



# Enjoy the **OUTDOORS** with Your Dog

***Your dog loves fresh air and sunshine as much as you do! Try some of these outside games and activities to keep your dog healthy and happy. In addition, playing with your dog, like training them, enhances the bond you share and helps them keep their focus on you!***

## ***FREESTYLE OBEDIENCE***

Take your dog to a large open area or yard and have them follow you around as you deliver commands: SIT, DOWN, STAY, COME, etc. Give lots of praise when your dog completes the correct action. You can then move on to more advanced commands, teaching your dog to BACK UP, JUMP over something, CIRCLE around, etc.

## ***OBSTACLE COURSE***

Try setting up a tube (such as an agility tunnel, available at most pet retailers) for your dog to run through, a pause table, a ladder, weaving sticks, poles to jump over, etc. Start with your dog on a lead, and walk them through the course in the order you want them to complete the obstacles. Give them lots of praise when they get it right, and recruit friends, family and neighbours to serve as judges-or to bring their own dogs to compete!

## ***BAITING PRACTICE***

For a twist on traditional fetch, grab a Wiffle bat and a dog-safe ball to hit across the yard or a park and have your dog play outfielder. Try not to hit another ball until your dog has brought the first back to you so that they learn they must return the item for the game to continue.

## ***WET FETCH***

If you have access to a body of water that your dog is allowed to play in, take a couple of balls or toys that will float to the water's edge and throw them in for your dog to swim after! If your dog hasn't had much experience in the water, start by tossing the object just at the edge. Make sure to first teach them where they can safely exit the water.

## ***HOMEMADE PUP-SICLES***

You can use a Popsicle mould or just an ice cube tray to freeze yummy, refreshing treats for your dog. Get creative by tossing ingredients such as yoghurt, bananas, peanut butter, and carrots into a blender with a little water or chicken or beef broth (all-natural or low sodium versions are best).

## ***TRACKING***

While not all dogs will take to tracking, it's fun to try! Go somewhere that your scent isn't already scattered-or use a strong- and unique-

scented piece of leather-and shuffle your feet or rub the leather in a distinct but straightforward pattern. Have someone else stay with your dog out of sight. Then, have your dog sniff you and your feet (or the leather) and lead them along the path you created.

## ***WET & WILD***

Fill up a kiddie pool with water and encourage your dog to splash around. For even more fun, grab a hose and have your dog chase the stream of water in and out of the pool. Add some dog-safe shampoo to combine playtime and a bath!

## ***HIDDEN TREASURE***

Start with your dog in a SIT/STAY, allowing him to smell a treat, and then hide it in the yard. Release your dog from the SIT and let him find it. Add a degree of difficulty by hiding a number of treats in advance. You can also try scatter-feeding your dog his kibble at mealtimes (throwing it all around the yard) -many dogs will spend hours enthusiastically hunting for every last bit.

## ***WALK THIS WAY***

In addition to being great exercise for you and your dog, walking is an activity almost anyone can participate in and a great way to get to know your neighbours! Organise a walking group for your neighbourhood or apartment building. Pick different destinations, or up the intensity by choosing portions to pick up the pace.

## ***BIKEJORING***

There are a variety of devices and special harnesses specifically made for "bikejoring" that attach your dog safely to a bicycle. Never attempt this by just holding your dog's normal lead in your hand while steering. Start slowly, guiding your dog along at a steady pace, and keep rides short. Gradually build speed and distance. Check for canine biking classes in your area.

*Remember that basic obedience is the foundation for having fun with your dog-games and activities should be a fun and rewarding bonding experience, not a stressful time, for you and your dog.*

