

Crafty Corner

Happy Hiding!

Hiding is an important behaviour to small animals like rabbits, guinea pigs, rats, mice, hamsters and gerbils. Why? They're prey species! In the wild, they're used to *running* for cover from predators.

Even though we're not predators, we still need to give our petite pets places to retreat to when they want to get away. Hiding helps them feel safe. Here's an easy fabric-fringe hideout you can make for your own small animals at home.

Supplies:

- Cardboard box
- Ruler
- Pencil
- Scrap fabric
- Scissors



Directions:

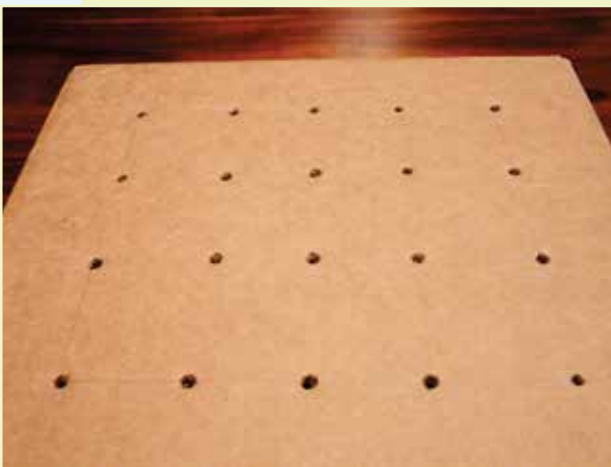
1. Cut the flaps off the top and bottom of the box.
2. Lay the box on its side. Using a ruler, make a grid of squares. Each square should be about 5 cm by 5 cm. The grid should be about 5 cm from the edge of the box all the way around.
3. Make a dot in the corners of each square.
4. Wherever you've put a dot, punch a hole through the cardboard using the tip of a pencil.
5. Cut as many strips of scrap fabric as there are holes in the box. Each strip should be about 3 cm wide and 10 cm longer than the height of the box.
6. Tie a knot at the end of each strip. Thread the strips through the holes so that the knots are at the top. The strips should come close to touching the bottom of the box without dragging too much – otherwise, they'll get dirty quickly. Cut off any excess fabric.



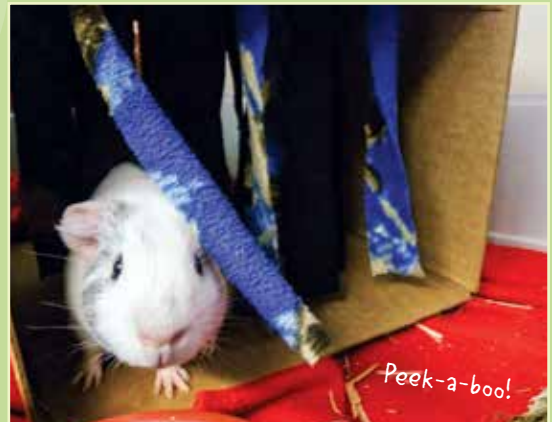
The strips of fabric mimic what it feels like to hide in tall grass.



Fleece fabric works best because it doesn't fray as much.



The box should be large enough for your small animals to fit comfortably inside. Thicker boxes hold their shape better.



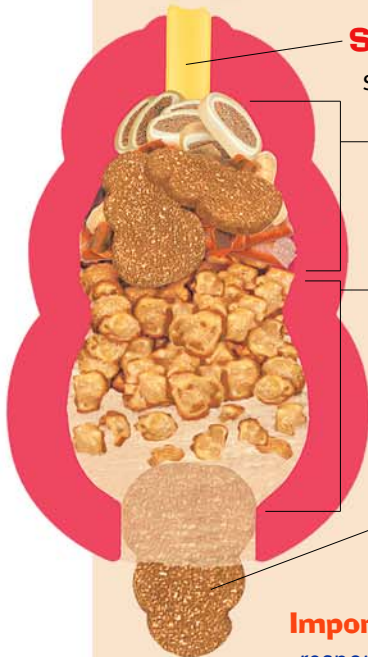
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Does your **dog chew your shoes, socks or furniture? Maybe he's bored!**

Try stuffing a **Kong** for him instead! It can be as simple as stuffing the Kong with a couple of cookies and peanut butter to creating a four-course meal! Check out this recipe or visit www.kongcompany.com for more irresistible ones!

get STUFFED!



Step One: TANTALIZER! Meat chunks, soft treat, peanut butter or cheese.

Step Two: DESSERT!

Fill 1/3 of the cavity with crunchy or soft dog treats.

Step Three: MAIN COURSE

Fill the last 2/3 with a mixture of canned and dry dog food OR **get creative** – try some mac and cheese or mashed bananas.

Step Four: The APPIE! Leave a super tasty tidbit sticking out of the opening. **YUM!!**

Important! Use Kongs safely! Your dog's safety is your responsibility. Always supervise your dog's use of Kongs to make sure he isn't tearing off pieces of rubber and eating them.

Hint: The original Kongs are made to last, imitations sometimes break apart more easily.

The BC SPCA encourages all pet guardians to improve the quality of life for animals beyond food, water and shelter, check out our website at www.sPCA.bc.ca/kids for more ideas on how to spice up your pet's life.

Kids Club members!

You: Send us your favourite original Kong recipe along with a photo of your pet enjoying her Kong. Deadline is January 31, 2005. A selection of recipes and photos will also be posted on our website at www.sPCA.bc.ca/kids.

