



LIVING WITH DOGS

TOYS, WONDERFUL TOYS

Dogs are a lot like children. If you don't give them something fun to do, they will make their own fun—and often not in ways you approve of.

What's more, dogs that get plenty of mental exercise are happier, calmer, quieter, and less likely to rummage through the trash or attack the couch cushions. All terrific reasons your dog should have toys. And not just a toy or two, either. Dogs have distinctly individual toy preferences, depending on the day, time, and situation. Do some detective work and find out what truly tickles your dog.



The best toys have a purpose. They deliver food, present a challenge, squeak, or make themselves interesting in some other way. If you are new to the world of dog toys, here are some classics to begin with: Rope toys, plush toys (with or without squeakers), Hide-A-Bee (Squirrel, Bird), tricky treat balls, soft rubber toys (vinyl), and hard rubber toys like Kongs and Nylabones. Once you have a good selection, develop a toy strategy. Designate a popular toy for use only during alone time, like when you need to leave your dog in her crate, confinement area, or a spare room. Then, rotate the other toys daily to keep the novelty factor high.

Some dogs are dissectors, another word for 'toy destroyers.' Messy as it can be, it's perfectly normal canine behavior—dogs are predators, after all, and need an outlet for those pounce-and-shake urges. If

your dog is a dissector, provide legitimate things for her to attack and let her indulge her hobby. Don't

worry; she won't graduate to your possessions. Spare your budget by collecting the stuffing and putting it back in the toy—your dog doesn't care if she splits apart the same stuffed alligator seven times. You can also use hand-me-down stuffed animals your children or your friends' children no longer want, or buy in bulk from a thrift store (just remove choking hazards like eyes and buttons). Many pet supply stores sell bags of squeakers that

you can then insert for added entertainment and allure. Remember, dogs get busy. Make it with toys,

IN THIS ISSUE

LIVING WITH DOGS

Toys, Wonderful Toys

DID YOU KNOW

These Doggie Blood Group Facts?

A WORLD OF DOGS

Picking a Winner—Adopting from a Shelter

DOGS IN ACTION

Movie Star Dogs

HEALTHY DOG

Thunder Phobia

DOG IN THE SPOTLIGHT

The Pug

TIPS & TOOLS

When Kids Meet Dogs

"If you think dogs can't count, try putting three dog biscuits in your pocket and then giving Fido only two." –Phil Pastoret



DID YOU KNOW

THESE DOGGIE BLOOD GROUP FACTS?

- Dogs have 10-13 blood groups (the number differs by country), categorized by the Dog Erythrocyte Antigen (DEA), a number, and a designation of positive or negative.
- All dogs belong to more than one group and many belong to more than two.
- DEA 1.1 positive dogs—about 40% of the dog population—are what's known as universal recipients (they can receive blood of any type without experiencing a life-threatening reaction).
- DEA 1.1 negative dogs are considered universal donors (but can't tolerate DEA 1.1 positive blood).
- Just to be safe, it's best to have your dog blood typed—that way, you know what to tell the vet in an emergency.

not trouble.

A WORLD OF DOGS

PICKING A WINNER—ADOPTING FROM A SHELTER

Adopting a dog from a shelter can fluster even the most level-headed person. We go, determined that today is the day. A lifetime pal for us, a playmate for the kids, or maybe a brother or sister for Spot, waiting at home. But once we're there, decision paralysis sets in. On all sides there are dark, pleading eyes, tails wagging furiously, and tongues trying to lick us through the mesh of a cage. Walking past those kennels, the anticipation is palpable—and often noisy: Me! Me! Pick me! Faced with so many four-legged hopefuls, most opt for the love-at-first-sight method of choosing: A pretty face, colors that appeal, a size that looks about right, and our proverbial goose is cooked.

But as with human relationships, initial attraction alone may turn out to be a poor predictor of long-term happiness. Successful matches are much more likely when would-be adopters carefully consider what is right for them and go looking for it. As the Greek aphorism prescribes: Know Thyself. An avid distance runner looking for a running buddy, for example, might want to pick a Border Collie mix over a Bulldog. Barking can be okay or a deal breaker, depending on the person. Some people don't mind long hair and drool on their eggshell-colored couches; others very much do.

