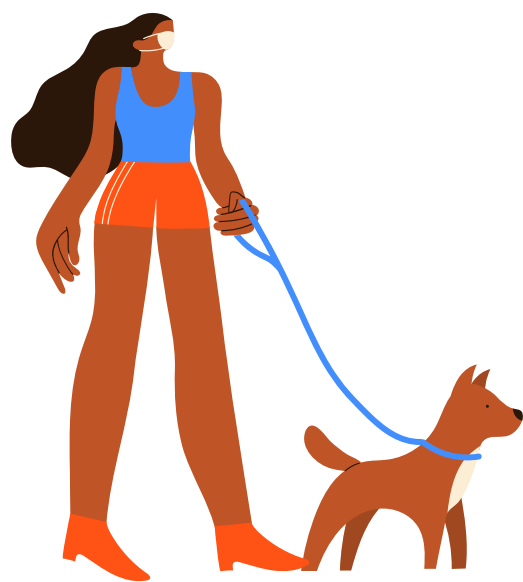
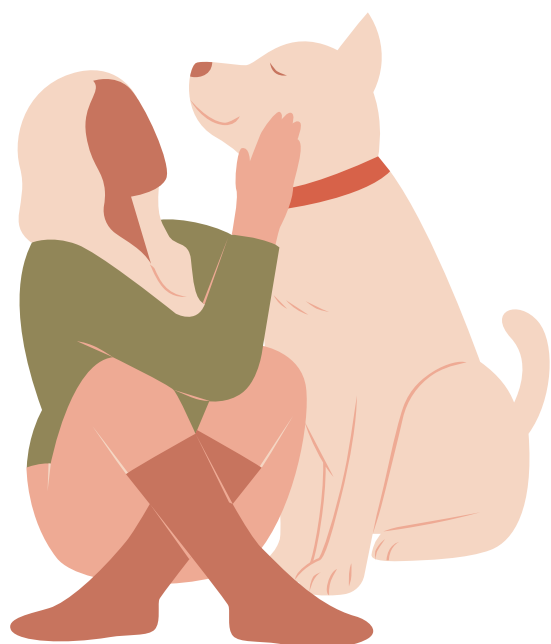
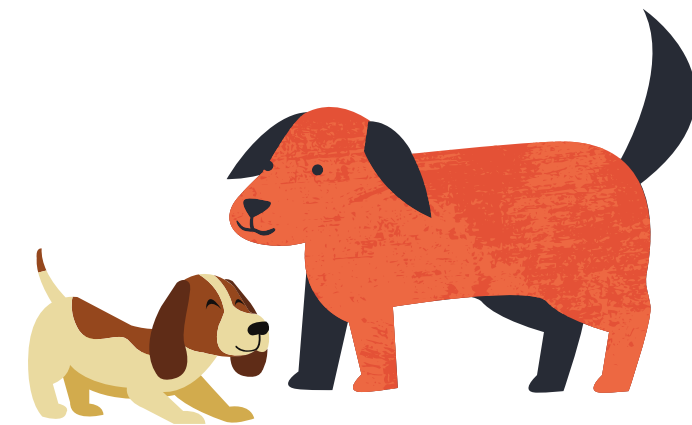




ROCKET  
DOG RESCUE

# Fostering 101



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# Is Fostering Right For Me?

Fostering is a wonderful way to help homeless dogs find their forever homes, learn more about dog ownership, and meet dogs you might want to adopt. That being said, fostering is a significant commitment that isn't without its challenges.

- Most foster dogs come to us from shelters or other situations where we do not know much about their backgrounds.
- Often, all we know about the dogs is how friendly they are with other dogs and people.
- We usually do not know if the dogs are house-trained, have separation anxiety, how much they bark, or know any basic commands.
- The goal of fostering is to help homeless dogs become more adoptable so they can find their forever families. Whether that family is you or another adopter please be prepared to work on the following:
  1. House-training
  2. Separation anxiety
  3. Leash skills
  4. General house manners
  5. Socialization with other dogs and people
  6. And more...

Please keep in mind that by signing up to foster you are committing to helping a dog find their home which often involves some training. If any of the above is a dealbreaker, fostering may not be for you.

# Where Foster Dogs Come From and What We Know About Them?

Most foster dogs come to us from shelters, as strays, or from other situations where we don't get a lot of details about their backgrounds. Below are some things we usually **do not know** about our dogs when they come to us, so we ask that all fosters be ok potentially having to work through them.



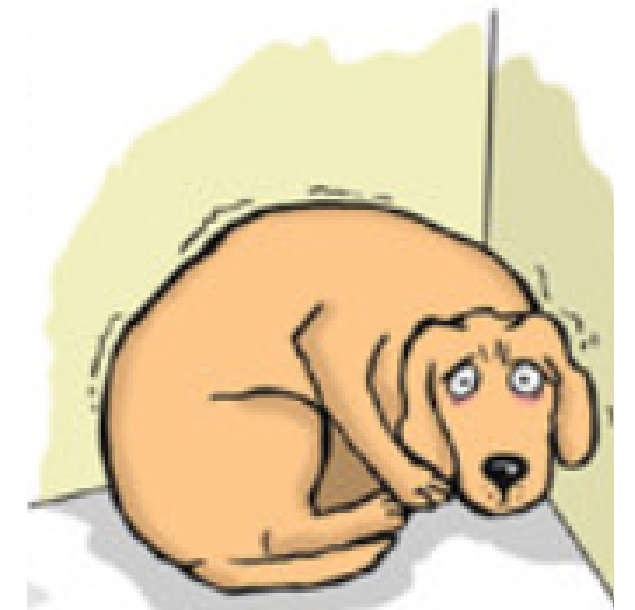
Is my foster dog housetrained?



