrieval.



No matter what breed or mix your dog is, there are plenty of stimulating exercise opportunities available. In the end, a stimulated dog will be a tired dog, and a tired dog will be a better-behaved dog. So do some research into the purpose of your dog's breed and find out what activities are available in your area. Your dog will thank you!

Indoor Fun During Inclement Weather

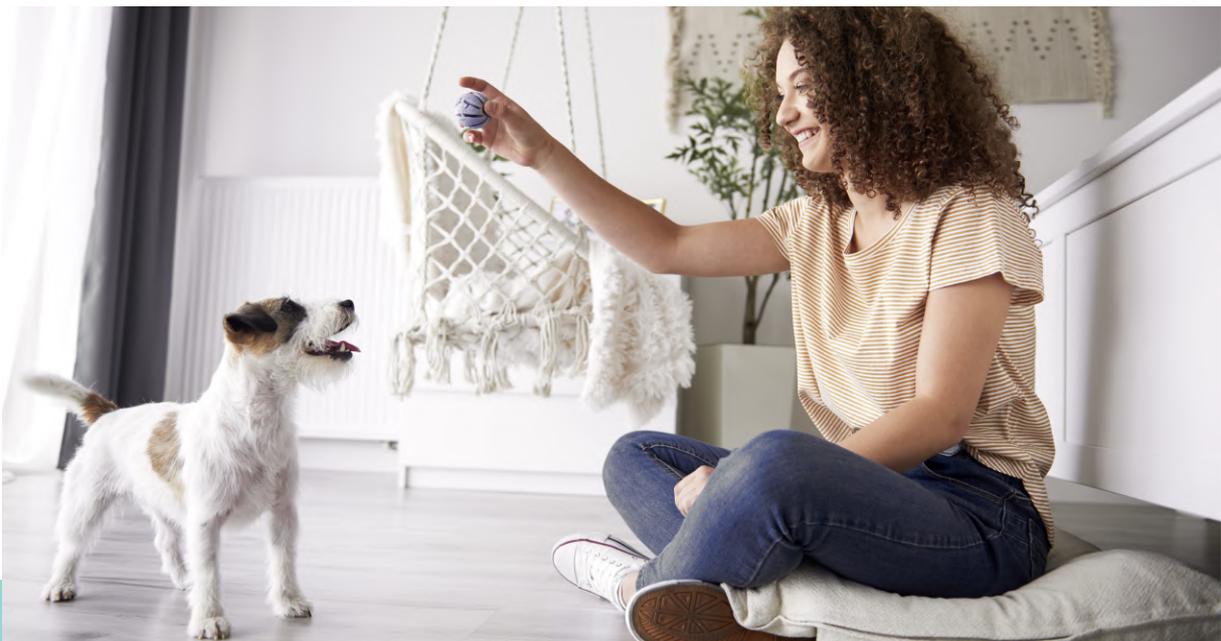
If you own an RV or camper, you know that one of the joys of the RV lifestyle is that you can follow the weather, particularly if you are a full time RVer. You can winter in Florida, summer in Maine, or travel anywhere you can find the perfect temperature to live your best life. This way you can do all of the outdoor activities you love, and avoid the things you dislike – like shoveling snow!

However, even in your perfect climate, storms and bad weather can pop up, driving you inside the RV. While we humans can entertain ourselves inside a small space like a camper by reading, playing games, or catching up on our favorite Netflix shows, our dogs can get bored quickly. Especially if you have a high energy breed with considerable exercise needs, your dog can get stir crazy without access to her regular exercise routine.

Fortunately, you've got a powerful tool for canine boredom at your disposal: canine enrichment.

Canine enrichment is a fancy way of saying “mental exercise” for your dog. Mental exercise is just as critical as physical exercise for dogs. In fact, the simple act of going for a walk actually provides more mental exercise than physical, because your dog works his mind as he sniffs and analyzes every scent, sight and sound along the walk. However, walks are not always appealing when thunder booms and the possibility of lightning makes a walk unsafe.

