



Golden Rule Dog Training

Come. Learn. Play

Fun Activities for You and Your Dog

Whether it is the summer heat, raining outside, or you just want to play with your dog, this list below will help you teach your dog some new ways to have fun!

The Living Room Obstacle Course

Adapted from ilovedogs.com, by: Linda Chavez

Game # 1

What you need: Hula Hoop, bath mats, cardboard boxes and a Kong or puzzle-type dog toy with treats

How you play: Place the items around your living room so that your dog has to go from one obstacle to the next.

1. The cardboard boxes can be linked together to serve as a tunnel. If you have children, they can link their hands and hold up their arms for your pup to leap over.
2. The Hula Hoop is another good leaping obstacle.
3. Line up the bath mats as "stepping stones" so your pooch has to jump from one to the next.
4. Have your dog try to muscle a treat out of his Kong or puzzle toy at the very end.
5. Repeat the course and enjoy watching the workout wags!

Game # 2

Depending on the space you have, you can make your living room an agility area. Use low jumping objects you have around the house:

What you need: Rolled-up blankets or towels, narrow shelves or boards (smooth, no splinters), empty plastic flower boxes, broomstick and a Hula-Hoop.

How you play: Make it easy for him in the beginning. Arrange your obstacle so that, ideally, your dog can't pass beside or underneath it. Use doorframes or chairs as lateral restrictions.

1. Encourage your dog to jump over the hurdle with the aid of some treats. You can jump with him in the beginning. Or you step over the hurdle first, and then lure your dog over to the other side.
2. When your dog understands the game and has tried different obstacles, insert a verbal cue (for instance, the word "jump") and send your dog over the hurdle with it.

Dog Show

What you need: Paper, markers, bath mats or towels, and dog treats.

How you play: Create a string of "command" stations, delineated by signs made by you (or your kids) that are posted beside each station.

1. Take your pup from station to station and see if he can do the command – sit, roll-over, down, etc. Give your pooch plenty of time to respond.
2. The objective is for your dog to learn to do the command with only one request. You can also swap between verbal commands and hand-signal cues.

Race for the Treat

What you need: A dog toy or treat, and a helper

How you play: Put a leash on your dog and ask him to sit, while a helper places a treat about 10 feet away from both of you.

1. Tell your dog to “Wait” as you remove his leash, and then give the command, “Go.” Race your pup to the treat or toy.
2. Make sure to race past the treat or toy; do not try to snatch it up, otherwise your pup might start to guard his toys or treats!

Flashlight Game

What you need: A flashlight and a spacious empty room

How you play: Turn off the lights, hide the breakables, and bring out the flashlight that’s been hibernating in the closet.

1. Shine the light around the room and have your pet chase the beam of light. Bring the beam back to you and reward your pup with a treat or a belly rub for a job well done.
2. Direct the beam of light toward the floor in an empty part of the room. If your dog has strong chase instincts will plow into anything to get to the light, and could easily injure themselves.

The Statue Game

This is a great way to burn off excess energy and focus on training is the statue game. The goal of the game is to get your dog wound up and then having her respond immediately to a sit and stay command. So they need to have a good understanding of the sit and stay command first, before trying this game. This teaches your dog listening skills for situations when she is overly excited.

How to Play: Start dancing or jumping around with your dog to get his or her energy up.

1. Freeze in place and tell your dog to sit and stay.
2. Hold the freeze and give a treat and praise.
3. Repeat!

Any kind of game you play that will get your dog excited and then immediately require her to calm down and perform some of her commands or tricks will be beneficial to you both.

Roll the Ball

I use a tennis ball for this, and my dog loves it!

What you need: A large ball that won’t pop (yoga balls pop after about 5 minutes.) Try a basketball, soccer ball or a big Tuff ball; you can also use a tennis ball for this game.

How to play: Get down on your hands and knees and push the ball, then have your dog push the ball.

1. Once your dog figures out how to push the ball, have him push the ball to you.

2. Say, "Push it" (this is another way to play fetch, but rolling the ball on the floor).

Indoor Boot Camp

Take advantage of your evenings while watching TV and play games with your dog! You can lengthen the dog's down-stays, or practice behavior cues such as: come, stay and leave it. You can also teach tricks, such as "Roll Over", "Shake" or "Leave-it." This is a great opportunity to strengthen his skills.

