



RSPCA School for Dogs Information Sheet

Food Dispensing Toys

Treat-dispensing toys are fantastic both for releasing constructive energy in active dogs and for getting more inactive dogs up and moving. It is a great way to provide mental and physical exercise for your dog (or cat!) and helps to reduce undesired behaviours such as barking, escaping and destruction of the yard.

We have come up with a list of toy suggestions from experiences with our own dogs that work well. We recommend a supervision period for each toy to ensure the toy is not damaged or destroyed, as every dog is different and plays with toys differently. For example, some dogs learn to pick up toys and drop them to get food out (eg kong classic), where others learn to fling them around. This can result in some toys being broken when they land on hard surfaces!

Kong Wobbler

Looks like an oversized Kong with a hole in it.

Pros:

- Comes apart in 2 pieces to allow for easy filling
- Solid and lasts well
- Easy to clean

Cons:

- Can be picked up by some dogs
- Treats can be emptied out too quickly



Kong Genius

Pros:

- Can join them together to add difficulty
- Durable
- Soft for older dogs and puppies
- Easy to clean
- Quiet



Bob-a-lot

Pros:

- Sturdy
- Adjustable
- Easy to fill

Cons:

- Dogs can chew the lid



Buster cube

Pros:

- Long lasting
- Durable/tough
- Comes in 2 sizes





RSPCA School for Dogs Information Sheet

Cons:

- Hard to clean
- Insert can become stuck over time and exposure to elements

Aussie dog tucker ball/staffy ball

Pros:

- Extra-long lasting
- Very tough

Cons:

- Difficult to fill
- Can be too hard and dogs can give up!
- Expensive



Aussie dog home alone toy

Pros:

- Long lasting
- Durable
- Adds a tug toy element
- Great for active dogs

Cons:

- Need to find appropriate place to hang
- Is hard to fill and clean
- Expensive



Busy buddy twist and treat

Pros:

- Can adjust difficulty
- Can use wet and dry foods and can freeze it
- Easy to clean and durable

Cons:

- Need to use larger sized treats otherwise too easy



Busy buddy kibble nibble

Pros:

- Easy to fill and clean
- Has rubber edges so is quiet

Cons:

- Can be chewed!





RSPCA School for Dogs Information Sheet

Tug a jug

Pros:

- Durable and fun (adds a tug toy element)
- Can alter difficulty
- Easy to load

Cons:

- Can be too hard for some dogs!



Home made plastic container (e.g milk bottles)

Pros:

- Easy to make
- Very cheap

Cons:

- May not last long!
- The wrong type of plastic may give your dog superficial cuts if chewed
- Refer to our Entertaining your dog info sheet for instructions



To find some of the above products and for more information, visit:

www.worldforpets.com.au

www.boredombusters.net.au

www.cleanrun.com

www.dogwise.com

You can also search for many of these products and more by using your search engine on the web.

Tips for using treat dispensing toys

All dogs learn at different paces. Some dogs will learn to use treat dispensing toys very easily and often get bored when it becomes too easy for them. Other dogs take a while to learn how to use the toys and can often give up if they don't receive any reinforcement (e.g. the food coming out). Take some time to teach your dog how to use each different toy. If your dog is getting their food at other times very easily (such as out of a bowl), then some dogs may learn to wait until the easier option becomes available! Teach your dog to work for their food as often as possible. This also doubles as supervision so you can be sure that your dog is not injuring itself on the toy or breaking the toy.

Make sure you vary the toys you provide your dog with. Even a fabulous treat dispensing toy can become boring when used every day.



RSPCA School for Dogs Information Sheet

Resources

Facebook groups focused on enrichment:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/canineenrichment/>

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1747279312231501/>

Youtube clips:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NAQ47cPeVcY&t=100s>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rtgROnCtRT0>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H5foqNUXFDE&t=6s>

Mornement. Dr Kate, Pets Behaving Badly, Wild at Heart: Why Enrichment is Essential for Your Pet's Well-Being: <http://katemornementanimalbehaviourist.blogspot.com/2017/09/wild-at-heart-why-enrichment-is.html?pref=fb&m=1>

© RSPCA School for Dogs 2018
