



Enjoy the

# OUTDOORS

with Your Dog



*Your dog loves fresh air and sunshine as much as you do—not to mention all the new and interesting sights and smells the outdoors brings! Try some of these outside games and activities to keep your dog healthy and happy. In addition, playing with your dog, like training him, enhances the bond you share and helps him keep his focus on you!*

## FREESTYLE OBEDIENCE

Take your dog to a large open area or yard and have him follow you around as you deliver commands: SIT, DOWN, STAY, COME, etc... Give lots of praise when your dog completes the correct action. You can then move on to more advanced commands, teaching your dog to BACK UP, JUMP over something, CIRCLE around, etc...

## OBSTACLE COURSE

Try including a tube (such as an agility tunnel/chute, available at most pet retailers) for your dog to run through, a pause table, a ladder, weaving sticks, poles to jump over, etc... Start with your dog on a lead and walk him through the course in the order you want him to complete the obstacles. Give him lots of praise when he gets it right, and recruit friends, family and neighbours to serve as judges—or to bring their own dogs to compete!

## BATTING PRACTICE

For a twist on traditional fetch, grab a bat and a dog-safe ball to hit across the yard or a park and have your dog play outfielder—no glove required! Try not to hit another ball until your dog has brought the first one all the way back to you so that he learns he must return the item for the game to continue.

## WET FETCH

If you have a body of water available that your dog is allowed to play in, take a couple of balls or toys that will float to the water's edge and throw them in for your dog to swim after! If your dog hasn't had much experience in the water, start by tossing the object just at the edge of the water. Make sure to first teach him where he can safely and easily exit the water.

## HOMEMADE PUP-SICLES

You can use a popsicle mold or just an ice cube tray to freeze yummy, refreshing treats for your dog. Get creative by tossing ingredients such as yogurt, bananas and carrots into a blender with a little water or, for picky pooches, chicken or beef broth (all-natural or low sodium versions are best).

## TRACKING

While not all dogs will take to scenting and tracking, it's a fun experiment to try! Go somewhere that your scent isn't already scattered—or use a strong and unique-scented piece of leather. Shuffle your feet or rub the leather in a distinct but straightforward pattern. Have someone else stay with your dog indoors or out of sight. Then, have your dog sniff you and your feet (or the leather) and lead him along the path you created.

## WET & WILD

Fill up a kiddie pool with water and encourage your dog to splash around. For even more fun, grab a hose and have your dog chase the stream of water in and out of the pool. Add some dog-safe shampoo to combine playtime and a bath!

## HIDDEN TREASURE?

Start with your dog in a SIT/STAY, allowing him to smell a treat, then hide it somewhere in the yard. Release your dog from the SIT and let him find it! Add a degree of difficulty by hiding a number of treats in advance. You can also try scatter-feeding your dog his food at mealtimes (throwing it all around the yard). Many dogs will spend hours enthusiastically hunting for every last bit.

## WALK THIS WAY

In addition to being great exercise for you and your dog, walking is an activity almost anyone can participate in and a great way to get to know your neighbours! Organise a monthly, weekly, or even daily walking group for your town. Pick different destinations or up the intensity by choosing portions to pick up the pace.

## BIKEJORING

There are a variety of devices and special harnesses that are specifically made for this sport—called “bikejoring”—that attach your dog safely to a bicycle. Never attempt this by just holding your dog's normal lead in your hand while steering. Start slowly, guiding your dog along at a steady pace, and keep rides short. Gradually build speed and distance. Check for canine bikejoring classes in your area.

