

Games Pooches Play!

All dogs love to play – even as adults. Playtime strengthens your relationship with your dog and keeps your pooch from getting bored. Try some of these games with your best buddy!



Fetch!

Everyone knows this game and even reluctant dog fetchers will catch on if the reward is worth it – a favourite treat! The key to teaching a dog to fetch is to practice “drop it” first,

otherwise you will end up with a different game – “keep away.” If your dog doesn’t drop the ball, end the game and walk away. After a few times of a quick end to playtime your dog will learn that the fun continues if you play by the rules.

Hide and Seek

Try putting your dog in a stay with her head facing away from your play area. Now go and hide. When you are ready, call her name and see how long she takes to find you. Not only can this be fun but it also teaches your dog to wait until she is called.



Treasure Hunt

Similar to Hide and Seek except you hide treats and see how quickly your dog finds them. Start by letting her sniff the treat, keep her in a stay and then hide the treat. As she gets the hang of it you can hide the treats in more difficult to find places and farther distances. This is the basic strategy of how search and rescue dogs are trained as well as dogs that find fruit or drugs in airport luggage.

Agility

Dog agility is an obstacle course for dogs. There are jumps, tunnels, weave poles, tires and see-saws that your dog must complete in the quickest possible time. You can set up your

Hint: Use treats to lure your dog the first few times through the course.



own agility course in

your backyard using household objects such as old mop handles for weave poles, a hoola-hoop for a tire jump and jumps made with two chairs with a stick across it.

Slowly withdraw treats and use praise with word associations for the actions you want the dog to learn. Try using words like “jump” or “weave” and say “good dog” when she completes the task. Try giving a treat or favourite toy at the end for a reward for completing the course.

Help your cats climb the walls

While dogs are content to live with us at ground level, cats are different. Cats love to climb, balance on ledges and sleep on shelves up high.



Why? Because your cat's ancestors were jungle cats. These wild cats perched in trees and climbed rocky ledges where they could overlook the forest floor, watching for prey. Trees and cliffs were also safe places to hang out, groom and sleep.

Today's house cats still behave like wild cats. Yet, we don't often think from a cat's perspective. If we did, we would provide furniture and "trees" cats can climb with places to hide, perch and nap. Think like a cat and provide vertical spaces.



Paradise for cats! You could transform your whole home with wall and ceiling cat walkways. See examples at goldtatze.de from Germany.



Cats like to sit up high and watch the action.



FROM IKEAHACKERS.NET

Add shelves along a wall. Buy them ready-made at home stores or places like IKEA and Amazon.



Stack wooden crates or cardboard boxes.



FROM AMAZON.CA

Make window ledges wider so your cats can sit and look outside. You can also get window shelves.



Make space on bookshelves just for your cats. Add a towel, carpet scrap or pillow for a bed.



Be creative. Add a shelf over a doorway where space is wasted anyway. Mount crates on the wall as steps up.



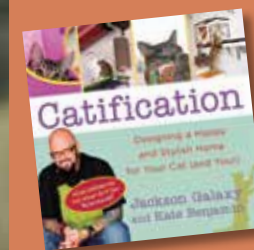
Build or buy a cat tree.

Cats like to hide sometimes. So make private nooks too, like this one from K&H Manufacturing.



FROM STORE.STYLETAILS.COM

Build steps or a ramp along a wall so your cat can use the vertical space.



Need more ideas?

These two books – *Catification* and *Catify to Satisfy* – are packed with ideas to make your home cat-friendly. Also, search "cat furniture" or "cat shelves" in Pinterest or Google for tons more ideas.

