

My dog sleeps a lot- is this normal? LARGE PRINT  
2 July 2024|Animal Care,  
Behaviour, Medical, Raising  
Awareness, Rescue Policy and  
Advice



Ever heard the phrase '***let sleeping dogs lie***'?

## Dog Sleeping Positions

petMD  
by chewy



### The Side Sleeper

**What it means:**

Pup feels calm and content, happy-go-lucky



### The Belly Up

Pup is playful and loving (and might still be in their puppy years)



### The Donut

Pup is sweet and caring, and might be on the shy side



### The Lion Pose

**What it means:**

Pup is protective, loyal, and caring



### The Cuddle Bug

Pup is affectionate and loving (and prefers snoozing next to their human or a furry friend)



### The Superman

Pup is silly and full of energy

[Here are a few positions in which sleeping dogs lie! More info on this later in the blog](#)

For the most part that's exactly what you need to do! Sleep is one

of the most important thing your dog needs to do, but it needs to be ***high quality, undisturbed sleep***. And by this we mean ***sleep where your dog doesn't wake up and follow you /jump up and get excited or cry every time you move or do normal*** round-the-house stuff.



Signs dogs are usually sleeping well or are developing a healthy sleep routine- they may move or make noises, or make their bed more comfy by digging at the bed (which is an old 'wolf' instinct, most experts think.)

Dogs do not need lights off to sleep well, nor do they (need to)

sleep more at night when you do, but they do *need a good routine of which sleep is a massive part*. So don't worry if you work shifts that means you sleep in the day- dogs will have no issue usually matching your longest sleep period, no matter what the time of day, if you make your bed time routine as consistent as possible. Sometimes a '*long sleep*' going to bed routine for your dog can be as simple as adding a blanket to your 'go to bed/go and lie down' training, to tuck them up or simply have an 'extra' blanket in the bed, with a cue phrase like 'banky time' said in a calming but happy tone to show them it's 'long sleep' or human bed time and they

need to be sleeping or at least resting while you personally are asleep, or busy (such as working from home), or need to go out. And don't worry if they don't do deep or high quality sleep for hours on end- a healthy, non stressed dog has quite a short sleep cycles lasting only 45 minutes at a time. During that time, they will cycle through REM and non-REM sleep twice, spending about six minutes in the REM or dream stage. The point is that they must get these sleep periods all through the day and night to aid good physical and mental health. ***And don't forget never touch them to wake them from dreaming. Dreaming is normal for dogs.*** Gently calling

their name can help if they seem 'stuck' in a dream for more than the six minutes REM sleep stage but you will startle them and they can snap if you touch them.

If your sleep training goes well you can combine this with getting them used to being on their own when you go away from them as well (or don't want them to sleep in your bedroom).

*The 'going out without them' routine also needs to be as low key as possible, and as similar to your 'sleepy time now' (when you don't go to bed yourself) or long sleep/bed time routine as possible (like changing clothes or footwear,*

going to the loo (by) yourself and so on) with no rushing (be prepared to not leave them alone to leave the house or go to bed right away if they're stressing out.) And just like any going to bed 'long sleep' routine, *make sure going out to the toilet with them right before and afterwards is part of the routine*, so they know they will be able to go to the loo outside when you're not in the room. Begin with only leaving the room for a minute or two, then slowly build up on the time away from them if all goes well. If they stay quiet or nap while you're trying this, then once you're back you can reward them with a treat but if they get too excited, or stay excited too long, you may



have to wait a while before you leave again! What you think of as excitement (jumping up, barking, running around and not listening when you say 'bed' etc) is more likely to be stress as [talked about in our blog](#) , especially when you first start teaching these routines and they can't work out right away what you want.

***Start as soon as they come home with you,*** with *what you want their sleep routine to be* as dogs find routine calming and soothing, and will decompress (get used to their home, jobs/activities you want them to do and so on like toilet training) if not faster, in a far more healthy way if you do. This

usually decreases and even prevents problems like behaviour issues down the line.



## **The breed of the dog.**

Some dogs are low activity dogs,

some medium and some high activity. We bred them that way, or at the least deliberately exaggerated some tendencies and behaviours in each breed of dog, it's not 'just their nature'. So sleep routines when a dog is in a home don't and won't come 'naturally' to them- you need to teach them how and when to sleep, it's just that *high energy dogs often find it harder to get used to or maintain a healthy sleep routine than lower energy dogs*. Of course most rescues are a mix of breeds, or if pedigree, 'failed' the typical breed requirement tests that led to them being dumped in a rescue in the first place. But as a general guideline (and this is not a

complete list or even a list all experts agree on) but note there are often outliers on this, especially with mixed breeds :

*Low Energy (for more [check this out](#), but don't think low energy means they don't need exercise)*