Will my foster dog chew my things?



Does my foster dog bark or have separation anxiety?



Will my foster dog be scared in a new place?



# How Do I Get Matched with a Foster Dog?

## Step 1:

You can apply for a specific dog to foster or submit a general application and be added to our weekly foster email. Just respond to our weekly email if you see a dog you want to foster! Also, keep an eye on our social media!



## Step 2:

Arrange a time to come to our facility to meet your new foster dog and take them home. Keep in mind we are open by appointment only so please wait for a response to your application or email.

## Step 3:

Come to our facility to pick up your dog and supplies. Please be ready to bring your foster dog home that day.



# Getting Your Foster Dog Adopted



Your foster dog will be assigned an advocate who will be your main point of contact. They will review applications for your pup and conduct interviews with potential adopters.



You can help the process by providing your advocate with great photos and detailed notes about your pup's behavior and training progress.



Make sure to bring your foster dog to as many adoption events as possible. They are super helpful in getting your dog adopted.



Your dog's advocate will send promising potential adopters your way and you can set up a meet and greet at a local park, your home, or another convenient location.

# How to Take a Great Photo of Your Dog

Pictures make all the difference when it comes to getting your foster dog adopted. Here are a few tips and tricks for taking amazing dog photos. Remember, the most important part of getting a good photo is taking a lot of photos!



To start make sure you have plenty of tasty treats and a/ or squeaky toy.

Next, pick a location with good lighting. This could be inside or outside. We recommend trying both. Try to find areas with solid backgrounds so your dog stands out in the photo.



Use the toys and treats to get your dog to look at you.

Have someone else hold your dog on leash so you can take pictures.





# Photo Examples

Good



Bad





# What if I Want to Adopt My Foster Dog?

Fostering is a great way to gain experience with dog ownership as well as learn more about dogs you might want to adopt. Sometimes you aren't planning on adopting and then you fall in love with a dog and just can't picture your life without them. We totally understand and our fosters have priority when it comes to adopting their foster dog.

If you are planning on fostering with the intention to adopt please keep the below guidelines in mind:

- While fostering can provide insights for potential adopters, our foremost objective is to facilitate adoptions and secure permanent, loving homes for our dogs.
- We allow fosters 1-2 weeks to make their decision on adopting before we start interviewing other candidates. We only allow 1 week for puppies as they grow quickly and need to settle in their forever homes asap.
- During the first 1-2 weeks we expect our fosters to be communicating with their advocate, taking great pictures of their dog, and filling out the foster dog adoption questionnaire your advocate will provide. This way if you decide not to adopt we can get the dog on the website right away.
- **If you decide not to adopt please be prepared to foster your dog until they get adopted.** Fostering is not a trial to see if you like a dog. When you decide to foster you are making a commitment to helping your foster dog find their forever home. (Please see the next page for information on returning a foster dog for other reasons).

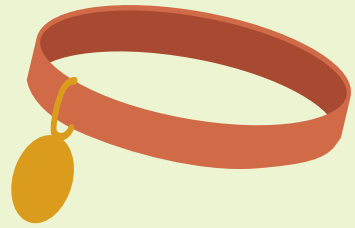


# What if Things Aren't Working Out?

As much as we always want things to work out, sometimes they don't. We have a very small facility so unless it's an emergency, we can not take dogs back immediately. Please review the below policies for returning a foster dog:

- If things aren't working out we are happy to work with you to find a new foster home for your dog.
- Please reach out to your advocate immediately if problems arise. We can help with training tips and advice, as well as finding a new foster home for your dog.
- We require at least 7 days notice to return a dog for non-emergency reasons.
- We have a very small facility and will not have room for your dog right away. Please do not come to our facility wanting to return your foster dog without reaching out to your advocate and making a plan.
- While we are looking for a new foster, we are also going to be looking for adopters. Please make yourself reasonably available for meet and greets during this time and bring your dog to events if possible.