How to play: Obedience Drills, your dog needs to know a few obedience skills.

1. Try doing combinations; for example, have her sit, down, sit again, stay, recall (come to you).
2. Then, sit and release.
3. Once your dog can do a sit-stay – try having them sit and stay at a distance.
4. Next try a sit-stay-release-come-sit combination.

The Collapsed Tunnel Adventure

Adapted from Agility Training Exercises Your Dog Can Do Indoors By Christina Sondermann

This tunnel ends in a flap that your dog has to push his body through. You will need a chair (alternatively, a coffee table) and a blanket.

What you need: Place the blanket over the chair so that it hangs down two opposite sides; there should be a lot of overhang at one end to create the flap.

How to play: Very important: Make sure the blanket is attached to the chair so that it cannot slip off while your dog is walking through it. Such an accident could totally spoil your dog's fun.

1. Your dog waits on one side of the tunnel. If he hasn't learned to wait yet, ask someone to stay with him and gently hold him if necessary.
2. Go to the other end of the tunnel, pick up the end of the blanket and catch your dog's eye. Call him and reward him when he comes to you.
3. Do this a few more times; each time, lower the blanket gradually so that your dog gets used to the feeling of pushing himself through to the exit.
4. Keep the degree of difficulty low in the beginning, with the tunnel overhang rather short so that your dog isn't in the dark too long.

More Fun with your Dog at Home in the Summer

1. Turn the sprinkler on and run through it with your dog!
2. Make a frozen treat. Stuff a Kong with plain pumpkin, smashed bananas, sweet potatoes, plain yogurt, or applesauce (no added sugar) and freeze it! It will take your dog a while to get through this healthy, cool treat.
3. Don't have a pool? Buy a plastic kiddie pool for the backyard and let your dog play or soak in it!

4. Check out other dog games that can be played inside your cool house.

<http://www.homewardboundgoldens.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/Nose-Games.pdf>

Get Out and About with your Dog!

1. Go for a swim! Take your dog to the lake and play in the water. If you want to take a drive, there are areas that have a dedicated dog beaches and swim areas. Be sure to take your dog in the morning or early evening so it's not too hot outside.
2. Take your pooch on a road trip to visit friends or explore a new area and go for a walk or even hiking! If staying overnight call ahead for a pet-friendly hotel!
3. Take your dog camping! Make sure your dog has his tag with updated contact information, he is micro chipped, and that you never have him off-leash! Use a long line if needed, and always know where your dog is at all times!
4. Head out to an outside, dog-friendly café and do some people-watching on a patio with your dog.
5. Take a class with your dog. This could be a training class, a socialization class or a class with an obstacle course at Homeward Bound!
6. Find a "Meet-and-Greet" for dogs (some are even breed specific).

Summer Safety Tips:

- When outside with your dog make sure he has access to shade and water. Don't let him walk on the hot pavement or any surface that is too hot for his pads. Hint: if it's too hot for you to walk barefoot, it's too hot for your dog too!
- Avoid the hottest times of the day; try early morning or late evening. Watch your dog for signs excessive panting or thirst and signs of heatstroke.
- If outside for any length of time, use sunscreen on your dog's nose to protect him; also some dogs with a thin coat may need sunscreen on their body.
- NEVER leave your dog alone in the car in hot weather!
- When driving in the car, don't let your dog loose in the car and make sure he has a car safety belt, and never let him hang his head out the open window!

For more safety tips see these articles on our website:

<http://www.homewardboundgoldens.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/Car-Safety-for-Dogs.pdf>

<http://www.homewardboundgoldens.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/Summer-Heat-and-Dog-Paws.pdf>

<http://www.homewardboundgoldens.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/Summer-Safety.pdf>

Sources:

Playtime for Your Dog, published by Cadmos Books

<http://thebark.com/content/agility-training-exercises-your-dog-can-do-indoor>

ilovedogs.com, by: Linda Chavez

Agility Training Exercises Your Dog Can Do Indoors By Christina Sondermann