When you cannot go for long walks or take your dog for runs at the local dog park, there are many canine enrichment activities that can be done in a small space like a camper or RV. Of course you can also do these when the weather is nice, but they are good to have at your disposal for those days when everyone is cooped up inside your RV unit.



Training

Obedience training should be fun for both you and your dog. Even when done in a fun way with plenty of positive rewards, obedience training should be limited to ten to fifteen-minute sessions. Any longer and your dog will probably stop wanting to participate and lose interest. If your dog has mastered the basics, you can put her through different sequences of commands to practice things like sit, down, stay, or come. Having a rock solid “stay” can be lifesaving, so if your dog has a solid stay, you can train for longer times or practice doing peculiar movements and arm gestures while she stays. For example, if she has mastered a two-minute stay, try for three or four minutes. You can practice having her stay while you turn your back, look away from her, do a little dance, or swing your arms around. Of course, you may look funny if anyone passes by the window of your camper, but it is good practice for your dog to know that they should stay until you give their release word no matter what is happening around them.



You can also work on your dog’s “leave it” or “off” command and add in continually challenging situations. If your dog will “leave it” when you place a treat on the floor in front of him, try placing the treat on his paw or tossing two treats, giving the “leave it” command as the treats land. This training is perfect for small spaces and can be fun. It also teaches your dog the critical skill of looking at you for further instruction and waiting for you to hand him food items instead of snatching them off of the ground. This is another command that can be lifesaving, especially if you drop a medication or come across something while hiking or walking that your dog might

Nose Work

Canine Nose Work continues to grow in popularity. In this sport, dogs use their powerful sense of smell to find a scent and communicate to their handler that they have found it. Dogs of all sizes, breeds, and ages can participate just for fun and mental enrichment, or for titles at official scent work events.



You can read more about getting started at the American Kennel Club Scent Work page. In order to get started, you can find videos on YouTube and also purchase books and supplies needed to participate in the actual sport. If you do not think you want to get involved in actual nose work as a sport, and just want to do something fun in a small space, you can also play the Find It game with treats

so that your dog searches for treats rather than scents. You can hide the treats in increasingly difficult places or place them in boxes or bins.

Check out the section called Find It at this link:

<https://thisfurrylife.com/2018/01/17/dog-boredom-busters>.

Nose Work is a sport that you can extend outside your RV when the weather is nice. Your dog can learn to find the hidden item around the RV and around your campsite, with more and more complicated hiding spots the more your dog progresses.

Food Dispensing Toys

There is a seemingly endless array of educational dog toys that require that your dog work through puzzles for treats or food. Toys range in complexity from the basic Kong, which is a rubber toy with a hole through the center that can be stuffed with food, all the way to more complicated puzzles that require dogs to move multiple parts in order to access their reward. You can purchase toys or make them yourself. Just make sure you always supervise your dog when using any of these toys.

Kong Style Toys

Toys like the Kong or the West Paw Toppl can be stuffed with a variety of foods of different textures. You can start with something moist like a banana and a teaspoon of peanut butter, add in some crunchy treats or pieces of carrot, and then freeze to make the treat longer lasting if you have access to power while in your RV. The Kong website has many recipes for dog owners.

<https://www.kongcompany.com/recipes>.

Puzzle Toys

There are a variety of puzzles on the market that you can purchase to hide dry training treats or kibble. Some have movable pieces and others require the dog to roll them around to release the food. You can also make several toys with things that you have on-hand. One favorite is to place treats in the cups of a muffin tin and place tennis balls over the openings. Your dog will work to remove the tennis balls and find the food. As your dog figures it out, you can hide treats in only some of the cups to increase the level of difficulty.