# What Supplies Does Rocket Dog Provide?



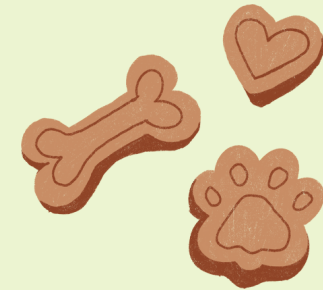
Collar,  
and Tags



Leash and  
Harness



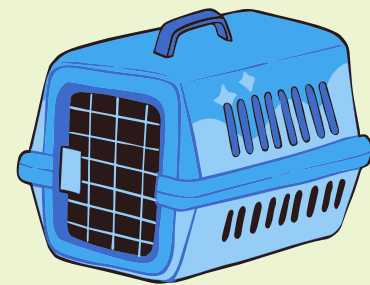
Starter Bag  
of Food



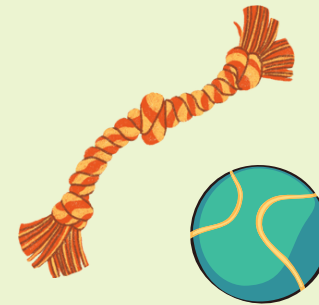
Dog Treats



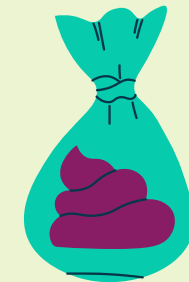
Up-to-Date  
Vaccines



Crate



Toys



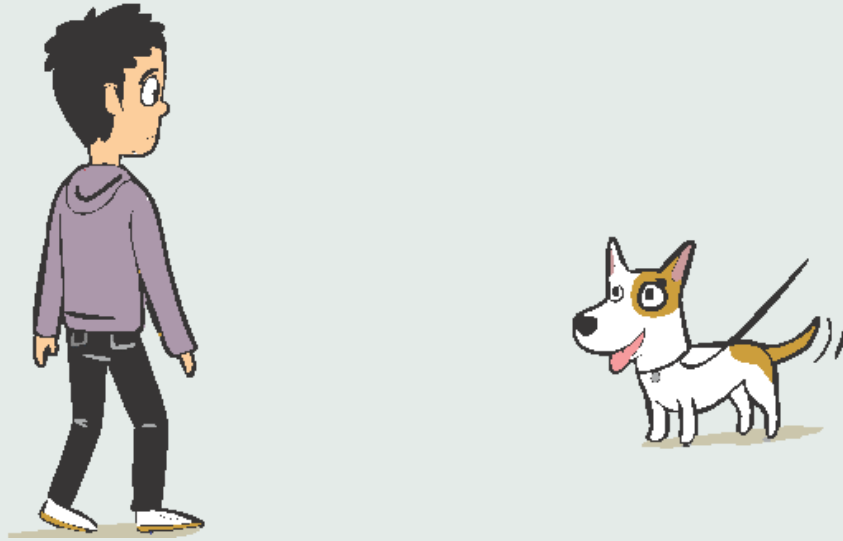
Poop Bags

# Things to Avoid When Meeting a New Dog

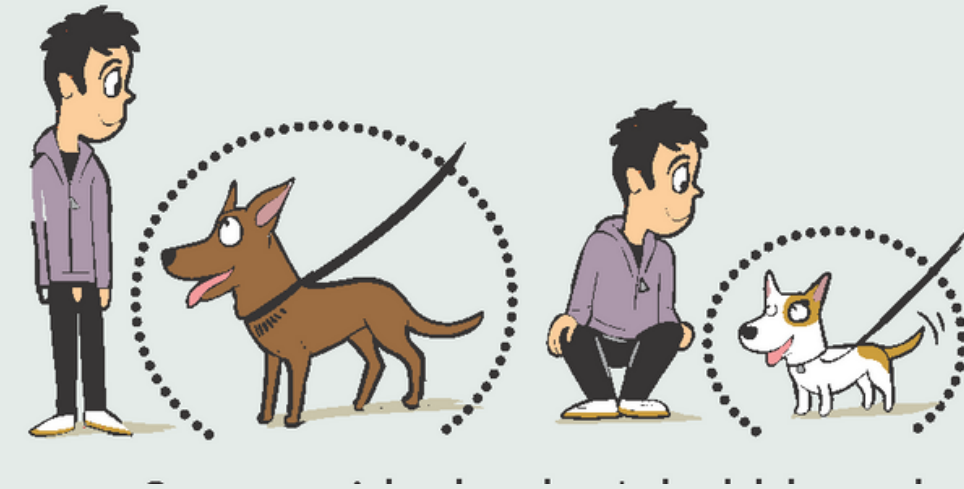
A good rule of thumb is if you wouldn't do it to a person you just met, you probably shouldn't do it to a new dog.



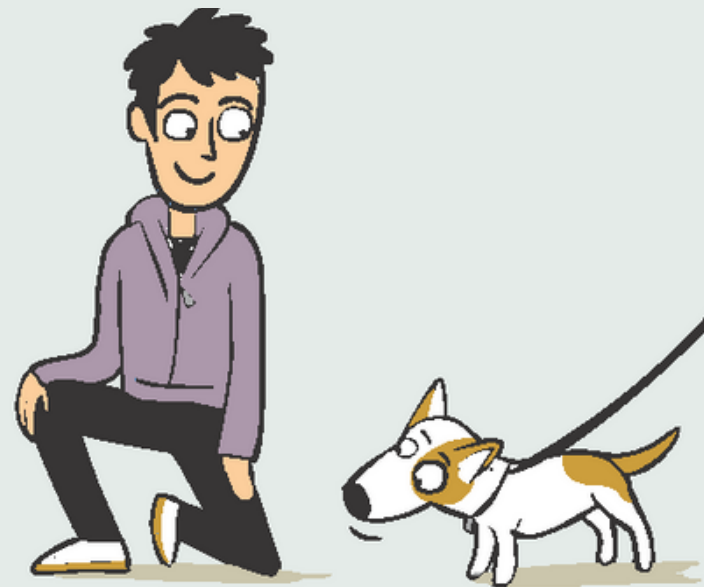
# How to Meet a New Dog



Approach the dog slowly and be mindful of their body language.



Give the dog space by staying outside of their personal bubble



Allow the dog to approach you on their own terms



Once the dog is comfortable then it is ok to pet.



# Setting Up A Safe Space for Your Foster Dog



Set up a safe confinement area where your dog can stay when you're out of the house or can't provide 100% supervision.



