

Tools for Enrichment

Environmental outlets for dogs are essential to promote healthy behavior and to avoid/reduce the occurrence of behavior problems.

Here we discuss some basic enrichment tools that engage the dogs senses of touch and taste. Chew toys are important for both puppies and adult dogs. Providing all dogs with good “chew” habits early on will help prevent chewing on unacceptable objects. Food toys provide an oral outlet along with mental stimulation while the dog works for his meals.



Kong® Toys – Kong® toys come in a variety of shapes and sizes and are easy to stuff. When starting dogs out on these toys make it fairly easy for them to get their food reward by filling the toy with kibble and topping it with wet food. As the dog gets the concept, make it harder to remove the food by mixing the wet and dry food together and then stuffing the kong. Eventually, you can stuff the kong and freeze it, making the food treat last for several minutes. For puppies freezing the toy also feels nice on their gums.

Make your own: a substitute for the kong toy could be an old marrow bone. Stuff it the same way and freeze it.



Tug-a-Jug™ – Premiere® makes a number of different food toys but the tug-a-jug is an Animal Farm Foundation favorite. Fill it with kibble or treats and watch your pup pull on the tug toy to get his meal.

Make your own: Take a juice bottle with a wide mouth and drill a hole into the bottom of it for your tug toy. Use the capped end to fill it with kibble and treats.

Tools for Enrichment



Linkables™ – This is a great toy as the dog never knows which hole will deliver his treat. You can change the shape so it is always just a little different and will keep the dog interested longer.

Make your own: Go to a hardware store and get PVC pipe. Make sure you purchase some elbows and ends. Put them together in different shapes capping the end and drill some holes into the sides for the kibble to come out of. This is a nice rugged toy that will last a lifetime!



Kool Dogz Ice Treat Maker™ – You can purchase the Kool Dogz Treat Maker™ and follow the included recipes to provide dogs with an ice treat. This is a great way to keep your pooch busy for hours. Fill this treat not only with food but also with toys and other chews.

Make your own: Use a water bucket or whatever you have that you can fill and freeze. Line the bucket with wet food, peanut butter or even cream cheese to get your pooch interested. Put kibble, treats and your dog's favorite toys in the bucket and add a chain or cord for easy hanging. Stick it in the freezer overnight.

You will discover most dogs enjoy working for their food. Using different types of toys will keep your dogs mind engage. There are many more toys on the market than we could possibly list here and all can be recreated at home if need be with a little imagination.