Maltese

French Bulldog

Italian Greyhound

Pug

Great Dane

*Moderate Energy (for more [click here](#) )*

Chinese larger dogs like Shar Pei and Chow Chow

Corgi

Many types of terrier  
Many types of spaniel

*Moderate to High Energy*

Beagle

Border Collie

Golden Retriever

Jack Russell Terrier

*High Energy (for more, [click here](#) )*

Doberman

German Shepard

Malamute and Husky

Malinois

Rottweiler

# The age of the dog. Puppies



puppies (and this can be from 8 months old up to 2 years old depending on doggy size)

Dog Life Stages				
Dog Size	Puppy	Adult	Senior	Geriatric
<b>Small</b> (up to 20 pounds)	Up to 8 months	8 months to 10-12 years	10-12 years to 15-16 years	16 years and over
<b>Medium</b> (21-50 pounds)	Up to 1 year	1 year to 8-9 years	8-9 years to 12-13 years	13 years and over
<b>Large</b> (51-100 pounds)	Up to 15 months	15 months to 6-7 years	6-7 years to 11-12 years	12 years and over
<b>Giant</b> (Over 100 pounds)	Up to 24 months	18-24 months to 6 years	6 years to 8-9 years	9 years and over

**PETMD**  
vet-written + vet-reviewed

can and will sleep for up to 20 hours a day including the hours when you go to bed.

**BUT**

- **Do not expect** any puppy to *understand 'long sleep' when you go to bed at all!*
- **Do not expect** *them to sleep away from you **at all** when you*

*go to bed if they are younger than 12 weeks till they are at least 6 months or older, or at the least 3 months after you brought them home, depending on how well or fast they are decompressing/settling in in general, either especially if you want them to sleep downstairs when you go to bed.*

*If that means *you have to sleep down with them* for a while, so be it. Unless you want a dog with separation anxiety as they have no concept of a human bedroom, why you would want to go there without them, or if you'll ever come back.*

*Even adult dogs when new in your*



*home will need you to do this.*

However, don't worry if you don't go to bed at the same time every night, or sometimes have trouble sleeping yourself. With gentle and consistent routine making, they will end up getting 'ready for bed' when you do, so it's a good idea to really exaggerate your own 'going to bed' routine so they can learn your actions and even your body language (e.g. yawning, having a hot chocolate, closing your device, taking meds (never leave your meds where a pup can reach them) turning off the TV and so on.)

*The most important thing after sleep in this context is resting, for you and your (new) pup and*

showing them 'play time' and 'training time', and 'quiet time' or 'bed time' are very different things, backed up by *command words* for this, as suggested in our [words blog](#), in a happy high tone for play and training and a low gentle tone for 'bed time'.

Also don't forget, most *pups under 6 months usually can't hold their toilet all night* so be prepared to have disturbed sleep yourself letting them out at least every 4 hours or more (if you're lucky and have seen or worked out their 'I need to go out' signal) whenever they ask, or after they've drunk or slept. Again adult dogs may need this too as many of them will be

used to going out of their kennel and toileting as soon as they need to. Once you've done this for a few nights you may feel a bit frazzled, now multiply that by 100 as the dog doesn't know the rules of the house that you know, and want them to follow, because you invented them ;)

Hopefully you can see why the first few days/weeks/months it is vital to get their sleep patterns right in a way you can reasonably maintain. And it's also vital to *regularly reinforce toilet routines alongside sleeping routines*, especially if you take them on holiday with you (not recommended for at last three months depending on how well

your pup is settling/has settled in.)

## Young Adults

This age can often cross over with puppy stages, so use the same methods and expect them to need as much sleep as in the puppy section above, as well as how long they should sleep for per day. But add the

possibility *developing **erratic sleep patterns as well***

*as **'teenage' fear stages*** if you adopt a dog between 7 and 18 months old, though they can also 'fear imprint' between 8 and 12 weeks old, then they may suddenly startle more easily or get scared of things that never used to bother

them. If you know your dog went through some stuff at that age (common in rescue dogs, and all good rescues will tell you if they know about anything bad they experience at that age) so *extra care needs to be taken in establishing a positive sleep routine with a dog who has a rough start to their lives*. Experts usually advise not to neuter until a dog is full adult if they are showing fear for no obvious (such as medical, or they've had a bad experience such as being attacked by another dog) reason.



## Adults

Again we call adult dogs 'adult' at different ages depending on size, from 8 months to 12 years in small dogs up to 2-6 years in large dogs. But as a general rule they *sleep **up to 14 hours a day***. And all the rules for puppies and young adults can apply, especially for new dogs as they don't know your house rules either, and many were used to living in kennels before they go home. Go at their pace and don't expect too much too soon.

And *never expect even an in home foster's adult dog to come in and know where their bed is in YOUR house*, or what a bed is if they've come from kennels (though all our dogs have their own beds and blankets), is as they don't even know the layout of your house yet, so they can't automatically differentiate between outside and inside in your house, or know where they are meant to sleep. They may be worried by carpets, laminate or lino inside and gravel and paving stones outside as they've never seen them before (see our ['lava and kettle dog' blog](#)) as well.