# Introducing Your Dog to Your Home



Start by taking your dog outside for a walk/ bathroom break.



Introduce your dog to your home on leash.

Put your dog in their safe space and allow them some quiet time to adjust.



Let your dog have a few hours to settle in. Alternate between giving them alone time and hanging out with them.

# What to Expect the First Day



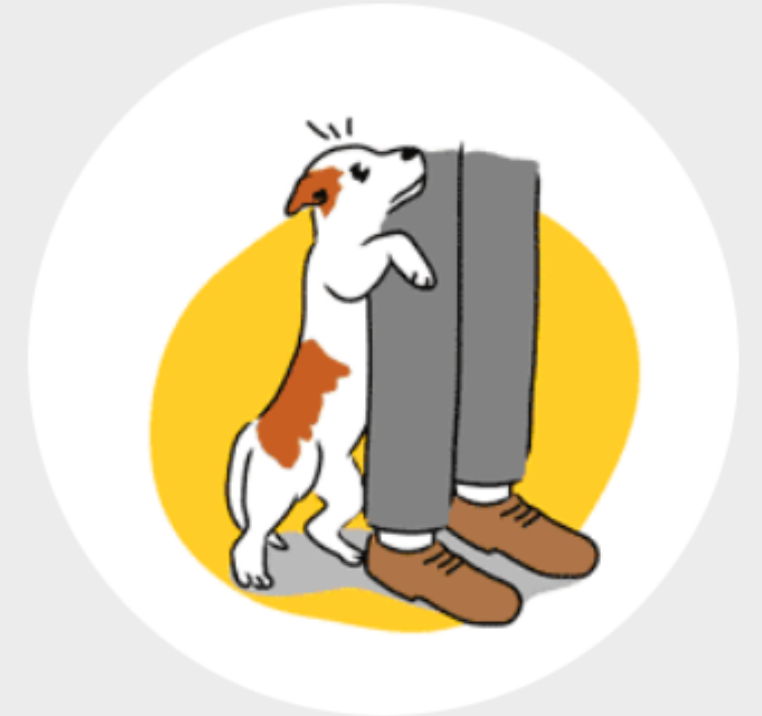
Your new dog may be scared and confused the first day. They might seem very sad and low energy or nervous or frantic. If your dog is nervous make sure to leave their leash on and confine them to one secure room. As their confidence builds you can allow them into the rest of the house.



They might not want to eat for the first few meals. This is ok and they will eat when they are ready. Don't be surprised if they also have an upset stomach the first few days. It's been a big change for them and transition can be stressful and hard on their tummies.



They might spend the first day hiding and that's ok. Give them the time and space they need to feel comfortable. Make sure to keep the first few days very calm. Limit how many new people your dog interacts with and work on building a routine to help your dog feel secure.



Your dog also might be overly clingy and not want to let you out of their sight. Don't be surprised if they cry a lot the first night, especially in their crate. While this may not totally go away, most dogs often settle down immensely after the first day.



# THE 3-3-3 RULE OF RESCUE DOGS



IN THE FIRST THREE DAYS,  
YOUR PET MAY...

- Feel overwhelmed
- Be scared and unsure
- Be uncomfortable and not "themselves"
- Not want to eat or drink
- Be shutdown and want to hide
- Test new boundaries



IN THE FIRST THREE WEEKS,  
YOUR PET MAY...

- Start to settle in
- Feel more comfortable
- Realize this might be their "forever home"
- Figure out their new environment
- Let their guard down
- Start showing their true personality, including behavioral quirks



AFTER THREE MONTHS,  
YOUR PET MAY...

- Finally feel completely comfortable
- Have built trust and a true bond with new family members
- Have gained a complete sense of security in their forever home
- Be set in a routine unique to your family

*The 3-3-3 Rule is a general guideline; every dog is an individual with unique needs and will adjust to new circumstances differently. Give your new pup space and allow them the opportunity to get comfortable at their own pace.*





# Recognizing the Signs Of Dog Discomfort

Most of the time dogs come to Rocket Dog directly from shelters, roaming as a stray or other sometimes abusive situations. These dogs have been through an enormous amount of change and may be very confused and scared. Below are some quick tips and tricks to help ease the transition.



**Licking Lips**  
when no food nearby



**Panting**  
when not hot or thirsty



**Brow Furrowed, Ears to Side**



**Moving in Slow Motion**  
walking slow on floor



**Slight Cowering**



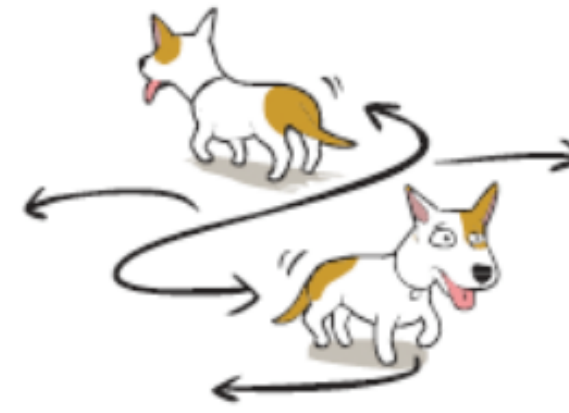
**Acting Sleepy or Yawning**  
when they shouldn't be tired



**Hypervigilant**  
looking in many directions



**Moving Away**



**Pacing**



**Major Cowering**

# Children and Dogs

Sometimes kids accidentally do things that can anger or frighten even the sweetest of dogs. To avoid potential issues teach your children how to safely interact with dogs and always supervise them when they are with the dog.



