



## Restricted Activity Enrichment for Dogs

As you may know, dogs need mental and physical stimulation. When you have a dog that is being treated for heartworm disease or recovering from an orthopedic trauma, it is important to follow the doctor's orders of crate rest and limited physical activities. This handout was created to help you provide your dog with the mental stimulation they need while restricting their physical activity.

One activity you can do with your dog that doesn't need any link or handout is to read aloud to them. You can set up a comfy spot for your dog to join you while you sit down to read them excerpts from your book, a magazine article, or the newspaper. If you have children, having them read a book aloud would be a great activity for them to engage in as well.

While your dog is on restricted exercise for heartworm, you can work on some basic commands. This is a great time to hook your dog up to their leash and work on sit, lie down, and stay. This is an activity you can do in your home. We don't recommend doing this off leash, as you want to make sure you keep your dog from running and jumping while undergoing treatment for heartworm.

We have a few "work to eat" links for your review. You can create some homemade activities with some commonly found household objects as well as some fun puzzle toys you can craft yourself or purchase.

Dogs love to use their noses. There are a few low key activities that we are sure will be fun for you to create and your dog to complete.

### Relevant Links

**Nose Work:** The first minute of this video is a puzzle toy. While on crate and exercise restrictions, you wouldn't want to do the nose work portion with boxes while off leash. You could do some on-leash, calm and controlled searches in your home for the box. Definitely no bounding around with the tennis balls in this video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h-dhQo1xGuY>

**Homemade puzzle toys:** Keep those cup carriers when you go to a local coffee house. You can place yummy treats in the cup area and cover with tennis balls. Your dogs can do this activity in an x-pen, laundry room, bathroom, or while in their crate. You can also keep your dog on leash and have them play with this puzzle toy in the living room:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ADtrrijS3cl>

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