## Seniors

As your dog ages, they are likely to need to sleep ***up to 20 hours a day*** again. They may get tired more easily, or grumpy, or have conditions like arthritis that give them pain- or doggy dementia that makes them fearful and forget things- and dogs in pain often want to sleep more. If you suspect your dog has pain issues, a vet visit will be necessary to rule out illness. But apart from that the same rules apply for your senior as to all dogs you (first) bring into your home. They may have spent all their lives in a kennel waiting to go home, or a abandoned ex pet that did not like kennels and are very glad to be in a house again, but they will still have



to learn your house rules and be shown where their bed or other safe space is. *Give them time and patience, and let them sleep, even if they choose what seems like a weird place at first.*

## Signs Your Dog Is A Senior



### Visible Signs

- Fur and Muzzle Start Graying
- Walking Stiffly/Unexplained Limping
- Cloudiness of the Eyes (Cataracts)
- Lumps and Dry Patches on Skin
- Unusual Changes in Weight

### Behavior Signs

- Increased Thirst
- Cranky/Grumpy
- Refuses Long Walks/Stairs
- Excess Sleep or Lack of Energy
- Aggression Towards Other Dogs

### Health Signs

- Inability to Control Urination
- Stiff Joints and Mobility Issues
- Loss of Hearing/Smell
- Lack of Appetite
- Blindness/Loss of Vision

## **What is the background of your dog?**

Did they come from a situation where they were abused or didn't feel safe? Such dogs may be too scared to sleep in case something bad happens. For example, dogs taken from mum too soon (looking at you, backyard breeders!) can exhibit fear of sleep as last time they did, their mum and littermates disappeared and they woke up somewhere totally new (you took them home.)

Often rescue dogs' backgrounds are unknown before they are saved and come into the direct care of a rescue. And while fosters (fully in home) and semi fosters (where the

dogs are trained and socialised but are still in kennels at 'long sleep time') can give a lot of information about how and when a dog sleeps usually, that might go out of the window in a forever home with less dogs and people around, or if your routine is very different to what they are used to. ***Keep your expectations low*** especially at the beginning; see what they do 'naturally' when they first arrive and build on that.

**How long have you had the dog?**

It can also depend on how recently you adopted your dog at ANY age. They will need way more sleep when they first arrive as they are decompressing and, depending on how well they are processing all the new stuff in your house (what they can see, smell or hear, touch- which includes that lovely new soft bed you've bought them; or taste- different food, and even different water can seem strange to a dog and add to their stress) they can take ***three times as long AT LEAST to make sense of the smallest thing***, and for that they need proper processing sleep (not sleep where they wake up or jump up every time you move- this means they are on full alert and are

not getting beneficial or high quality sleep.)

**Am I giving my dog the best chance of high quality sleep to make sure they process properly?**

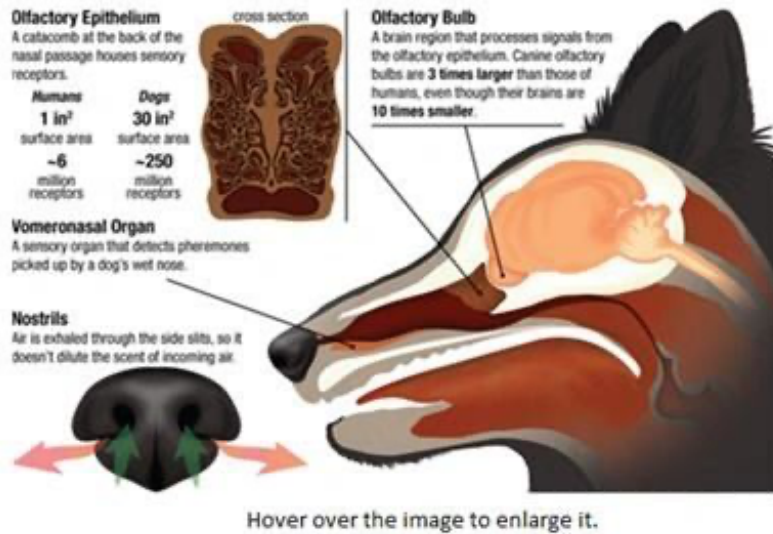
Probably! (If you have been following our rules, blogs and guidelines we have anyway.) But dogs' senses aren't the same as ours, so below are some useful facts about how dogs perceive their surroundings. You may be accidentally doing something

that's stopping high quality sleep, or even stressing them out.

## **SMELL**

***Smell is the most important sense for a dog.*** In fact a dog's sense of smell is 10,000 to 100,000 times more acute than a human's! They can smell illnesses like cancer in humans (and other animals) and can 'smell' fear (or at least the hormones given off), and even what time it is!

## Canine Upper Respiratory Tract



What their safe/sleeping space smells like is super important for them to have high quality sleep. You can help a new dog settle in by putting a blanket or item of clothing that smells of you in their safe space. But many dogs will choose their own safe space and swerve the space you thought would work for many reasons, but it can also be it doesn't smell right to them. So if they won't settle but

seem to be decompressing well in general, check the ingredients in your house and clothing cleaners and make sure they are dog safe, and aren't too strongly fragranced.