Avoid bothering dogs when they are eating



Don't try to take a dog's toys



No grabbing or pulling the dog by its ears or tail



No grabbing, squeezing, or hugging dogs



Don't put your face right up to the dog's



Avoid disturbing sleeping dogs



Avoid yelling at or around dogs. Use your "inside voice" instead.



No climbing on or riding the dog.



# Medical Care

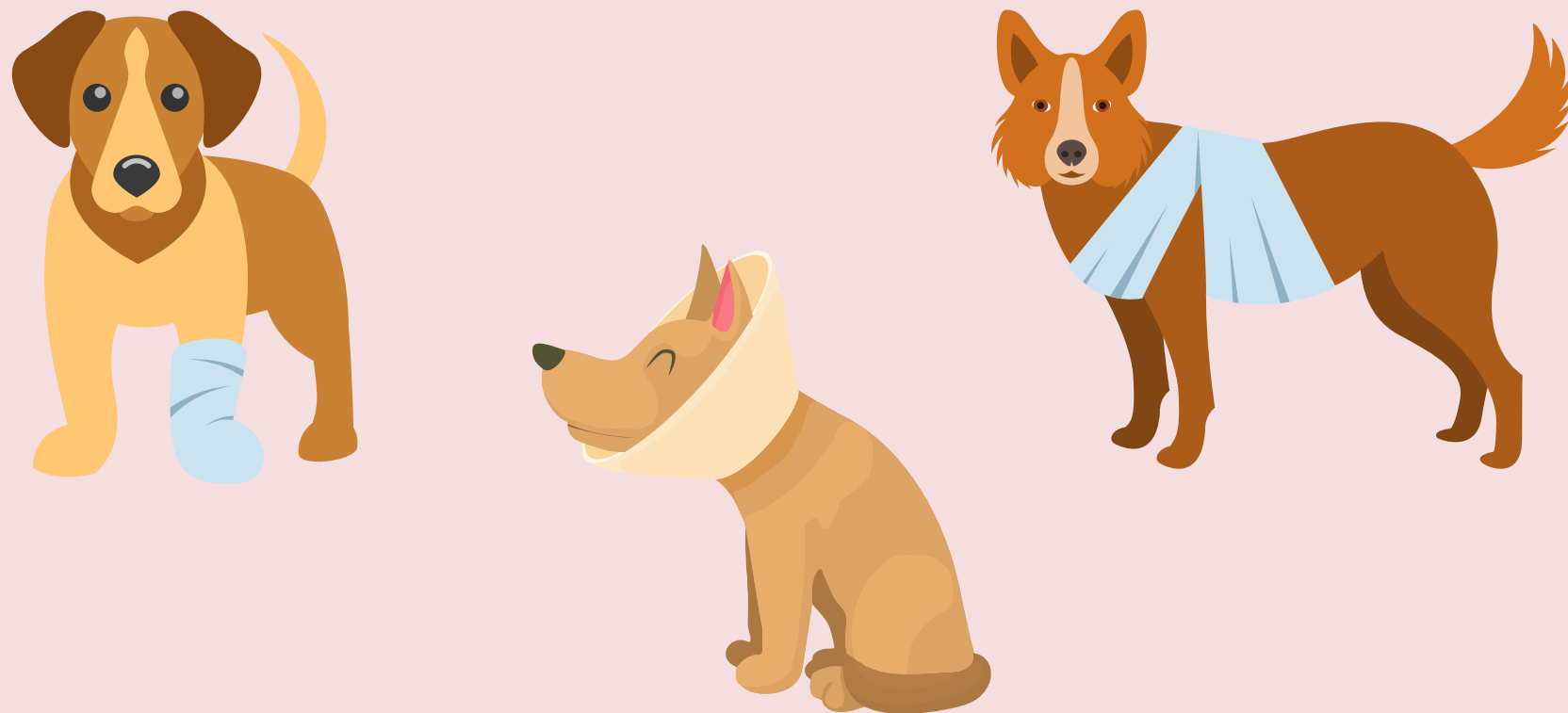
## What if My Foster Dog Needs to See a Vet?

Rocket Dog will cover all necessary medical expenses, but all treatments need to be approved beforehand and done through Rocket Dog's preferred vet. If you take your dog to a vet of your choosing Rocket Dog will not cover the cost. If you think your dog needs to see a vet reach out to your advocate or [foster@rocketdogrescue.org](mailto:foster@rocketdogrescue.org).



## What if it's an Emergency?

Emergencies happen and can be very scary. In the case of an emergency please call or text us at (415) 756-8188 or (805) 448-2036. Rocket Dog will cover the costs of emergency medical treatment. Please note that emergencies are life-threatening situations and require immediate treatment.



# Help, My Dog is Coughing!

By far the most common medical issue we see in foster dogs is kennel cough. Kennel cough is the dog version of the common cold. Kennel cough symptoms include:

- Coughing (note: dogs coughing can often sound like choking, hyper ventalting, weird or raspy breathing, or vomiting)
- Runny nose
- Lethargy

Just like the common cold, kennel cough is viral, not bacterial, so antibiotics do not help. The only time we would put a dog on antibiotics is if we think the kennel cough has turned into bacteria pneumonia.

