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✧ Highlights ✧

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LIVING WITH DOGS

Is Your Dog Fetch Obsessed?

Throwing a ball for your dog can seem like a quintessential part of the human-dog relationship. Parks are often full of people flinging balls and frisbees into the air as their dogs tear after them. While there's no doubt some dogs relish this, is it possible to have too much of a good thing?



Certain dogs are more vulnerable to ball obsessions, and it's important to keep an eye on how this pursuit can affect them. When dogs become feverish about an activity, it's like a chemical bath. Adrenaline and cortisol rush through their bodies, and it can take time (sometimes days) for these to return to a balanced state. These hormones are also great at blocking pain, which is why some dogs will play fetch for hours, only to start limping when they get home. Even if your dog seems at their happiest while chasing down that ball, it might be placing them in a state of mental and physical stress. They may also stop engaging with the environment - all eyes on the ball rather than sniffing and interacting with other dogs. Or they may start to guard their ball, leading to tension and scuffles at the dog park.

If you're worried your dog is a ball addict, what can you do about it?

- Try cold turkey for a few weeks and note any changes. Is your dog calmer? Are they sleeping better? Are they more relaxed on walks? These may be signs that ball play is running their life.
- If you do throw things for your dog, allow them to warm up first before they start running after things at speed.
- Keep fetch sessions short! Set a 10 minute timer so you stick to it.
- Use their ball obsession for good. Try hiding balls around the garden for them to sniff out and find, or as a powerful recall reward in emergencies.
- Give your dog days off. Aim to have at least one non-fetch day per week and focus on slow sniffy walks and enrichment like treat searches and food toys.

"No one appreciates the very special genius of your conversation as the dog does."

—Christopher Morley

DID YOU KNOW?

Just How Good IS That Nose?

The average dog brain is about one tenth the size of a human brain, however the part responsible for smell is around **40 times larger than it is in humans.**

They have **WAY more scent receptors than we do.** For every one scent receptor a human has, a dog has around 50.

That wet nose actually assists your dog with their sniffing skills. This thin coating of mucus helps to **capture scent particles as they draw in air.**

Dogs have been **trained to use their noses in incredible ways,** and can detect mines, drugs, explosives and even cancer.

Appreciating canine sniffing superpowers might inspire you to let them sniff just that little bit longer on your next walk (they'll love it!).



A WORLD OF DOGS

Are 'Dog Years' Really A Thing?

At some point you may have heard that one human year is the equivalent of seven dog years. This adage has been thrown about for decades, but is there any truth to it? The short answer - not really.



Researchers at the University of California explored this question by creating a formula that more accurately compared aging in dogs and humans. This formula was based on pattern changes of methyl groups - small molecules made of one carbon and three hydrogen atoms. These are part of an organism's 'epigenetic clock' and provide clues about the age of our genes. By matching and then comparing these patterns, scientists were able to more accurately discern physiological age differences between us and our canine friends.

Aging in dogs was found to be a lot more complex than the 1:7 ratio we're all familiar with. Dogs age much faster when young, with the first year of a dog's life being closer to 30 equivalent years of a human. That's a lot of growth! By four years, dogs are on par with a human in their 50s. This aging then tends to slow down as they reach seven years.

While this model may provide a more accurate picture, there still isn't a perfect formula for the aging rates of dogs. The size of a dog seems to have a big impact, with smaller dogs tending to enjoy a longer lifespan. There isn't much consensus as to why, but all that rapid early growth is considered physiologically demanding, especially for the giants of the dog world. Certain breeds also live longer lives than others, with fewer health issues along the way. Then of course there's lifestyle - access to veterinary care, weight, and diet all play an important role.

We can all agree that the answer to how long dogs live for is "Not long enough." Sharing our lives with dogs is a source of enormous friendship, humor, and pleasure. So give your dog an extra fuss today. Head outside with them and enjoy every single second of it.

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DOGS IN ACTION

The Right Dog For The Right Herd

Herding dogs are popular across the globe, and were originally bred to gather, move, and protect livestock. But did you know that there are big differences in how they do this? These breeds were developed to have a specific style of herding, based on geography, stock type, and the tasks required. Some dogs were designed to gather stock, and do so fairly quietly and with lots of 'eye' and stalking, like Border Collies. Others were bred to drive massive herds across expansive and harsh landscapes, such as Australian Kelpies. German Shepherds often served a tending role, creating a living fence around herds and shepherding them where they needed to be. As the name suggests, Australian Cattle Dogs were developed to work cattle, boldly facing these large animals and often nipping at their heels. The New Zealand Huntaway ranged over vast areas of land with limited visibility, using their impressive bark to move animals and alert handlers to their location.



Understanding our dogs' original purpose can provide a lot of insight. If you love herding breeds, watch videos of them working. While genetics aren't a crystal ball, it may give you clues about barking, athleticism, and intensity, as well as the activities they will love doing with you!



HEALTHY DOG

What To Do If Your Dog Needs Crate Rest

Dogs may require restrictions in movement and exercise following veterinary procedures, particularly surgery. This can be a challenge, especially for young and active dogs. If possible, set up their rest zone (such as a pen, gated area, or crate) in advance to get them used to it. Laying non-slip mats is a good idea to prevent slips and falls. It can be distressing for some dogs when they can't access their usual bathroom area - chat to your vet about options. If they're small you may be able to carry them, or you could seek out a harness designed to lift dogs safely.

To keep that canine brain happy...be prepared! Stock up on long lasting animal-based chews. Use your recycling to make treat parcels - these can be great fun for your dog to tear apart. Fill food toys and pop them in the freezer so they're ready to go. And don't forget to simply spend time with your dog - recovery can be tough for them and your care will help them through it.

DOG IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Welsh Corgi

One of the oldest British breeds and favored by late Queen Elizabeth II, the Corgi's ancestry lies in the cattle herding dogs of Wales. They were experts at moving cattle by nipping at bovine heels, and their short stature helped to avoid getting kicked in the process. There are two distinct Corgi breeds: the Pembroke and the Cardigan.

Corgis are low-set and sturdy and possess impressive stamina. Prospective pet parents should be mindful of their natural herding traits, especially in a busy household with children. Due to the work they were bred to perform Corgis can be quite vocal—an important consideration if you like your neighbors! On the bright side, you're unlikely to miss a delivery with a Corgi around.

If you're keen to bring one of these lively and cheerful little dogs into your home, search for a Corgi rescue near you.



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Does Your Dog Need A Winter Jacket?

Many dogs don't enjoy getting dressed up, but for some it may be a necessity in chilly climates. Which dogs are likely to need extra warmth when temperatures drop?

- Thin-coated breeds such as Boxers and French Bulldogs
- Dogs with low body fat such as Greyhounds and Whippets
- Older dogs who may be more sensitive to cold or have health issues
- Dogs from warmer climates who may not yet be used to the cold

When considering options, think about:

- Designs that adapt to body movement and aren't restrictive
- Jackets that cover the chest and stomach as this is where a lot of heat is lost
- Options that are easy to take on and off to reduce stress for your dog



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