*Continuity of smell in a new home* can also be vital. If you've adopted one of our dogs in an in home foster, your doggie 'forever pack' will include items that they used to clean their home and bathe the dog. A familiar smell from their foster home (and we only use dog friendly products- and even sell them in our non profit shop), combined with something that smells of 'you' really helps them to cope in their new home. So we advise all adopters to sleep with a



blanket you've bought for them (we have blankets in our shop that are familiar in texture to all our doggies) for a good week before the dog comes home so they can get a great idea of who you are by smell, or an old T shirt that got good and sweaty at work or after being slept in. And put that item in their bed or safe space ready for them to come home to.

We also advise that you give your dog plenty of sniffing times on walks whether a regular or new walk as ***smell is the main way they make sense of their surroundings***, (for more on this see our blog on it <https://lorasluck.org/blogs/f/what-is-my->

dog-trying-to-tell-me ) and ***give them lots of processing time after a walk to have a good, undisturbed sleep.*** Sniffing triggers the release of endorphins, dopamine, and other neurotransmitters that induce *feelings of pleasure and relaxation in dogs.* So having access to smells the like has *physical and emotional benefits* for dogs. It *decreases heart rate, lowers blood pressure,* and improves a dog's outlook on life- they will feel safer, and build confidence and independence when they are allowed to sniff things, and just as important, remove smells from the home that stress them out or make

them sick. So when they smell something worrying to their super sensitive noses, they are much less likely to get high quality sleep because they simply won't be relaxed enough.

## **SIGHT**

Sometimes humans overestimate how important what a dog can see in their(new) home is but of course what they can see especially in their safe space is important. Our blog [here](#) goes into more detail about how dogs see compared to humans- you will be surprised to realise they usually react far more to movement than sight as we imagine it.

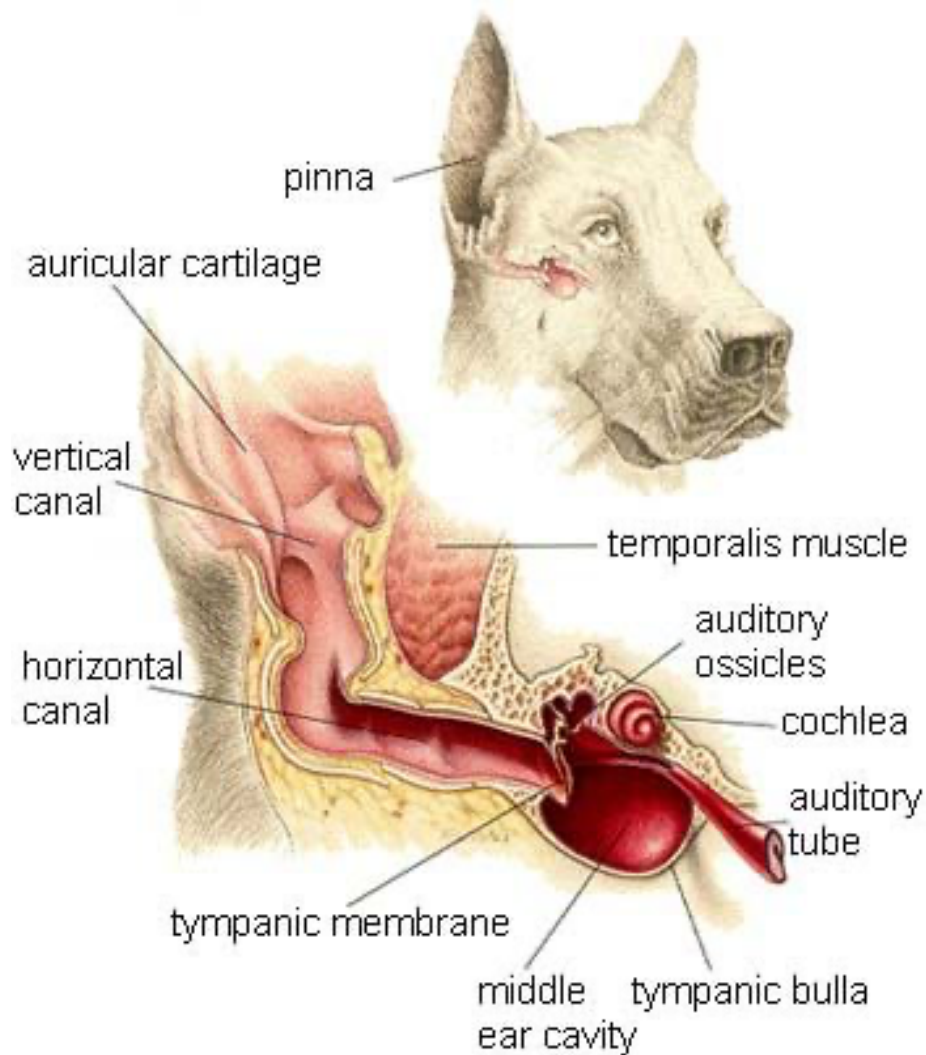
## SOUND

**What if my dog gets stressed or wakes up at the slightest noise?**

**Dogs can hear the quietest sounds** from four times farther away than us humans can. They can hear higher frequency sounds, can more easily differentiate sounds (e.g. they may recognise the sound of your car) and they can pinpoint the exact location of the sound.