## Normal Kennel Cough:

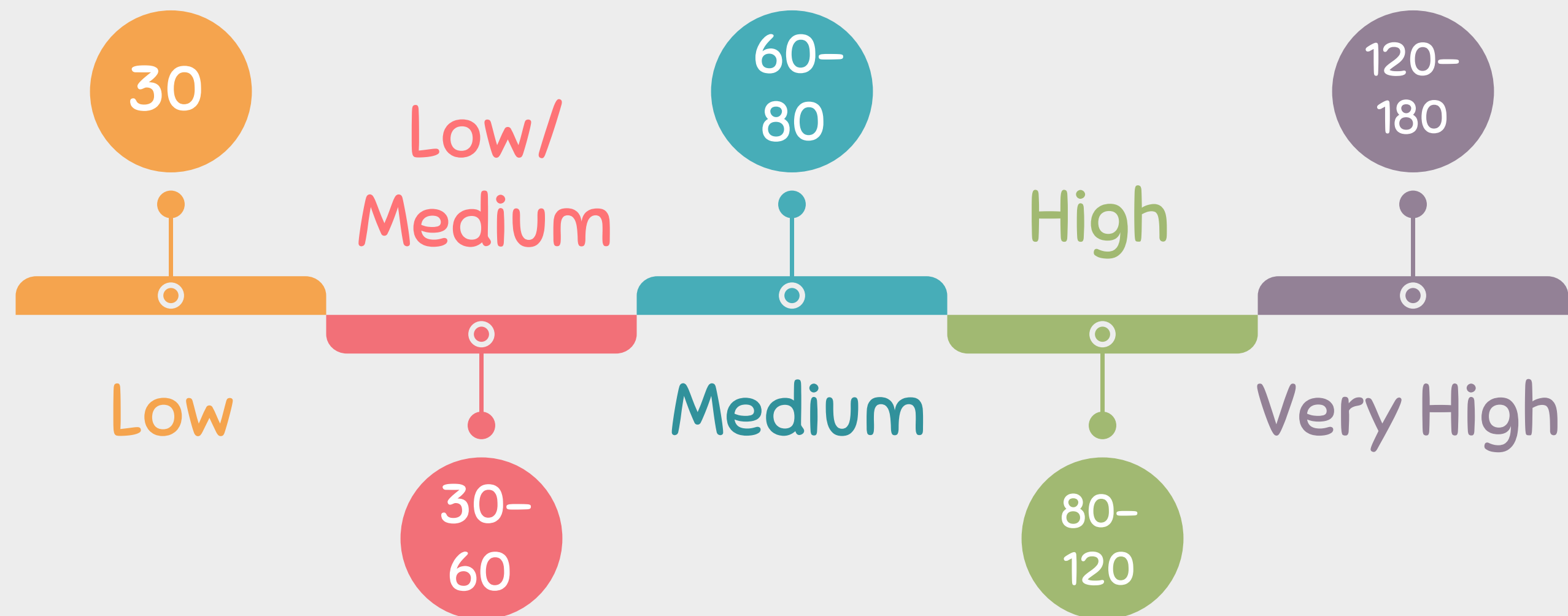
- Coughing
- Runny Nose
- Not super hungry
- Tired

## When it's time to see a vet:

- Dog hasn't eaten or drank water in more than 24 hours
- Dog is so lethargic they do not want to get up or go outside
- Dog is throwing up multiple times (full meals, not coughing up bile or phlegm)

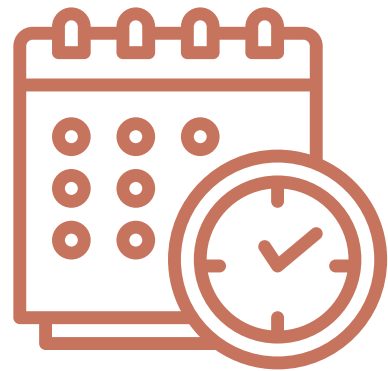
# Dogs and Exercise

Every dog is different, but one thing all dogs have in common is they need exercise. When we talk about dogs' energy levels we often use terms like medium or high energy. But what exactly does that mean?



Minutes of Daily Exercise

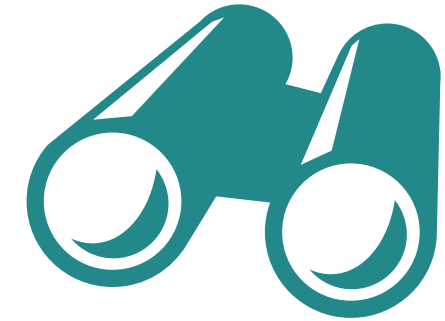
# Housetraining 101



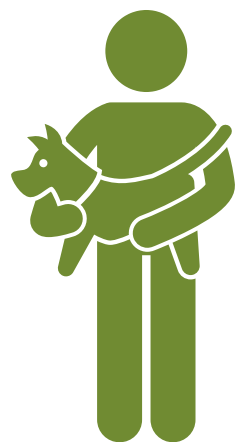
Keep a consistent bathroom schedule.



Keep your dog in their confinement area when you can not 100% supervise them.



Always watch your dog closely in the house.



If you see your dog sniffing and circling in the house, pick them up and take them out immediately.



Take your dog out for frequent potty breaks. For puppies, we recommend taking them out every hour.

