

KEEPING PUPPY BUSY: PHYSICAL & MENTAL

Physical Exercise Plan

A tired puppy is a calmer puppy and a calmer puppy makes for happy puppy parents! Unfortunately, the usual leash walk is seldom enough to have a calming effect. Puppies need activity that encourages them to run several times a day in order to meet their needs for exercise. Playing fetch or Frisbee, swimming, playing tug, and playing with other puppies are some ways you can meet this need. If time is a factor, consider hiring a dog walker or taking your pup to puppy daycare. Your puppy will have a great time, housetrain faster, and be much less likely to chew on the kitchen table legs due to boredom and extra energy. You'll also feel better knowing she's not at home by herself all day—and you'll have a calmer puppy to return home to in the evening.

Mental Stimulation

Puppies have growing minds as well as growing bodies. But inquiring minds often look for projects and the most obvious choice is often chewing the sofa cushions. Providing your puppy with fun things to do on his own can help prevent behavior problems associated with boredom like barking and chewing the furniture. Along with providing a productive outlet for puppy's problem-solving skills, toys that stimulate puppy's mind can teach him how to settle down and be alone. The following mental exercise games and problem-solving activities will help keep your puppy occupied with parent-approved projects.

- Stuffed Kongs, bully sticks, marrow bones, and pressed rawhides are great for puppies who need to chew
- The Tricky Treat Ball works the brain while dispensing puppy's meal
- Plush puzzle toys (ex. Hide-A-Squirrel) are great for puppies who insist on taking the stuffing out of, well, everything
- Wrap treats in old stuffed animals and/or socks to encourage dissection. Throw items in the washer to clean and use again
- All puppies enjoy a good scavenger hunt. Once puppy has gone potty, scatter her kibble around part of the yard and encourage her to "find it."

See your Puppy Shopping List for more ideas!