



Enrichment for Dogs

Enrichment uses one or more of your dog's senses and makes their world a better place. Using items to curb boredom can reduce or eliminate unwanted behaviors while increasing confidence.

Enrichment items can be store bought or recycled from every day household items. This means that you can make your dog happy in any price range!

Below are examples of enrichment. Feel free to get creative and find new ideas.

What is the purpose of enrichment?

- Enrichment provides stability
- Curbs boredom
- Reduces or eliminates unwanted behaviors while increasing confidence.
- Teaches appropriate play and chewing
- Provides mental and physical exercise

Enrichment is sensory (many times multiple senses): Taste, touch, smell, sound, sight. Here are some examples of each:

Taste-

- Hand feed- Leave the bowl behind and teach your dog to sit politely for feeding time, while bonding with you
- Bully sticks, deer antlers or Nylabones- All are better alternatives to chewing your shoes
- Homemade ice treats- Fill an ice cube tray with low sodium chicken broth, yogurt, baby food, or watered down peanut butter. Add treats and freeze
- Paper bags or Chinese takeout containers with food hidden in them- Fun inexpensive treat dispensing toy
- Kongs, Kong Wobblers, Everlasting treat toys- Another alternative to feeding from a boring bowl



Touch-

- Beds or blankets- For warmth and comfort
- Handling or grooming- Reward whole handling. This can teach your dog that grooming is a good experience
- Swimming pool filled with water bottles- Bonus for hiding treats at the bottom
- Water bottle toy- Put an old sock over top of an empty water bottle, instant toy
- Playground equipment- Makes a boring yard fun



Smell-

- Scent of the day (scented oil diluted in spray bottle) or flower essences
- Nose work – Hide treats in the house or spices (dog safe) hidden in yard
- and let your dog find them
- DAP products – May reduce stress for dogs
- PVC pipe treat dispenser toys- Make your own inexpensive toys

Sound-

- White noise machine, television or radio- All help dogs in distress when you are not around

Sight-

- Bubbles- Puppies to seniors may love to watch and chase

- Playdates- Playtime with another dog can give you a tired happy dog when the experience is positive
- Mirrors- Some dogs love to check themselves out in a mirror



For more enrichment ideas, check out these articles:

<http://thebark.com/content/enrichment-toys>

<http://barkpost.com/3-dog-toys-you-can-make-from-things-around-the-house/>

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