So sounds close by or in your home can be even more overwhelming to your (new) dog. For example, if you've run the vacuum for the first time, don't engage with them and let them

chill back down again for a long time afterwards. If you had it on for 20 minutes, let them process in the safe space they chose for at least an hour **(3 times as long as the activity)** with no stimulating activities at all (play, walks etc) and only leave them with a toy if it's a comfort toy or calms them (like a teddy) *don't let them go mad in their beds* with an activity toy like a ball or rope tug toy. And *never fuss them in their beds/safe spaces!* *Their beds are for lounging, chilling in and sleeping ONLY, not for play or fuss with you.*



If you find (and this is common) that your dog is ***sensitive to noise*** (which is logical if you think about it- has your dog ever heard a washing machine or TV before for example) you can provide all sorts of ways to provide noise

desensitisation for your dog. Examples include (and try them out in this order to reduce the possibility of them getting stressed out):

- *Nature videos* (not of animals) of things like rivers, forests, beaches and such like in the background such as this YouTube channel <https://www.youtube.com/@johnnielawson>, who use non looped real time videos in their content. You can also introduce [\*weather sounds\*](#) from YouTube as dogs are very affected by weather but only if the nature videos are relaxing them; otherwise wait to introduce

them along with the 'man made' noises we talk about later in the list

- *White noise* (like a fan but be careful, they may find the noise and movement of a fan worrying at first) or play what are called ASMR sounds at them. YouTube has 1000s of black screen (where there is no picture as sometimes (new) dogs can be very sensitive to pics on a TV screen, especially if they're moving, because dogs notice movement especially when they're stressed as it could be something exciting, or dangerous, like when you're watching your favourite show) [videos like this](#). There are



also apps you can add to your phone or device. They can be good for you to listen to as well, as each type of noise has a 'colour' (like brown, green, pink, blue etc) that we 'resonate' to and *if your dog's stressed and not sleeping much, or seems to be sleeping all the time, you will be stressed too and your dog will pick up on that.*

- *Noises that reproduce man made 'inside' sounds the dog will hear round the house (vacuum cleaner, hairdryers, washer/dryer, microwave, the hum of a fridge etc )*
- *Noises that reproduce man made 'outside' sounds they may hear in the garden or on a walk,*

like [cars, sirens, fireworks](#) etc (for these always start with them super quiet and slowly increase the volume.)

- *Noises that get dogs used to a wide range of human voices.* Having talk radio on or non musical podcasts can help here, starting on low and increasing the volume if the dog is showing no stress.
- Get them used to your *musical taste and TV shows* by starting off with tunes at a very low volume and slowly increase.
- Practice *answering the door to a [knock or doorbell](#)* for deliveries and visitors, or using your phone. All sorts of phone and doorbell noises can be found here to try

out. Again keep the sound level low at first.

- Get your dog *used to the sounds of other animals* like other dogs and cats by using videos like this on super low volume at first.
- A ticking clock wrapped in a blanket or towel in their beds can help as it sounds like the heartbeats of its mum, siblings or foster or kennel buddies especially if they are a cuddle type sleeper (see below.)  
But they may chew it so try not to leave it in their beds when you're not at home.

***Always be prepared to turn any and all of the above off if they're reactive, for them to***

***have a high quality nap or sleep, and reboot.***

If you can't access YouTube <https://www.youtube.com>, which is free (with ads) and you don't need to sign up to anything, there are [lots of 'apps' you can add](#) to your phone, the device or smart TV to get them though unfortunately you usually have to pay for them. Or download sound clips of them, some of which you may also need to pay for or sign up for. [Here's a link for some](#). If this tech sounds a bit scary, just ask in your support chat for advice.

**TOUCH**

***RULE 1: Do not touch them when they're in their safe space!*** They must know their safe space is theirs else they are much less likely to use it as their sleeping space.



How their safe space feels is also important. Your dog may *not be used to the textures or thickness*

*of the bed and blankets* you have for them so be prepared to have to give them a space with little to nothing in at first. They will soon get used to the 'luxury' of the super deluxe bed you lovingly bought for them if introduced to them when they are ready.

