



To walk with a dog... is to share his world. What sights and sounds he encounters. What past and present smells he reads. To stretch his legs, to bask in the sun, to discover and wind his way through this brave new human world.

cheerfuldogs chronicles

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Living With Dogs: 5 Tips for Keeping Your Dog Busy

Dogs get stir-crazy, too. If yours is climbing the walls and driving you to distraction, here are five ways to help him chill.

Balanced exercise. There are plenty of ways of working out for your dog. The key to appropriate exercise is balance. A run may be suitable for some, a brisk leash-walk for others. Try a game of fetch or go-find-it in the garden or living room; maybe a round of hide-and-seek or catch-me-if-you-can. The key is that the activity should not be

over-
stimulating.
Take your
cue from
his
behaviour.



Healthy Dog: We Are What We Eat

We are what we eat. It's a common saying about human nutrition, acknowledging the critical link between our health and our diet. And it's true of dogs, too.

The question of canine nutrition has garnered increasing attention over the last couple decades, bringing an ever-burgeoning pet food market in its wake. The choices are endless: A dizzying array of dry foods, to cans, dehydrated foods, frozen raw diets, the butcher shop, and home-cooked formulas.

If all these choices have you wondering what to feed your dog, you could start by checking out *The Whole Dog Journal* (www.whole-dog-journal.com).

They claim to be a *Consumer Reports* for dog lovers, decoding conflicting pet food advice and the newest research studies to keep readers up to date with straightforward guidance on the pros and cons of various diets.



cont.

... keeping dogs busy

Put away the food bowl. Extend your dog's mealtime by putting his food in a Kong, treat ball or other food delivery toy. He'll enjoy the challenge and expend extra energy.

Let 'em chew. Dogs are born to chew, and many are content to spend hours on a good project. Talk to your vet and local pet supply shop about safe options, then try a variety to discover what tickles your dog's fancy. Whatever you choose, always supervise for safety and remove the item before it becomes small enough to swallow.

Work the mind. We all know dogs are smart, and mental exercise can tire a dog out as well as the physical kind can. Do an online search for canine puzzle toys, and you'll find an impressive selection of creative products to keep your dog's mind occupied for long stretches. For best results, read and follow the training directions that accompany the toys you choose.

Reward the calm. Here's an easy one that's often overlooked. Tell your dog "thank you" when he's being calm. Reward your dog's calm moments with a treat, some attention, a chew, or a puzzle toy, and he'll reward you with more calm moments.



Dog Sports Around the World: Weight Pulling

Dogs have pulled things for humans throughout history: sleds, carts, and many types of cargo. In today's sport version, dogs wear a padded harness that attaches to a so-called trace (two side straps), which connects to either a sled, wheeled cart, or rail carts. Competitions mostly attracts breeds like Bulldogs, Mastiffs and Boxers, but the sport is open to all breeds and all sizes. Any dog can learn to love pulling weight if training is done carefully in small incremental steps without stress or force.

The key thing to success — a happy dog that's having fun — is to carefully and gradually condition the pooch for the job. That includes desensitizing your dog to the harness and other equipment with treats, fun, and praise, and it means slowly



building from no weight to light weight and so on. And always remember that the dog didn't pick the sport. If she's having a bad day, let her off the hook. Weight should be tons of fun, pun intended.



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