

Keeping Your Dogs "Exercised" Without Walking Them

Like their humans, most pooches benefit from the positive impact regular exercise has on their health and well-being, but there are many conditions that may prevent you from walking your furry friend. The Bay Area is known for having the kind of weather that beckons dogs and their people outside, but there are certainly days when many want to hide from the elements -- whether you're avoiding muddy paws in the winter or a roasted hot dog in the summer.

Although the temperature outside is one of the most common issues stopping you and your dog from enjoying a nice walk, there may be other reasons you can't exercise him, such as feeling ill or having limited mobility. The good news is that there are many creative ways you can keep your pup entertained and stimulated without having to strap on a leash. The following are some great ideas for "exercising" your dog indoors:

- **Puzzle Play:** There are tons of doggy-puzzles available on the market. Most involve your pup figuring out how to get treats or kibble out of them. You can find such brain-boosting puzzles at your local pet store or at online shops like Chewy.com.
- **Hide-And-Go-Seek-Treats:** Put their noses to work without spending money on a new puzzle by hiding treats around your home. Hide treats at various levels within their reach and watch them happily hunt for their goodies.
- **Tug-Of-War:** This classic game that tests strength is a perfect indoor workout for your dog. It requires that she utilize most of the muscles in her bodies, so it's no wonder a few rounds of pup versus human can start to tire her out. Pet stores sell many toys ideal for tug-of-war, but you can also use things you may already have at home, like thick rope, to get the pulling action going.
- **Chewing Bliss:** A bored pup can be a destructive pup. Instead of putting your furniture at risk, provide your dog with toys and treats that are meant to be chewed up. Once again, pet toy manufacturers have got your covered

when it comes to ample choices, but you can also go to your local butcher and request a raw beef femur bone. Your pooch will be in heaven for hours!

- **Soft Ball Bowling:** Get your hound's four legs moving with an indoor version of fetching a ball. Instead of a tennis ball, use a soft, plush ball and roll it on the ground instead of throwing it. Your glassware can remain safe while your dog gets her play on.

These are just some ideas to help keep your dog happy and healthy. Some may work better than others to suit his individual play style and preferences. Try mixing it up with the different activities too. You're sure to find a substitute that will work for you and your pup when you can't get outside for a walk.