## **TASTE**

*Relying (too much) on food or treats* when your dog needs to 'go to bed' and sleep, or in training in general, isn't doing your dog any favours. While scared dogs can follow a trail of low reward treats (like grain free biscuits) to a bed or outside can be useful, it shouldn't be done every time else they'll

expect it and not actually realise what you want, they'll think one of their 'jobs' is to follow the treat trail. Or all you may be doing is activating their 'hunger hormones' which can result in stressed or obsessive behaviours, rather than their 'happy chemical' brain centres. *Stressed dogs also will often eat too fast* so are barely tasting what you are giving them, which can be helped with high value soft foods on a licky mat that take time to eat. Eating too fast can also make a dog choke and become food avoidant.

Conversely, they may ***react oddly to a change of food or even water***- yes, water from different

areas can taste very different to dogs, and they may find it off-putting. We advise as much *food continuity* as possible to help your dog settle in, or if you need to change food, ensure it's high quality than the food they are currently on. All of this if not properly managed, can make them sleep a long time as they just have too much to process, or, worse, not be sleeping 'enough' (and by 'enough' we mean at least 14 hours a day, as discussed above.)

Don't forget, taste and smell are super linked in dogs, but *dogs' sense of taste is much lower than humans*. People have roughly 9,000 taste buds, but dogs have



only around 1,700, so they can be vulnerable to eating non dog safe plants in the garden and on walks especially when stressed. Usually their capacity to self medicate with plants they encounter is good, but if they are stressed or adopted out of area they may not recognise the plants they encounter, eat them and get sick. Also checking your dog's *tongue can be one way of working out their general health.*

# DOG TONGUE



- A dog's tongue has more tasks to do than any other part.
- Uses its mouth much like we use our hands.

## WARNING SIGNS ON YOUR DOG'S TONGUE



Tongue discoloration is an indication of illness.



Can happen if the dog plays with toys with artificial colors.

### Red Tongue

Bacterial Infection, Diabetes, Fever, Bladder or Kidney Problems, Hyperthyroidism, Cancer.



### Blue Tongue

Heart and Circulatory Problems, Toxicosis, Organ Stress, Liver Disease, Hepatitis, Autoimmune Issue.



### Yellow Tongue

Liver, Gall Bladder or Gastritis Malfunction, Jaundice.



### Pale Tongue

Anemia, Leukemia



### Dark Raised Tongue

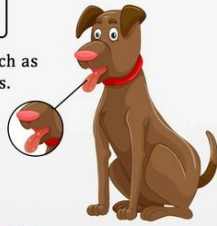
Dark bump on your dog's tongue which may be a sign of melanoma.



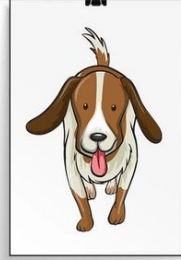
## DOG'S TONGUE ULCER



Can indicate underlying illness such as Kidney, or Periodontal diseases.



## PANTING DOG WITH BLUE TONGUE



Panting is a respiratory response to heat, nervousness or exhaustion.

## HANGING TONGUE SYNDROME



Dogs cannot withdraw their tongues.

## DOG'S TONGUE ANTISEPTIC

Dog saliva contains antibacterial components.



## CLEAN DOGS TONGUE

- Brushing your dog's tongue will remove bacteria.
- Tongue cleaning refreshes the breath.



## DOGS WITH BIG TONGUES

- Breeds like Boxers may have oversized tongues.



## What if I have the opposite problem- my dog hardly sleeps at all!

Sometimes it can go the other way, when your dog seems to have 'no chill' or off switch. This can of course be because they're bored or not discharging energy or stress through the day, so slow/gentle introductions to activities that may tire their brains out also needs to be done.

*But never too much too soon!*

***Dogs can get overexcited if they have too much play/activity,*** or if they are 'high energy' dogs, or you do them for too long or past the point where they're

comfortable but they want to please you so they continue, so make sure you can read your dog and how they show stress (all in our blogs.) They may not like the activity you are trying much but think it's the only way/time they're going to get engagement from you, so over time try lots of things (including activities they can do without you) and when you find the ones they like best make sure you do the ones that make them more likely to have a sleep afterwards, not ones that wind them up, especially before their 'long sleep' time.



Sometimes a dog will need medical intervention to aid sleep, but there's no need to rush right to the vets for pills. We have lots of tried and tested herbal helps for this in our non profit shop and can provide lots of herbal suggestions on your adopter support chat

depending on the reason(s) you think your dog is not sleeping enough or not getting high quality sleep.

## **My dog chews instead of sleeping.**

If while reading this blog you've realised your dog actually isn't sleeping enough, rather than sleeping 'too much' (as let's face it, sleeping 'too much' when they need to sleep 14-20 hours a day is pretty much impossible), some dogs release stress by chewing so sometimes a long lasting chew toy they can eat is good especially if

they're too wound up to sleep but don't do this in a multi dog house in case of scraps over food, and never leave them unsupervised with one, especially a bone or large chew (whether it's food or not) as they could choke, or get long lasting treat obsession or food reactivity. So while chewing can get them relaxed enough to stop chewing and have quality sleep, this is not always true.

