



NEW DOG OWNER TRAINING PROGRAM

INTELLIGENT DIVERSIONS & CREATIVE PLAY

The information in this handout is intended as a general guide only

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*"What does it mean 'expensive shoe?' I ate it because it smelled like you.
- From 'If You Only Knew How Much I Smell You: True Portraits of Dogs', by Roy Blount Jr.*

That's what pups do!

Puppies don't chew because they are 'bad', but because, like any toddler, it's how they experience the world. Teething babies of all species need something to chew to relieve the irritation of new teeth coming in. Below are some great pro-active ways to direct your puppy to appropriate chewing outlets and protect valuable things in the process!

*"First, when does it happen, and second, where are you when it happens?
If the puppy gets into things it's not supposed to and you're in another room,
then shame on you, not shame on the puppy."
- Debra Horwitz, DVM, DACVB Veterinary Behaviour Consultations St. Louis, Mo. College of
Veterinary Medicine University of Missouri Columbia, Mo.*

Dogs are by nature exploring, investigative, and curious animals that are in constant need of physical and mental stimulation to be satisfied. Your dog will chew, dig, bark and get into things - he has to. Your job is to provide ACCEPTABLE outlets for these activities.
TIREDDOGS SLEEP!

When your dog picks up something he shouldn't, trade him for something much more interesting that he SHOULD play with - make a big deal about the toy you have to offer! Rotate his toys and chews to keep them interesting. When you see him choose the right thing notice it! Praise him and have a quick game. Most dogs steal things because it is certain to get you out of your chair. Catch me if you can is an awfully fun game - for the dog ...

INTERACTIVE and PACIFIER Toys

Dog toys fall into two categories - Interactive toys and pacifier toys.

Interactive toys are toys which are the most fun played with YOU. **Pacifier** toys are toys designed to keep the bored dog occupied.

Teach your puppy that these toys will appear when he is calm only; otherwise you will teach him to be silly more often. In my house, puppies that start getting into things, racing around the house and harassing the adult dogs get to take a nap in their crates. If they are calm and quiet, they get a puzzle toy.

It is a knife edge balance to keep the dog intellectually stimulated, exercised and rested. Over the years I have found that well rested puppies are pleasant and easy puppies. Puppies who are constantly stimulated are a pain to live with. And puppies who get no stimulation are difficult to train as adults. Strive for balance. Balance will get you where you want to be with your puppy.

- Sue Alexander CPDT CDBC, Dogs in the Park, Guelph, Ontario www.dogsinthepark.ca

Pacifier Toys

The following are some safe pacifier toys, ideal to keep your dog occupied whilst you are out of the house.

Homemade Toys - Sometimes the best toys are homemade, like a milk jug or empty water bottle. For example, put pebbles in a sealed bottle as a rattle or dry dog food in one with the lid off (make sure the ring is removed).

Kongs - Kongs are rubber toys that look like rattlesnake tails and bounce which way and that. Add a bit of peanut butter, a square of cheese, a big biscuit too large to fall out and a few that will. Fill several and hide them in the house or yard and they will keep your dog busy for hours. Go to <http://www.kongcompany.com/> for great recipes and ideas!

Nylabones - they come in a variety of shapes and sizes and hardnesses, from the 'edible' varieties which are intended to be eaten, to the dental bones designed to massage gums and clean teeth, to the Galileo version for the most powerful chewers. If your dog isn't interested, roughen the edges so it looks like another dog enjoyed it first, and then rub peanut butter or squeeze cheese into the crevasses

Chew toys - Hooves, rawhide, pig ears, knuckle bones etc. Chosen carefully (the right size and hardness for your dog's particular chewing style) chew toys can provide hours of chewing satisfaction. If your dog bites off chunks or consumes them quickly they could cause digestive upset or intestinal blockage. Real bones can be safe for some dogs and not for others, depending on how powerfully they chew - heavy chewers can suffer from tooth fractures. There is much debate over raw vs. Cooked, but to be on the safe side, provide uncooked bones.

