

# ENRICHMENT

## WHAT IS IT?

Enrichment is often talked about and promoted as a fantastic experience for puppies and older dogs alike but what exactly is it?

Enrichment is the act of adding interesting things to our dogs 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 day in, day out consisting of sleeping, walking in the same area each day and eating the same food out of a bowl.

It can become really boring for our dogs who are natural adventurers as well as scavengers and hunters. Providing our dogs with mental stimulation and outlets for their natural behaviours will help prevent them becoming self employed and finding their own amusement through boredom. Often the activities they choose are things we'd rather they didn't like digging in the garden or chewing the cushions.

Dogs who have engaged in appropriate activities throughout the day 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.



# ENRICHING YOUR DOGS LIFE



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



Youngever



Tux Toy



West Paw



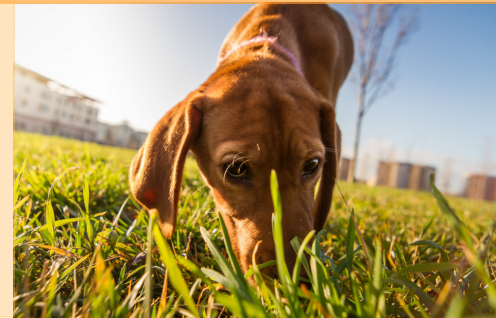
Toppl Toy



Buster Cube

**Sensory Enrichment:** Opportunities for your dog to explore using their different senses. Spreading their meal over the lawn, grass, snow or all around the house is a great way to use their sniffer to find their food.

Scavenging and foraging for their food provides a ton of mental enrichment. A great way to exercise the mind!



**Social Enrichment:** Engage with your dog with a small game of play together, get down to their level. Teach your dog how to play tug-of-war. Make sure they get to win! Ball chasing or chasing a toy. Increase the bond between you and your dog. Interacting with other people and animals up close and from a distance, are all important as long as your dog consents.

**Physical Enrichment:** Such as digging, exploring, climbing and crawling. Puppy parkour is great for this.



Nina Ottosson Puzzles

**Cognitive Enrichment:** Which includes: puzzle games, clicker shaping games or training sessions, snuffle mats as well as other games like hide and seek.

## Hide and Seek

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

## Snuffle Mats



# #DITCHTHEBOWL



# ENRICHMENT PROJECT

## Muffin Tin

This is a great confidence builder for dogs and can be made simpler or more difficult depending on your dogs skill level.

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

To start with 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 as well as novel items such as plastic egg cartons or other packaging.

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



# ENRICHMENT PROJECT

## Burrito

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 and enjoyable.

To start, get a small towel and some of your dog's food. You want to sprinkle the treats across the towel as you roll up. Make sure some of them are near to the edges to help your dog get started.

When you've created your burrito simply give 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 at other times when your dog has a bit of 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 it out of. There is so much fun to be had with enrichment!