However, some dogs get more wound up with a food based chew as eating releases grehlin (the hunger hormone, for more on this [check out this blog](#)) which in combination with all the other things they are feeling under

stress, could make the problem of erratic sleep or sleep that does not seem to refresh or reset them worse. So when you see your dog getting stressed, and sleep doesn't seem to be helping them rest properly, it can be trial and error finding things they find calming to do. If you're not sure what a stressed dog can look like, we have some very useful blogs on that too ([here](#) and [here](#).)

***Chewing should never be instead of sleeping,*** but it can help them relax enough for them to have high quality sleep when they do sleep.



## How can I tell they're sleeping well without disturbing them?

Check out these pics of some typical ok to good sleep positions. While there are always exceptions, these often show not only how well they are sleeping, but you can also learn more about their normal character as well as their state of mind as they sleep.

### **The Side Sleeper**



#### **Position**

Lying on their side with their legs extended.

#### **Meaning**

They feel safe, relaxed, and are at a comfortable temperature.

#### **Personality**

Side sleepers are **trusting and loyal**. They'll snooze just about anywhere, but prefer their own bed.

Temperature can make a difference to how well a dog sleeps. Too hot or too cold can interrupt sleep or make them uncomfortable

## The Lion's Pose

### Position

Sleeping with their head on top of their paws.

### Meaning

They are resting, but still ready to jump and play in a moment's notice.

### Personality

Lion's pose sleepers are **protective and devoted**. They'll typically snooze by your feet or the front door.



When dogs sleep in this position it means they are resting, but not sleeping deeply; they could be ready to jump up and follow you if they hear a noise or you move suddenly or noisily.

## The Superman



### Position

Belly pressed to the floor, back legs behind them, and front legs stretched forward.

### Meaning

They're tired but ready to play if the opportunity arose.

### Personality

These pups are **playful and energetic**. They'll play until they can't anymore — plopping down on any surface.

They're tired and happy for a sleep, but ready to play if the opportunity arises. This is more like a nap than a sleep and they can wake up quickly and be ready to jump up at a moment's notice to play. This is a common sleeping position for high energy dogs during the day, but for low and high energy dogs could be a sign they're not processing well

## when they sleep.

### **The Donut**

#### **Position**

Curled up in a ball with all of their limbs tucked close to their body.

#### **Meaning**

They are seeking to protect themselves and preserve body heat.

#### **Personality**

These dogs are **caring, but anxious**. This position is common in new dogs getting used to their new home.



Some dogs just like sleeping like this, but it also keeps all of the dog's vital organs tucked and hidden. They could feel the need to protect themselves while sleeping or are still getting used to their environment; normal in stray or new dogs. But it could mean they are cold.

## The Cuddler



### Position

On top of you or curled up with another animal.

### Meaning

A sign of love, bonding, and that your dog wants to get closer to you.

### Personality

Cuddlers are **affectionate and loving**. They'll do anything to snooze next to you or another furry companion.

Wanting to cuddle with you or another pet in the house is clear sign of bonding but be careful as they could fear bond if you let them snuggle too soon after taking them home after adoption. Sleep-cuddling could also a leftover behaviour from when your dog was a puppy and snuggled with their litter to keep warm or feel safe.

When they're older, cuddling can become a comfort habit.

## The Burrower

### Position

Under pillows, clothes, or blankets.

### Meaning

They are searching for comfort and security.

### Personality

Burrowers are **affectionate, but needy**. To make them feel secure, add blankets to their bed.



Dogs may sleep better under a blanket for comfort and security.

They may also be trying to feel more calm themselves down, so a heavy blanket or dog thundershirt that provides gentle pressure can help ease nervous behaviours for dogs with anxiety issues or even

disorder. Or they may just want a proper/complete break from what they see as their 'usual jobs' like watching over the house and their family. It can also be something as simple as they like most humans prefer much less noise and light especially at 'long sleep' time, or blocking out distractions before bed.

## The Belly Up



### Position

Lying on their back with their belly up and legs in the air.

### Meaning

They fully trust you and their environment and are trying to keep cool.

### Personality

Belly up sleepers are **loving and trusting**. They're comfortable in their surroundings and will snooze anywhere.

Dogs sleeping like this could simply be trying to keep cool, as while they sweat through their paws, keeping their belly cool is a good way of heat dissipation. But also, because this is such a vulnerable position, when dogs sleep this way, it means they fully trust you and their environment unlike the donut position they are exposing their belly and their vital organs to the world, so they are usually feeling really secure. But always bear in mind they may be too hot in your warm house especially if till now they've slept outside in rescue kennels, so have water on standby and turn down the heat if you can



They may go from belly up to getting up and stretching out somewhere else, then go back to sleep.



This position shows they could be (too) hot if they sleep sprawled out on cool surfaces, particularly when they're on their bellies with legs extended, getting maximum contact of their less furry (usually) tummy skin touching the cold floor or ground. If you notice your dog often doing this, you can turn on a

fan or the AC, put out some cold water, think of investing in a cooling mat or gently call them out of sleep to give them a frozen treat.

