



April 2026

Canine Enrichment - Keep Your Dog Challenged & Happy

Fifteen minutes a day is all you need! To avoid over-feeding, adjust your dog's kibble to off-set your use of treats. Tiny bites of soft treats work great. If it's too cold or too hot outside for a walk, these exercises will work your dog's brain and wear them out in a short time.

• Food Puzzles

- Food puzzles, snuffle mats, & "Kong Toys" slow down your dog's eating and help with digestion.
- They're also effective with treats. They keep your dog occupied or "re-directed" from stressful behaviors.
- Use them for:
 - Company or workers at your home
 - Redirecting barking behaviors
 - In the car to calm stressful reactions
 - As thunderstorms approach

Explore Food Puzzles by searching "Food Puzzle", "Snuffle Mat", "Kong Toys":

- <https://www.chewy.com>
- [HTTPS://amazon.com](https://amazon.com)
- Visit your local retail Pet Stores

• Home Made "Play Areas"

- Use articles around the house to create miniature "agility courses".
 - Old plastic jugs make great "cones" for dogs to learn "weave in and out".
 - Take old plastic pvc pipes and teach your dog to "jump over". Start with "step over".

Explore Agility activities:

- <https://bestfriends.org/stories/features/how-agility-training-helps-rescued-dogs>

• Nose Work and Hide & Seek

- Take old boxes, turn them upside down and hide treats in them for your dog to find. Dogs learn very quickly because they have a keen sense of smell. Help them in the beginning by showing them where the treats are hidden. Once they understand the game, don't let your dog see you hide the treats. You can substitute kibble for treats.
- If you don't have boxes, you can hide treats under pillows or other fun places around your house.
- This great brain "workout" and will wear your dog out in about 15 minutes.
- Play hide & seek with your dog in the house. When they're not looking, hide yourself in the furthest point of your house and call them. They'll have fun trying to find you. Your reward is seeing how proud they look when they find you.

Explore nose work and games:

- https://www.ted.com/talks/alexandra_horowitz_how_do_dogs_see_with_their_noses
- <https://resources.bestfriends.org/article/dog-nose-work-scent-training-sport-dogs>
- [https://www.gvr canine.org/uploads/1/4/0/3/140391736/training_games_for_dogs_2 .pdf](https://www.gvr canine.org/uploads/1/4/0/3/140391736/training_games_for_dogs_2.pdf)