

# Pet Enrichment

A bored pet will often get into trouble; younger and high-energy animals require more mental and physical stimulation than others. Mental stimulation is twice as effective as physical activity when it comes to alleviating boredom. That may mean training and puzzles, or that may mean adding some extra tricks to your planned daily activities.

## Motivation

The key to entertaining your pet is figuring out what matters to them. For some, it's any and all treats. For others, it's attention, pets, and a high-pitched baby voice. Some are hyper toy-focused and will do anything for a stuffy or ball. Once you figure out your pet's motivation, you can start curbing some of those naughty behaviors.

[How to Find What Motivates Your Dog To Work - American Kennel Club \(akc.org\)](#)

Let's be honest: for cats, it's murder.

## Training

Your pet doesn't have to be a genius to learn, and they don't have to be athletic to learn tricks and agility. It's all about taking the time and using that motivation to get your pet's mind and body engaged.

Here are some places to start:

[5 Things You Can Train Your Cat to Do \(Really\) | HowStuffWorks](#)

[Teach Your Puppy These 5 Basic Cues \(akc.org\)](#)

[10 Tips to Practice Agility at Home with Your Dog – American Kennel Club \(akc.org\)](#)

## Get a Friend

Most pets do better with a friend, whether it's the same species or not.

[Why You Should Get Another Cat – Jackson Galaxy](#)

[Would Your Dog Be Happier With a Second Dog? - TuftsYourDog](#)

Smaller pets, like rabbits, guinea pigs, and rats, almost *a/ways* do better in pairs or larger groups and should not live alone unless absolutely necessary due to medical or behavioral issues.

If it's not the right time for you to adopt another pet, consider [fostering a pet](#) or working with a local [rescue](#).

[Host a Dog - Saving Grace \(savinggracenc.org\)](#)

[Foster Volunteers - SPCA of Wake County \(spcawake.org\)](#)

[Second Chance Pet Adoptions | Foster a Pet \(secondchancenc.org\)](#)

[Fostering CFP dogs! – Cause for Paws \(cfp-nc.org\)](#)

## Get Out of the House

### Hiring a Dog Walker

Not everyone has the time to take their dog on a good, long walk, or even a quick jog. Sniffing the neighborhood is equivalent to reading the morning newspaper, having a cup of coffee, and chatting with the neighbors. New sights, smells, and sounds provide mental enrichment in addition to the physical activity of walking. If it's in your budget, hiring a dog walker is a great way for your dog to get much-needed outside time, and many walkers are willing to discuss on-the-go training.

[Do I Need a Dog Walker? How to Find & Choose One \(akc.org\)](#)

### Take Your CAT for a Walk

Yes, some cats enjoy going outside. The safest way to get your cat outside is on-leash or in a stroller or carrier (you can be *that* pet parent!); remember, the leash law applies to dogs **and** cats. Cats that are allowed to roam outside the home unsupervised are at risk of being hit by a car, attacked by wildlife or domestic pets, ingesting poisons... the list goes on and on.

If your cat seems interested (and not absolutely terrified) in going outside, do some research on how to safely take your feline friend for an adventure.

[Should You Leash Walk Your Cat? Ask the Cat Daddy - Jackson Galaxy](#)

### Is Doggy Daycare Right for My Dog?

Just like the dog park, not every dog enjoys doggy day care. But for those social butterflies or high-energy dogs that do, it can become their favorite activity! Most will take a nice, long nap after getting home and may be wiped out for the next day, too. It's important to know if your dog is exhausted from playing or exhausted from barking and being stressed out for hours. Most daycares will do an assessment for new players and have a webcam so their owners can check in throughout the day. Take advantage!

[How to Choose the Best Doggy Daycare: Questions to Ask \(akc.org\)](#)

### Catio

Want to let your cat experience the outdoors without leaving the safety of home? Consider a catio. From small ones that are basically window inserts, to ones large enough for you to enjoy as well, there are so many options! Catios bring smells, sounds, and visual stimulus from outdoor to in.

[Catios: The benefits of outdoor enclosures for cats | The Humane Society of the United States](#)

## Pet TV

Some dogs have been watching TV for years, but frames per second have finally increased enough for TV to be interesting to many cats. Some pet parents leave the TV on to keep their pet company while they're gone, just be careful that your TV is securely mounted or sturdy enough to withstand curious paws.

[How Do Cats & Dogs Perceive the World? - Silversky | Delivering WOW! to Everything Pets](#)

## DIY Enrichment (all types of pets)

Whether you're on a budget or your pet just doesn't appreciate those fancy store-bought toys (or destroys them before you can even put your wallet away), check out the links below for some easy and affordable ideas. You'll never look at an empty toilet paper roll the same again!

[Easy enrichment ideas for pets | The Humane Society of the United States](#)

[DIY Cat Toys with Kate Benjamin – Jackson Galaxy](#)

[Enrichment for Bunnies – Triangle Rabbits](#)

[11 DIY Chew Toys for your Guinea Pig – Small Pet Parade](#)

[DIY Hamster Toys - The Best Creative Homemade Hamster Toys \(\[squeaksandnibbles.com\]\(http://squeaksandnibbles.com\)\)](#)

[Canine DIY Enrichment | ASPCA](#)

[21 Simple Tricks to Make Your Dog Happier, Smarter, and Less Bored Every Day | The Dog People by Rover.com](#)

[Dog Enrichment - Animal Friends, Inc. \(\[thinkingoutsidethecage.org\]\(http://thinkingoutsidethecage.org\)\)](#)