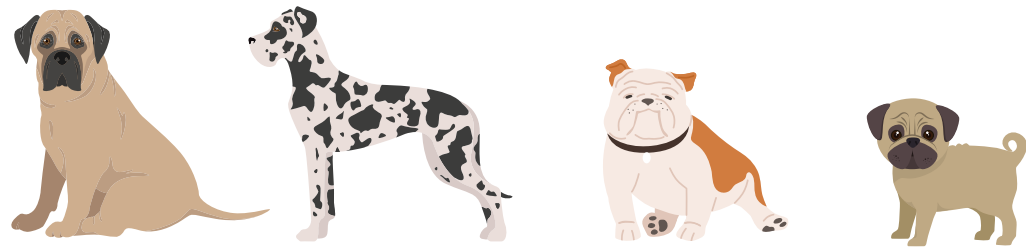


Always reward your dog for using the bathroom outside.

# Dogs Breeds and Exercise

## Low Energy

30 minutes daily



English Bulldog, Basset Hound, Mastiff,  
Great Dane, Pug, Saint Bernard, Chow  
Chow, Pekingese, etc.

## Low/ Medium Energy

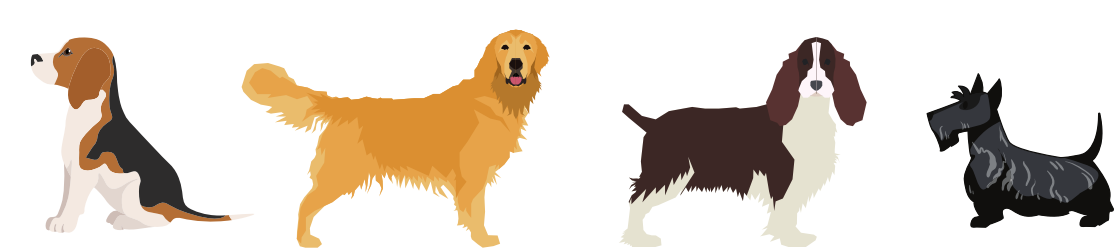
30–60 minutes daily



Bichon, Toy and Miniture Poodle, Chihuahua,  
Dachshund, Lhasa Apso, Maltese, French  
Bulldog, Papillon, Shih Tzu , etc.

## Medium Energy

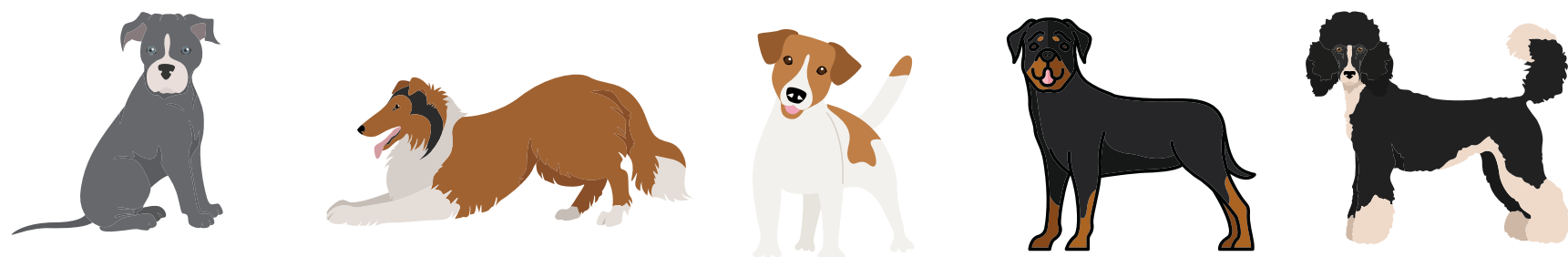
60–80 minutes daily



Beagles, Retrievers, Spaniels, Some  
Terriers, Grey Hounds, Labs, Fox Hounds,  
etc.

## High Energy

80– 120 minutes daily



Staffordshire/ Pit Bull, Bull terriers, Boxer, Doberman, Standard  
Poodles, Rottweilers, Rhodesian Ridgebacks, Some Terriers, etc

## Very High Energy

120–180 minutes daily



Australian Shepherds, Border Collies, Cattle Dogs, Shepherds,  
Pointers, Boxers, Weimaraners, Doberman, Vizslas, Huskys, etc.



# Types of Exercise: Physical

It's a common misconception that giving your dog access to your backyard means they are getting all the exercise they need. Dogs require interaction to get moving and as a pet parent, you are your dog's main motivator—to get fit and stay healthy. Below are just a few of the many types of exercise you can do with your dog.