Snuffle Mat

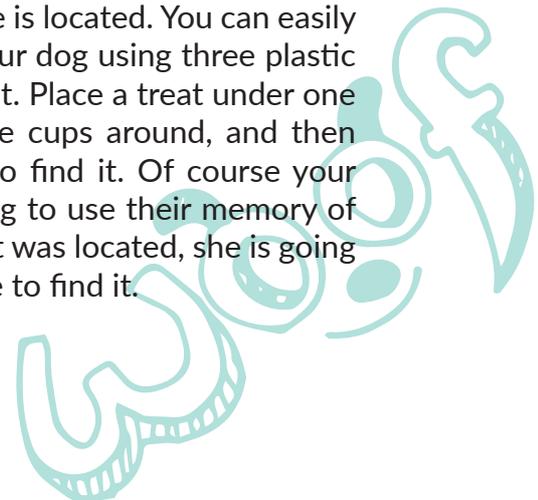
The snuffle mat is another toy that you can purchase or make yourself. It consists of small strips of fabric tied together to form a flat mat with plenty of hiding spots. In fact, it is a great way to recycle fabric from worn out clothes that you might otherwise toss. You can hide dry food and treats inside the fabric pieces so that your dog must work to find them.

Here is a quick tutorial on how to make a snuffle mat:

<https://youtu.be/DJQY08LPfts>.

The Shell Game for Dogs

The shell game is a game in which a prize is hidden under one of three shells, and the participant must try to watch the shuffling of the shells to keep track of where the prize is located. You can easily do this with your dog using three plastic cups and a treat. Place a treat under one cup, shuffle the cups around, and then ask your dog to find it. Of course your dog is not going to use their memory of where the treat was located, she is going to use her nose to find it.



Check out this video for a quick demo on how to play:
<https://youtu.be/JTk41dWia5M>.

You can come up with your own ideas, just make sure that all of the materials you use are safe for dogs and that you always supervise your dog to ensure that he is not eating something he should not. Not only do these games help your dog work his brain and alleviate boredom and excess energy when you are rained in during a camping trip, they also strengthen your bond as you play together and you learn more about the powerful mind of your best friend.



Mental Exercises For Dogs

While physical exercise is paramount to the health and happiness of your dog, mental exercise is just as important. Without sufficient mental stimulation, dogs may invent their own destructive pastimes to entertain themselves.

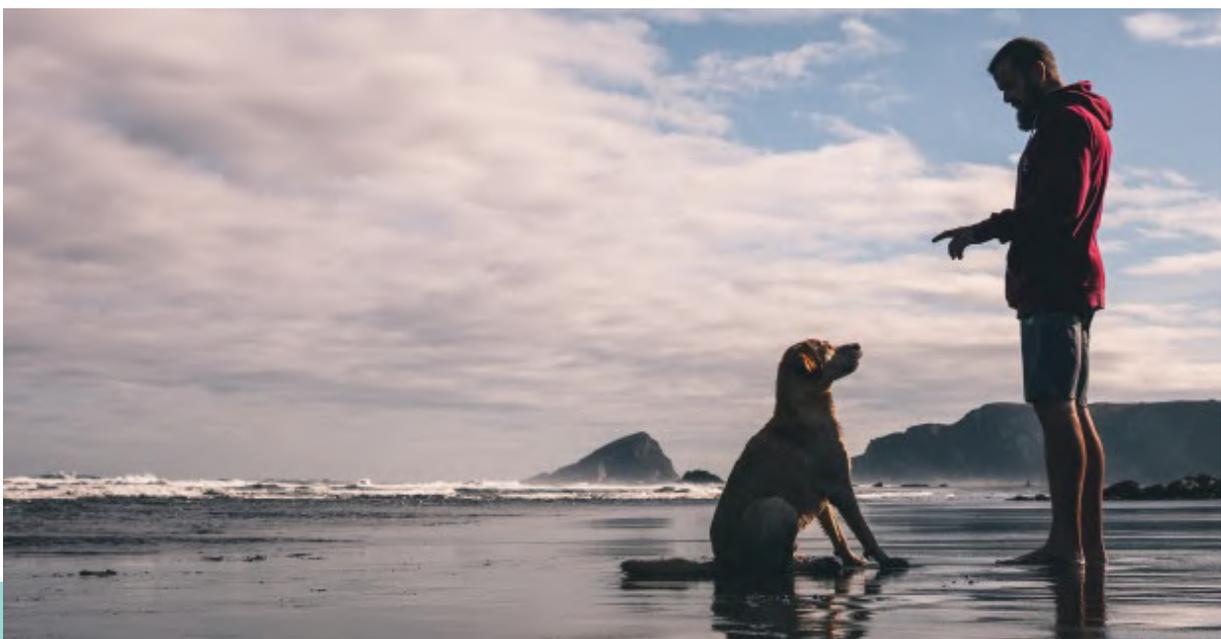
Mental exercises not only tire out your dog and give their brain a workout, but they also allow you to spend quality time with your dog and have some fun. Here are some examples of some great mental exercises for your dog.

