



All About Enrichment

Dogs need mental and physical stimulation. If you don't supply an appropriate outlet, your dog can find countless ways to entertain themselves. Chewing the coffee table down to stubs, digging up the petunia bed, engaging in lengthy tail-chasing sessions, shredding your clean, nicely folded laundry into miniscule rags, or barking and howling at noises real or imagined will all seem to your dog like great ways to pass the time.

Providing enrichment to your dog means giving them access to opportunities to perform natural dog behaviors. Here are a few that your dog finds very enriching: sniffing or foraging, interacting with humans and other animals, digging, chewing, eating, even hearing new sounds and seeing new sights. We



humans enrich our lives all the time, and we love novelty! While I may choose watching TV as my evening enrichment opportunity, I may choose to watch a different show depending on the day. Just like our dogs may love chewing toys but may enjoy rotating through a few favorites, more than having the same toy each day.

Work-to-eat toys or “Puzzle Feeders” are a fantastic and simple solution for any pooch suffering from canine cabin fever. Merely dropping food into your dog's bowl is boring and even unnatural to them, leaving them with a whole lot of untapped energy to burn. Work-to-eat toys are an easy way to put that energy to proper use. There are many toys on the market designed to suit this very need, KONG toys, Tug Jugs, Kibble Nibbles, and Buster Cubes being just a few.

With all these toys the idea is the same — put food inside something and let your dog figure out how to remove it. With this concept in mind, the possibilities to make your own work-to-eat toys using common household items are endless. To design your own toy, observe your dog's favorite activities. Do they like to rip out all the filling from their stuffed animals? Try packing a tissue box with a mixture of cotton batting, rags, newspaper, and kibble. Maybe even mix some treats in there for them to find! Does your dog have a keen nose, or sometimes help themselves to leftovers in the garbage can? Simply hiding treats in uncommon places around the house will keep him busy all evening. Or maybe spread their dinner kibbles out in the backyard grass for them to sniff around for. That 30-second dinner might turn into 10-minutes of sniffing, and that's hard work! Your pup might even be ready for a nap post dinner time.

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There's no end to the creative ways to feed and play with your pet to help provide them natural and appropriate outlets for their needs. Enlist the whole family in creating some of these fun options. Kids love coming up with these fun games, so get them involved in the creation and implementations and they might even be able to toy prep for you so that you can be ahead of the enrichment game come your busy workweek!

Recyclable Enrichment

- Paper Towel Rolls
 - Tissue Paper Rolls
 - Tissue Boxes
 - Egg Cartons
 - Cereal Boxes
 - Plastic Bottles
 - Paper Bags
 - Coffee Cup Tray
- (Ensure your dog doesn't ingest any plastic!)

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