Walks



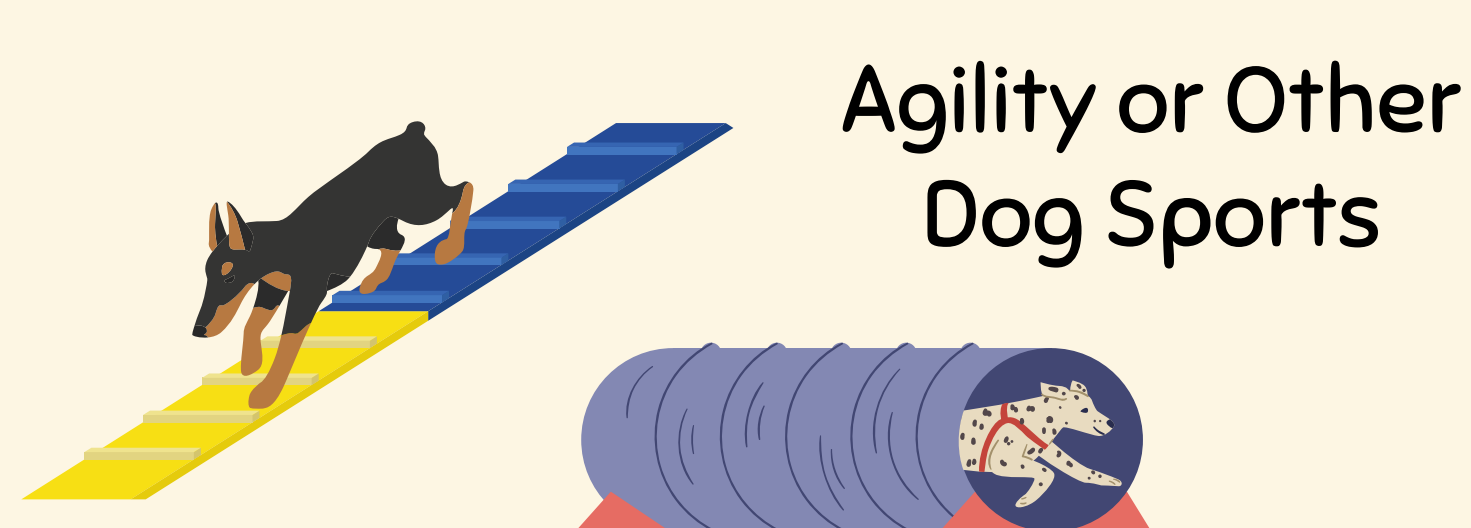
Obedience



Jogging



Frisbee or  
Fetch



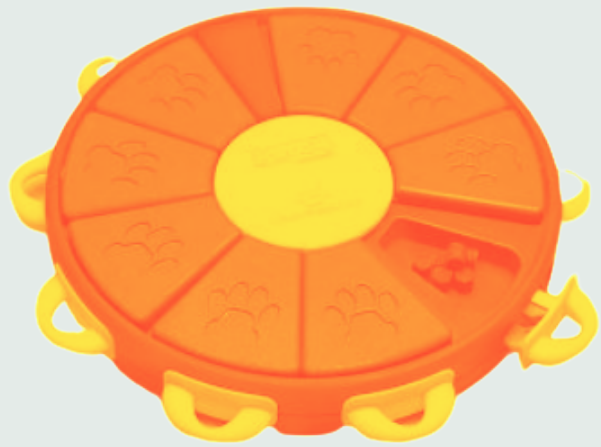
Agility or Other  
Dog Sports



Parks and Playtime  
with Other Dogs

# Types of Exercise: Mental

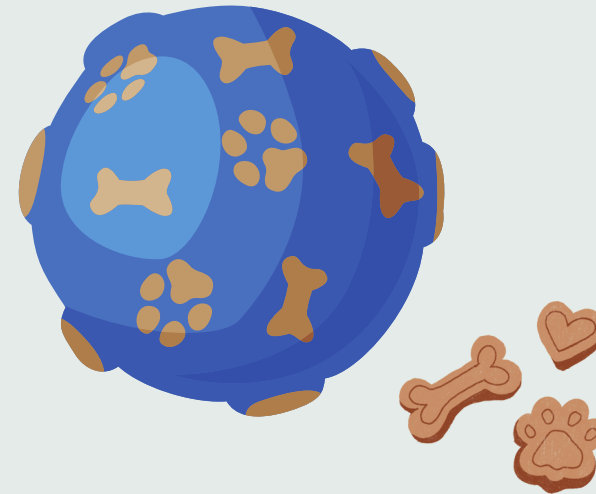
Additionally, your dog is an intelligent creature that also needs mental exercise. A balanced routine is key to a happy, healthy dog. This is where stimulation comes into what your pet's daily routine should be like. Here are some fun ways to provide your dog with ways to keep their mind occupied:



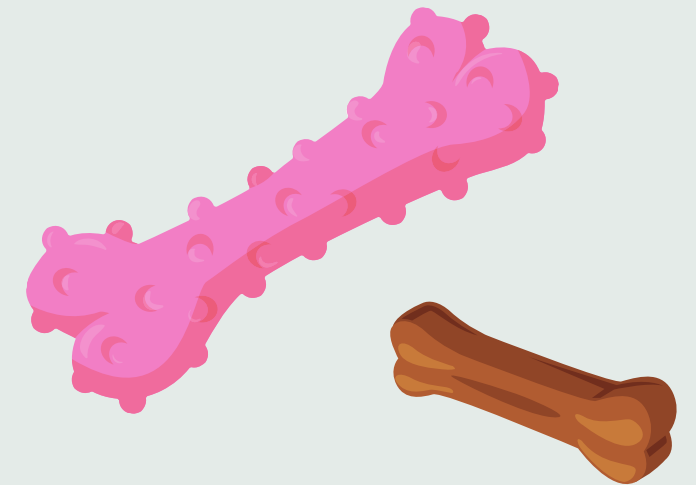
Puzzle Toys



Stuffed Kongs



Treat-Dispensing Toys



Chew Toys

## Useful Resources:

[Best Canine Enrichment Toys and DIY Solutions](#)

[How to Stuff a Kong](#)

[Meeting Your Dog's Enrichment Needs](#)

# What Can and Can't Dogs Eat

## Go For It



## In Small Quantities



## Avoid it



## Nope