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Obedience training



Whether you enroll in a class or work on training at home, obedience behaviors such as sit, stay, down, are essential. Each dog should know these behaviors for a variety of reasons, and they should be worked on consistently to make sure your dog doesn't forget them. Keep training sessions short but consistent, between 5 and 10 minutes several times each week. Learning anything new is a great way to stimulate your dog's brain.



Tricks

No matter how old your dog is, they can always learn new tricks. Any form of learning is stimulating to a dog. A quick search on the internet can give you a variety of behaviors to teach your dog as well as instructions on how to do so. Common behaviors to teach your dog include shake, wave, high-five, spin, speak, stand, and crawl.

Help with the chores

Dogs thrive when they are given a job to do. A great way to stimulate their mind as well as give them a job (and help you out in the process!) is to teach them how to help with the chores. Maybe you want to teach them how to transfer laundry from the washer to the dryer, or how to put their toys back in their basket. These daily chores can be great mental exercises for your dog that take place daily.



Learning the names of their toys

Another mental exercise for your dog is to teach them names of things. There is a border collie reported to have learned over 1,000 individual words. Perhaps you may not teach your dog that many names, but "bed," "crate," or the names of specific toys may be achievable goals.

Clicker training

Much like teaching your dog tricks, clicker training stimulates both your dog's brain and yours as well. Using a clicker is an effective tool for positive reinforcement training. The clicker creates a sound association as the sound of the clicker indicates a bridge between a behavior done correctly and the reward that follows. Positive reinforcement is a great way to stimulate your dog's brain while also tightening the bond between dog and human.



Scavenger hunt

In your backyard or inside your home, create a scavenger hunt for your dog's meal. Divvy your dog's diet into smaller portions and hide them in various reachable locations. This will allow your dog to "hunt" for their food. Since we often feed the same food in the same amount day in and day out, a scavenger hunt makes mealtime into a mentally stimulating game with a delicious reward. Just make sure to remember all of your hiding places in case your dog needs help finding some of them.



Food puzzles

Much like a scavenger hunt, food puzzles can liven up mealtimes, making them more interesting and mentally stimulating.

Explore new places

Take your dog to see new sights and smells. This is an easy way to stimulate that busy brain without too much effort. A simple walk on a new trail or in a new park will have your dog's brain firing on all cylinders.





Cardio Exercises for Your Dog

Did you know that 56% of all dogs were considered too be obese? According to the Association for Pet Obesity, 50 million dogs in the United States are significantly overweight, leading to an increased risk of arthritis, heart disease, and even cancer.

Fortunately, dogs can lose weight through decreasing the calories they consume and exercise, just like we do as humans. It is extremely important to always check with your vet on how to reduce calories without starving your dog or before starting any new exercise program.

In the meantime, here are some fun cardio exercises for you and your dog to do together.

Dog Walking & Hiking

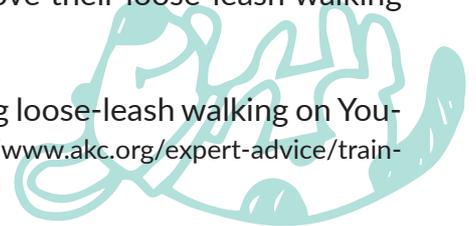
Having a fenced yard is a must-have for many dog owners. In fact, most shelters and rescues look for owners to have fenced yards before approving potential adopters. However, it is important to remember that even though the fenced yard is a safe place to play off-leash and a handy spot for 3 a.m. potty breaks, it is not a replacement for leashed walks.