Watch out for signs of heatstroke (see our blog on that) if they start panting and can't stop.

Alternatively they may just need to be groomed (if they have a long coat, see our blog for grooming advice.)

Let them sleep downstairs if they're ok sleeping away from their human(s), where it's likely to be cooler or have a tiled or stone floor like a kitchen if they do this in warmer seasons.

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## What medical issues can cause a dog to sleep what seems like too much or not enough?

It's only really likely to be something medical if other symptoms are also present ***Trouble breathing*** so they may have suddenly changed their usual sleeping position

### **Head and Neck Raised**

#### **Position**

Lying with their head and neck raised on a surface.

#### **Meaning**

It could mean your dog has issues breathing properly.



## Lethargy.

not wanting to do things they usually ask to do (play etc). But don't forget while very young and very old dogs will need to sleep more than adult dogs, lethargy with vomiting can be a precursor to Cushings or if allied with dry coughing, be indicative of not only difficulty breathing but also heart issues, both of which being very serious and needing an urgent vet visit.



## (Hyper)activity

when usually they are pretty calm and sleep well ,could be pain/ anxiety but it could also be rarer conditions like hyperkinesia (unable to calm down, or gets way too excited over stimulating things in their environment) or doggy ADHD.

## Snappiness

are they in pain or scared? Is it a common breed trait? r Or are they just fed up of being bothered when they are in their beds when they're trying to sleep?

## ***Loss of appetite or thirst***

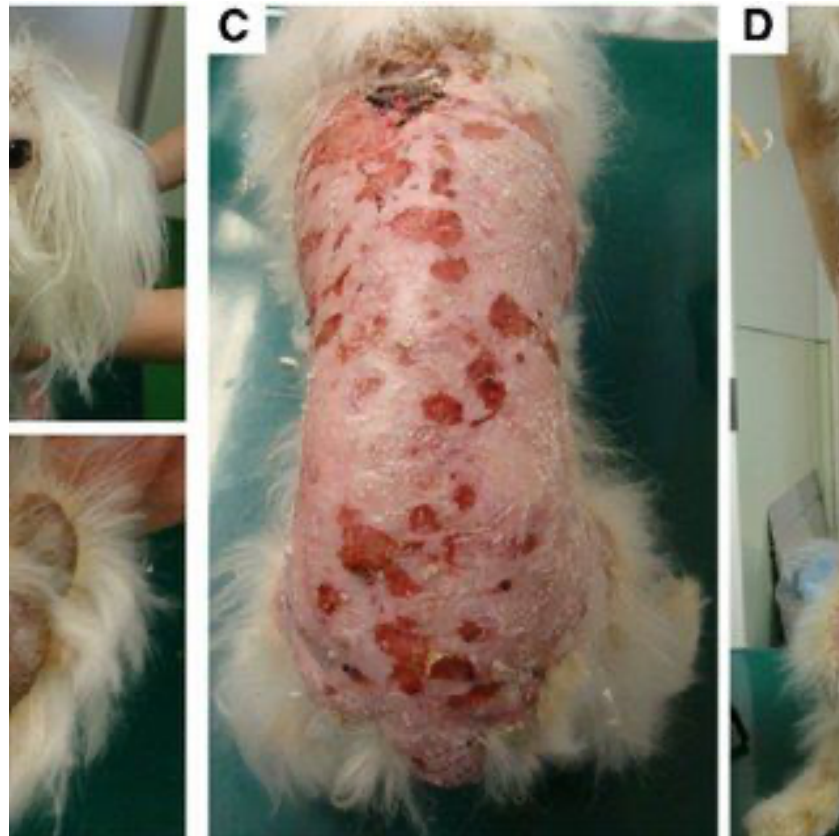
dogs can have a whole range of conditions, some of which can be very serious, if they don't want to eat or drink, and yes dogs can get things like IBS just like humans, for example. For 6 common causes of this [click this link with vet created content](#).

## **Sores, *Skin Bumps***

### **(*Granulomatous***

***Dermatoses)* or hair pulling out from chewing that can't be a result of having fleas or ticks, note this could be dermatitis, or more serious conditions like mange as well which is painful and makes**

them miserable. This could be a food intolerance (common allergies are chicken and grain, which is another reason why we [prefer people to raw feed](#), and give lots of advice on how to do this safely, but there are many more serious reasons as to why they may be over licking or chewing themselves. If you think your dog is licking or chewing themselves too much, a handy [vet approved link on that is here](#).



A Granulomatous Dermatoses example, and yes it can look very scary. They need to see a vet right away!

Please note: *These are general guidelines, if your (new) dog seems to be an outlier, or doing*



something that's worrying you, please leave a message in your live support chat and a team member will answer as soon as they can.

***And remember, the more positively you approach sleep with your dog, and the lower the pressure you put on your dog or yourself to 'get it right', the better it usually goes!***