Dogs of all types, ages, sizes, and energy levels are lovable, of course. And they all deserve loving homes. Going to a shelter with a shopping list (... short hair, medium-sized engine, good with cats...) may strike some as too businesslike. Unromantic. But factoring in lifestyle and temperament compatibility when looking for a canine companion drastically increases the chances of a happy, life-long relationship. In the end, nobody would expect every person they came across to be a suitable partner, either. One person's ideal is another's recipe for disaster. Besides, preparedness is the best defense against the urge to take home every single dog in the shelter.

(If your heart is set on a specific breed but you want to give a dog a second chance, look online for breed rescues in your area.)





DOGS IN ACTION

MOVIE STAR DOGS

Dogs rule the silver screen. Sure, horses do amazing things, cats can be charming, parrots add color, and pigs might show off some of that porcine intelligence. But dogs perform like no other animal species. Why? They love the work. If the job is fun, if people pay attention to them, if there are treats and praise and play to be had, they keep going long after other animals kick back their claws or talons or hoofs and lose all interest in the silly humans trying to get them to act funny while the cameras roll.

So, dogs have the ideal raw material for movie stardom. It still takes oodles of training to get a dog ready for the big screen. Cues have to be solid—as in pay-attention-in-the-aisle-in-PetSmart-during-a-food-spill solid—and sometimes silent, too. Dog actors often need to react to their handler's body language rather than voice cues and they can't be staring at the handler all the time either. That kind of situational awareness and attentiveness takes time, ingenuity, and effort to train. But what would the movie world be without Old Yeller, Lassie, Toto, Skip, Otis, Benji, Beethoven, Hooch, Marley, Brinkley, Winn-Dixie, Petey, Rhapsody in White, even Cujo, and countless other canine stars? Not the same, that's what.



HEALTHY DOG

THUNDER PHOBIA

As anyone can attest who has an afflicted pooch in the house, thunder phobia is a torment for many dogs. Some pant, shake, pace, whine, or drool, and try to hide in the closet. Others are gripped by uncontrollable panic and try desperate things to get away from the scary storm, including crashing through windows or running headlong into traffic. Not every thunder phobic dog can be cured, but many have been helped by gentle desensitization such as the playing of a CD with thunderstorms at extremely low volume, which is then gradually increased over several months. Another option, if your dog is able to take treats during a storm, is to dish out something extra special with each thunderclap.

Before trying any treatment always get expert guidance from your vet or dog trainer—and start well before thunderstorm season. If all else fails, talk to your veterinarian about calming medication.



DOG IN THE SPOTLIGHT

THE PUG

One of the so-called smushnose dogs, the pug packs a big personality in a compact container. Clownish, fun-loving, wheezy, affectionate, and dignified, pugs can be traced back to pre-B.C. China. Marie Antoinette had pugs, as did Queen Victoria (she had 36, in fact). Pug charm conquers high culture (William Hogarth's 1745 self-portrait *The Painter and his Pug*) and popular entertainment (memorably in the *Men in Black* movies) with equal ease. Some pug facts: Their puppies are called puglets; they make first-class couch companions; they're great with kids; they inspire fan festivals called Pug-O-Ramas, and they happen to be the sixth hottest dog for attracting positive attention from the opposite sex while strolling in the dog park, according to *The Dog Lover's Guide to Dating*—just in case you were wondering.

To give a Pug a home, search online for nearby rescues.

TIPS & TOOLS

WHEN KIDS MEET DOGS

It's widely believed that children should approach unfamiliar dogs by sticking a hand out to be sniffed. But an outstretched hand doesn't actually put a pooch at ease. Instead:



Ask first.

Always ask the owner's permission. If the owner is not around, don't approach, however friendly the dog seems.



Wait for it.

When you have permission, crouch down and let the dog come to you. If the dog doesn't approach, respect that and leave it alone.



Pet wisely.

Pet the dog's back or chest, not the top of its head. Many dogs are sensitive about having their heads touched.



No face time.

Staring directly at a dog or putting your face close to his can feel like a threat to the dog. Look away with regular intervals and speak in a soft, soothing tone.

834-293-3033 | jean@FirstFriendCanineConsulting.com | FirstFriendCanineConsulting.com



I am Jean Kolor, owner and trainer of First Friend Canine Consulting. I am a Karen Pryor Academy Certified Training Partner as well as a licensed Family Paws Parent Educator. I offer private in home training where I train your dog for you or coach you in how to train your dog. I offer group training classes for puppies, adolescents and adult dogs. I also work with expecting and new families to help them through the unique challenges presented by relationships between baby and dog and toddler and dog.

Contact me today for more information on how I can help you reach your goals with your dog in a positive, respectful way.