Knotted ropes - Chewing a knotted rope can massage gums and keep your dog's teeth clean, plus the added play value of shaking, tossing, pouncing and 'killing'. Some come with rubber toys or tennis balls added for even more fun. You can hide biscuits in the knots to encourage your dog and add interest. If your puppy is teething, you can soak the rope in broth or water and freeze it to soothe aching gums.

Dental devices - various shapes and sizes of flexible, nubby edges massage gums and clean teeth. Some are designed so you can put doggy toothpaste in the grooves and let your dog brush his own teeth!

Fleece toys - Many retrievers and 'mothering types' seem to find comfort in carrying a soft toy with them, and frequently present them to their owners upon their arrival home from a long day at work. Squeakers may encourage 'disembowelling' and your chew man might soon be without his insides, but most dogs continue to enjoy them even without their stuffing.

Brain Toys / Self-amusement

Buster Cubes - This durable plastic cube gives dogs mental stimulation, exercise and relief from boredom. It is designed to be filled with bite sized dry pet food or treats. The food is released as the dog rolls the cube with its nose or its paws.

Tricky Treat Balls - a soft rubber ball with a specially designed food dispensing hole in one side. Dimpled so it's easy to carry, quieter on wooden floors than the Buster Cube, and easier for younger and easily frustrated dogs who might give up on a trickier toy.



Outdoor fun for you and your dog

Huge balls - herding breeds especially love playing soccer alone or with you. "Jolly Balls" have handles, nearly indestructible "Best Balls" can be filled with sand or water for more challenging fun!

A suspended ball - remember playing tether ball as a kid? Many dogs also enjoy this game, especially boxers and bull dog breeds. The ball should be suspended from a horizontal pole, not a vertical one for safety.



A kid's wading pool - water loving breeds will love spending hot summer days splashing in a shallow kid's wading pool. **A sandbox of his own** - If your dog loves to dig, make him an appropriate place to do it. Bury his favourite toys, bones and a biscuit or two before you turn the dog out to play.

Brain Games

Tricks and more tricks - You are only limited by your imagination! Sit up, shake hands, roll over, chase your tail, take a bow, and balance a biscuit on his nose.

Hide his breakfast - using his nose can be the most tiring activity for your dog. Leave widely spaced trail of kibble to the hidden bowl ... gradually, day by day, decrease the number of 'clues' until your dog is finding it all on his own.

Hide and seek - Have a family member hide, have them call "come!" and send the dog to find them - start out easy and make it more and more difficult day by day. Play this game in the dark to encourage your dog to use his sense of smell.

Find your toys - Take him out of the room and hide his favourite toy and send him in to find it ... if your dog doesn't like toys, play "hide the biscuit" instead. Variation: Name his toys - and send him to retrieve them by name. Can you put out a pile of his favourites and have him retrieve them one by one, by name?

Message delivery - Teach your dog to deliver notes or other items to other family members. "Take it to daddy" could save you a trip downstairs and give your dog a job he can be proud of!

Obstacle courses - over, under, around and through. Large cardboard boxes can become tunnels, a wide board and a couple of cinder blocks can become a bridge (see agility below).

Clicker Training! 101 things to do with a cardboard box, Free shape behaviour with your clicker!

Active Games & Dog Sports

Retrieving - "sit" "stay" "get it" "out" - dumbbells, Foxtails, Tennis balls

Jumping - Start slowly. Keep the jumps low and the landing surface soft, especially for young dogs. Avoid repetitive jumping or height until your dog is completely through growing.

Bike riding, jogging - start slow and build distance gradually, soft surfaces and short distances for young dogs, check pads before and after every run, avoid the heat of the day.

Cart or sled pulling - The Iditarod! A Northern breed favourite. Cart pulling is enjoyed by Newfoundlands, Bernese Mt. Dogs, Pyrenees and others.

Swimming - is good exercise and a great way to cool off. Not all dogs naturally know how to swim! Doggy life jackets are a good idea when boating. Important: Swimming pools are strictly off-limits to unsupervised dogs.

For more information, read our handout [How to Play with Your Dog](#) or go to www.diamondsintheruff.com