Leashed walks and hikes have dual benefits. Walks provide important mental exercise to dogs because of the mental stimulation that they get from smelling new scents along each new path. Walking your dog is also the easiest form of exercise to do together because the only equipment you need is a leash and collar or harness. But it is also a great and fun way to burn calories together, so both you and your dog experience the health benefits.



If your dog's walking manners are rusty, many dog training facilities offer courses for dog owners specially created to help their dogs improve their loose-leash walking skills.

You can also find positive training methods for teaching loose-leash walking on YouTube and on the American Kennel Club website: <https://www.akc.org/expert-advice/training/whos-walking-who-tips-to-teach-loose-leash-walking>.



Varying your route is fun for both you and your dog. After all, who wants to walk the same route every single day? We suggest researching to find out which trails are available at your local municipal parks or nearby state and local parks. Remember to start with easy terrain, especially if your dog is obese or has joint pain or problems.

You can find new destinations online here <https://www.traillink.com/activity/dog-walking-trails/> and here <https://www.bringfido.com/attraction/trails>.

Dog Swimming

Swimming is the best partner exercise to perform with your dog, and it is becoming easier to find a swimming spot with more and more indoor dog pools opening around the country. Not only are indoor dog pools open year-round, allowing your pet to swim even during cold winter months, but they also offer a clean environment and special water treatment methods that are safe for a dog's skin and coat. Many also offer water therapy treatments for dogs with joint pain or mobility problems.



Of course, dogs have been swimming outside in lakes and streams for hundreds of years. However, blooms of blue-green algae can be deadly to dogs and it is not always easy for an average dog owner to know if algae is present or if it is the type that can hurt their dog. Salt water can also be dangerous when ingested by dogs, so make sure if you take your dog to an outdoor swimming spot, you should be aware of the water conditions and prevent your dog from drinking the water as he or she swims.

Dog Parks & Doggie Daycare

Dog parks and doggie daycares both offer opportunities for your dog to meet and play with other dogs. Just like with humans, though, some dogs do not want to play with other dogs, so there are several steps to take before choosing to take your dog to an off-leash park or a doggie daycare facility.

Schedule a vet visit to ensure that your dog is up to date on all appropriate vaccinations and that their joints are healthy enough for running, jumping, and rough-housing with other dogs.

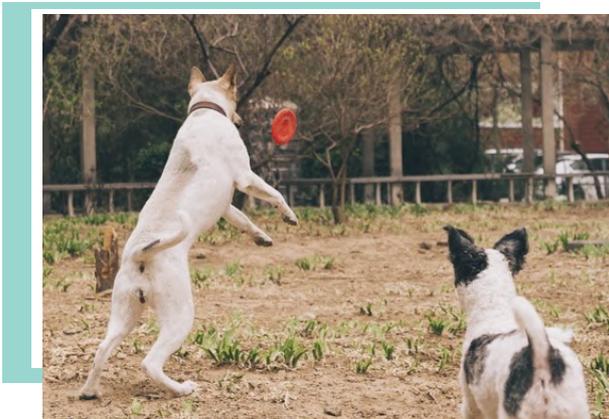
Meet with a professional trainer to learn about your dog's body language, how to spot warning signs of fighting or aggression from your own dog or other dogs, when to step in and take your dog off a play session, and how to break up a fight should one happen.

Thoroughly research all daycare facilities to ensure that they practice collar safety, are sufficiently staffed, and are owned and monitored by knowledgeable, qualified staff.



Dog frisbee & fetch

Some breeds are more obsessed with balls and flying discs than others, but all dogs can enjoy a classic game of fetch. It is important to watch your dog and stop the game when they become visibly tired or overheated. Some dogs will hint that they are finished with the game when they no longer bring the ball or disc to you, but others are so obsessed with the game of fetch (like many Sporting and Herding breeds) that they would play all day if you let them.