We: Randomly pick three lucky submissions that will receive a COOL Kong gift package! Easy huh?

Send: BC SPCA Kids Club
1245 East 7th Avenue
Vancouver, B.C. V5T 1R1

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Welcome to the first issue of Bark!

- the BC SPCA's magazine for kids.

Bark! is packed with animal facts, information and ways you can help animals.

While *Bark!* is a great magazine on its own, BC SPCA Kids Club members receive much more.

To become a member check out the back page and join the hundreds of kids throughout B.C. making a difference for animals.

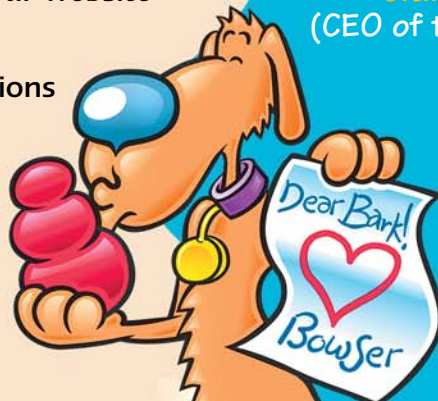
We hope you enjoy *Bark!* and would love your feedback!

Yours truly,



Jeter Daniell
(Husky/ Malamute Cross)

Craig Daniell
(CEO of the BC SPCA)



Playing it safe

How to find the best toys for your dog or cat

When you walk into a pet supply store, it can be overwhelming. There are just too many options! How are you supposed to know what's best for your pet?

Some toys are great. They let you have fun with your pet, and help him express his natural behaviours. But other toys can be dangerous! Just because something looks cool or colourful, it doesn't mean it's good for your furry friend.

Read on to figure out how to find the perfect toy for your dog or cat. Remember, the best way to keep your buddy safe is to supervise him during playtime.

Pets can swallow pieces when toys fall apart, so pay attention if his toys are becoming worn. That's when it's time to throw them out and replace them!



FOR YOUR PLAYFUL PUP

For dogs, chewing is a natural behaviour. Toys can also help their teeth stay healthy by scraping away plaque and tartar.

Go for it!

- ✓ Classic Kong® toys, food puzzles and food-dispensing balls
- ✓ Veterinarian-recommended chew toys made of nylon or rubber
- ✓ Plush and squeaky toys
- ✓ Fetch toys such as rubber balls or Frisbees



Beware!

- ◆ Rawhide toys. Some dogs try to gulp these down in chunks, which makes them a choking hazard.
- ◆ Hard plastic toys. These can chip your dog's teeth!
- ◆ Toys from the dollar store. They're cheap to buy, but also cheaply made! They usually fall apart right away.

***TIP: A toy is too hard if you can't make an indentation in it with a fingernail, or if it would hurt to hit yourself in the knee with it.**

Make a Pupsicle

Summer is here! It's the perfect time to whip up this refreshing treat-and-toy combination. Blend together one of the following flavours:



Berry Delicious: 1 cup plain yogurt, 2 cups berries (e.g., blackberries, blueberries, raspberries or strawberries, or a mixture of these) and 2 tablespoons of honey

Gone Bananas: 1 cup plain yogurt, 1/3 cup natural, unsalted peanut butter and 1/2 banana (mashed)

Pumpkin Pie: 1 cup plain yogurt, 1 can of pumpkin purée, 1 teaspoon of honey and 1 banana (mashed)

Pour the mixture into a Kong® or other interactive feeder toy (a hollow, rubber toy that will contain the mixture) and freeze for a few hours. This will make your dog's playtime more challenging as he tries to get at the yummy goodness inside!



FOR YOUR CURIOUS CAT

Cats are predators just like their ancestors. So they love movements and sounds that trigger their instincts to hunt prey! You can keep your cat healthy and active by stimulating her desire to chase and pounce.

Scratching is also an important natural behaviour for cats. Your cat scratches to condition her claws and leave behind scent marks.

Best choices

- ✓ Dangly wands
- ✓ Plush toys, or toys you can fill with catnip
- ✓ Scratching posts and cat towers for climbing and perching
- ✓ Interactive feeders and food-dispensing balls



Be cautious

Cats can sometimes eat small toy parts. These can include:

- ◆ Feathers
- ◆ String, yarn, ribbon or elastic
- ◆ Bells
- ◆ Pom poms

If you find a toy that has any of the above, you don't necessarily need to avoid it! However, you'll have to make sure that you're paying extra close attention while your cat plays.



Make a Sock Toy

If you're on a budget, don't worry! Cats love exploring ordinary things like paper bags and cardboard boxes.

You can also make awesome do-it-yourself cat toys from common household items. Be creative – try making a pyramid using toilet paper rolls and a glue gun. You can hide treats in the rolls for your cat to find! Or, check out this cool DIY fish toy below.

You'll need:

- A single sock (that you don't want to wear anymore)
- Something to stuff your sock with, such as fabric or packing paper. Cats love the crinkly sound!
- Fabric markers or a felt tip pen to decorate your sock (optional)

***TIP: Pick a sock with a lighter colour than your pens, so that the design shows up well!**

Step 1: Stuff your sock.

Step 2: Tie a small knot at the end of the sock to keep the stuffing inside. If you've found that the sock is too full to tie a knot, simply untie it, take some stuffing out and try again.

Step 3: Decorate your fish. You can draw eyes, a smile or even some scales!

Step 4: To encourage your cat to play with the fish, dangle it over your kitty's head, or toss it in the air to spark her prey instinct. She will also love it if you hide some catnip inside.

