

# ENRICHMENT

## WHAT IS IT?

Enrichment is often discussed and promoted as a fantastic experience for puppies and older dogs, but what exactly is it?

Enrichment adds exciting things to our dog's environment to promote species-specific behaviors such as curiosity, engagement, exploring, investigating, foraging and scavenging. It challenges their brains, boosts confidence, enhances problem-solving abilities and teaches them new skills.

Often, modern-day dogs are given the same routine daily, consisting of sleeping, walking in the same area each day and eating the same food out of a bowl. It can become dull for our dogs, which are natural adventurers, scavengers, and foragers. Providing our dogs with mental stimulation and outlets for their natural behaviors will help prevent them from becoming self-employed and finding their amusement through boredom. Often the activities they choose are things we'd rather they didn't like such as digging in the garden, barking at everything they see or chewing the cushions.

Dogs engaged in appropriate daily activities will be more content, happy, relaxed and fulfilled. One sure way to a peaceful evening without zoomies is by setting up enrichment for your pup.



  
**Pawsitive Peaks**  
TRAINING AND BEHAVIOR<sup>+</sup>  
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**#DITCHTHEBOWL**

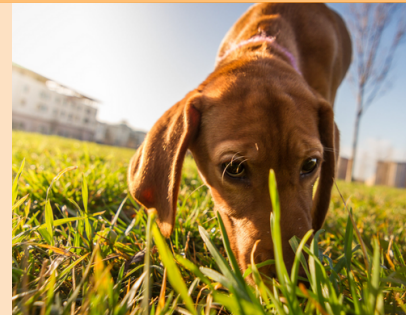
# ENRICH YOUR DOG'S LIFE



**Food-Based Enrichment:** Food stuffed toys or food dispensing balls. These toys are meant to be filled with your dog's favorite food, peanut butter, yogurt, cheese, fruits and kibble.



**Sensory Enrichment** allows your dog to explore using their various senses. Create *scent trails* by hiding some treats or their favorite toys in the backyard or indoors for your dog to follow. Plant a *sensory garden* with dog-friendly herbs and plants like lavender, mint, and rosemary for your dog to sniff and explore. Take your dog for *textured walks* with grass, sand, gravel, and pavement to engage their sense of touch. Play recordings of various sounds like birds chirping, doorbells ringing, or vehicles passing by to expose your dog to different auditory stimuli in *sound games*. Scavenging and foraging for food offer valuable mental enrichment, providing a workout for their mind. It's a great way to exercise their cognitive abilities!



**Social Enrichment:** Bond with your dog through interactive play at their level. Teach tug-of-war, ensuring they win sometimes. Try ball chasing or using toys for engagement. Interacting with other people and animals up close and from a distance is essential as long as your dog consents. Flirt poles engage dogs in playful exercise by moving a lure for them to chase and catch.



**Physical Enrichment:** Enhance your pup's physical well-being with activities like digging, exploring, climbing, and crawling. Try puppy parkour for a fun twist. Take them on a sniffari in a field or wooded area, letting them lead on a long line (12-15ft) while you follow.



Nina Ottosson Puzzles

**Cognitive Enrichment** involves stimulating your dog's problem-solving skills through activities such as puzzle games, clicker shaping, training sessions, snuffle mats, and interactive games like hide and seek.

**Hide and Seek**

Drop a few treats while your puppy is busy, and run and hide. Call your puppy to come to find you. Great for practicing recall!

**Snuffle Mats**



# ENRICHMENT PROJECT

## Muffin Tin

This is a great confidence builder for dogs and can be made more straightforward or complex, depending on your dog's skill level.

To begin with, you're going to take some of your dog's food or treats and sprinkle them into different sections. You can use a selection of different flavors and textures to give your dog an even more enriching experience. Once you've done this, you will add some objects on top of the tin that your dog will need to move out of the way to access the tasty delights.

First, you can make this simple by having some of the sections free to access and some covered by one of their toys. As your dog becomes an expert, you can increase the difficulty by adding more objects, including different toys and novel items such as plastic egg cartons or another packaging.

There are many ways to vary this challenge to keep it new and exciting for your pup.



# ENRICHMENT PROJECT

## Burrito

This enrichment game is a great way to get your pup thinking and trying something new; this enrichment game is perfect for teaching your dog to problem solve while making mealtimes more fun.

Get a small towel and some of your dog's food. You want to sprinkle the treats across the towel as you roll up. Ensure some are near the edges to help your dog get started.

When you've created your burrito, give it to your dog on the floor or in their crate and watch the fun unfold. Remember, these activities are also great to set up outside of meal times. Enrichment games are perfect for keeping your dog occupied and happy when visitors come over, when you're sitting down to a meal, and when your dog has some extra energy.

To make it more of a challenge, you can fold the burrito up or place it in another container for your dog to pull out of. There is so much fun to be had with enrichment!