Although a game of fetch seems like something a dog knows instinctively how to play, many need to be taught the basics of bringing the toy back to their human.

You can find training tips on teaching your dog to play fetch at the American Kennel Club's link:

[https://www.akc.org/expert-advice/training/how-to-teach-a-dog-to-fetch-or-retrieve.](https://www.akc.org/expert-advice/training/how-to-teach-a-dog-to-fetch-or-retrieve)

Dog Sports

Whether your dog is a pure-bred dog or a mix, there are dog sports for every shape and size. These sports allow dogs and their owners to do the activities for which the dogs were originally bred but in a fun and competitive environment. And if your dog is a mix of many breeds, you can try a variety of sports to see where he or she has the most fun.

Agility is perhaps the most well-known sport for dogs. Agility dogs navigate obstacles and compete to get the fastest time on an assigned course. Nose work, also called scent work, is an event in which dogs use their natural sniffing abilities to locate specific scents and mimic the work done by professional detection dogs. Nose work is gaining steadily in popularity, and dog training facilities often offer beginner courses to get you started. Lure coursing is perfect for dogs with a high prey drive who love to chase. Hunt tests are for retrievers or other hunting breeds who are skilled at finding and retrieving waterfowl and upland game. Dog diving can be done by any dog who loves to leap into the water from a dock.



Dogs and their owners can participate in events just for fun or to earn titles and awards. The only dog sport limited to purebred, unaltered dogs is Conformation, which judges breeding stock compared to the breed standard. Otherwise, any dog can participate regardless of whether they are AKC registered and if they have been spayed or neutered.

Check out the American Kennel Club guide to getting started in dog sports at this link: <https://www.akc.org/expert-advice/sports/get-started-in-dog-sports-and-events>.

Find the right sport for your dog at this link: https://www.apps.akc.org/apps/event_calendar

Dog Exercise Equipment

What is dog exercise equipment? What is it for? How do I know if my dog needs it? We all want what's best for our dogs, but with all of the marketing ploys out there, it can be difficult to ascertain what our dogs actually need to live their happiest and healthiest lives. We will discuss several types of dog exercise equipment, including what dogs benefit from them and in what conditions and situations they are best used.

Why do dogs need exercise equipment?

Exercise equipment can be useful in certain conditions. No matter what time of year it is, your dog needs regular exercise to stay healthy. If you live in a climate with harsh winters and have a dog that does not thrive in cold weather, you may need to exercise them indoors.

Exercise equipment made specifically for dogs can help you maintain your dog's health even in the dead of winter, all from the comfort of your home.

Types of Dog Exercise Equipment

Here are just a few of the myriad types

Indoor Ball Launcher

Multiple companies make ball launchers made for indoor use. Many have customizable settings regarding angle and distance so you can make sure the ball launcher doesn't destroy your home. Once your dog gets the hang of bringing the ball back to the launcher, they will be able to keep themselves entertained while also getting a good workout. Indoor ball launchers are most effectively used for smaller breeds that can run through the house without destroying it.



Balance Disks

Also called wobble disks, balance disks are used to train core strength in both humans and dogs. They come in a variety of shapes and sizes but they all have one thing in common: they wobble! Balance disks teach body awareness, especially foot placement, and are great winter alternatives to (and training for) activities that require balance, such as hiking. Balance disks can be great workout equipment for almost any breed or type of dog.



Treadmill

While dogs can be taught to use a regular human treadmill, there are also dog-specific treadmills out there. These are often built with sidewalls that are better suited to keeping your dog safe while using the machine. Treadmills are not only beneficial for high-energy dogs that need vast amounts of exercise, but also for dogs who require some sort of physical rehabilitation or physical therapy.

Indoor Obstacle Course

Great for beginner and experienced agility dogs alike, indoor obstacle courses can facilitate agility training, even in the middle of winter. Most affordable beginners' kits come with a minimum of a jump, a tunnel, and weave poles. Even if your dog is an experienced agility competitor, the indoor obstacle course can be a great way to keep up their training when the weather prevents them from accessing the larger outdoor courses.

