

HUNTERDON DOGS

WHERE DOGS ARE FAMILY AND LOVE IS UNLEASHED

NESTA'S LIST

5 INDOOR
"BOREDOM BUSTER"
ACTIVITIES FOR YOUR
PUP!

Breed of the Month
The Cocker Spaniel

Member Featured
Articles

1 THE POWERFUL
IMPACT OF SENIOR
DOGS

2 CREATING YOUR
PUPPY'S RICH
ECOSYSTEM

Winter Guide

10 ideas to help you
prepare your pup for
winter!

CONTENTS

**20**

CAN MY DOG EAT THAT?

CHECK OUT FRUITS THAT ARE GOOD AND BAD FOR YOUR PUP!

**14**

THE POWERFUL IMPACT OF SENIOR DOGS

In this article, Ari pays tribute to Honeybee and Maximus, two senior dogs who impacted her life, and shares her experience, advice, and tips for anyone wondering if adopting a senior dog is for them!

**24**

CREATING YOUR PUPPY'S RICH ECOSYSTEM

In this article, Heesun dives into all the important aspects of Puppy Socialization that you might not be aware of. Raising a confident puppy requires a collaborative effort from the whole community.

THE ESSENTIALS

02 EDITOR'S NOTE

Find out what to expect in this issue and read a little note from our Editor in Chief, Nesta.

04 WALL OF FAME

View this month's top dog images from our Hunterdon Dogs Facebook community!

09 NESTA'S LIST -BOREDOM BUSTERS

Check out this list of Nesta's favorite 5 Boredom busters when pups are stuck inside during the winter.

40 JANUARY'S ESSENTIAL GUIDE

PREPARING YOUR POOCH FOR WINTER

31 TOP CONTIBUTORS

Thank you to the amazing community members of Hunterdon Dogs. Check out the top ten contributors this month

34 BREED OF THE MONTH

This month is featuring the Cocker Spaniel. Find out fun facts about this pup and if this is a perfect breed for you!

45 5 RELATABLE MOMENTS EVERY DOG LOVER CAN APPRECIATE

We have all experienced moments that our pups have made us laugh. Here are 5 common antics that make our pups laugh out loud.

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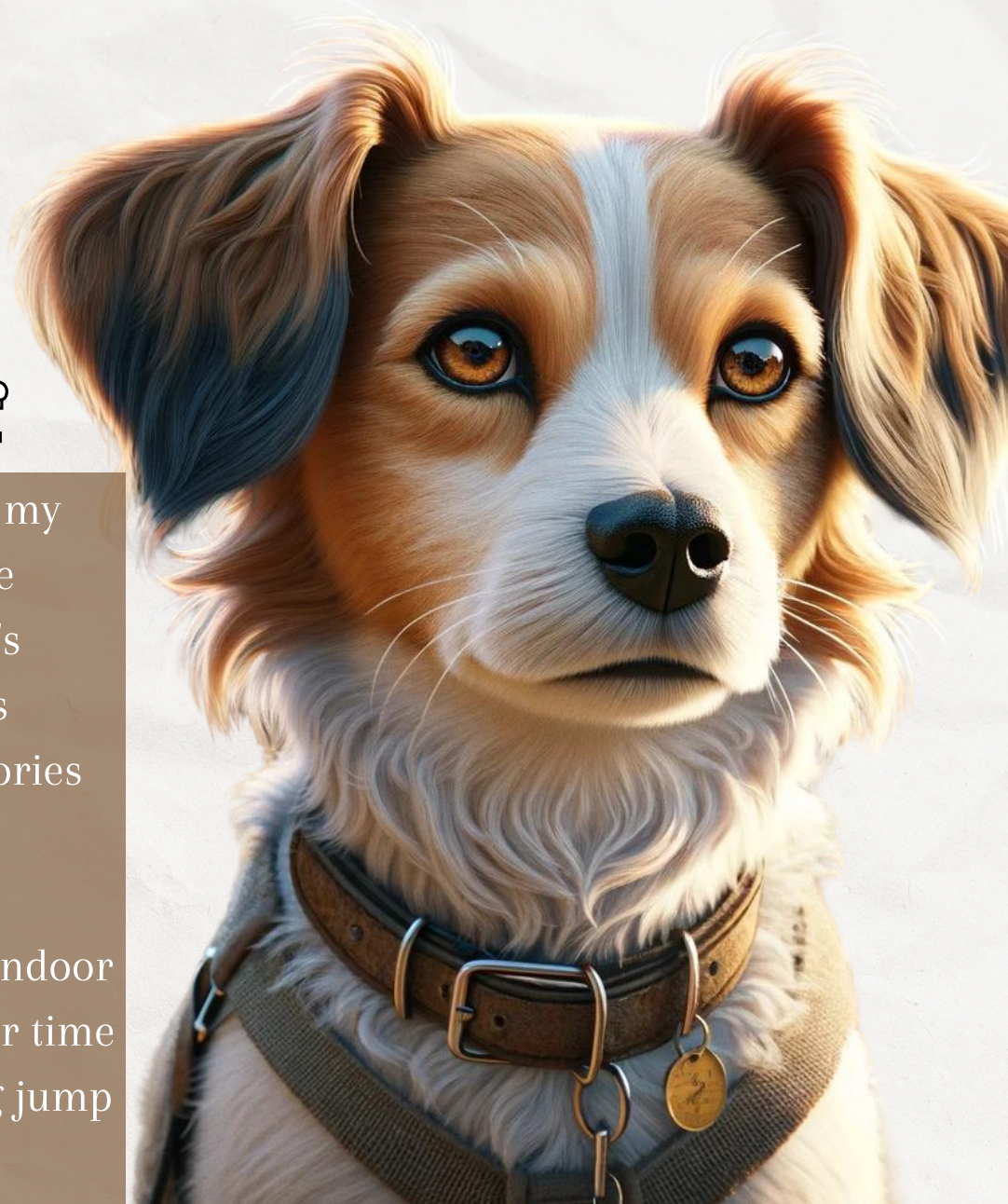
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Nesta

Editor-in-Chief



Nesta here again, wagging my tail with glee to share some exciting news! This month's edition of our magazine is packed to the brim with stories

Yours truly, Nesta, will be sharing my top 5 favorite indoor boredom busters for winter time dullards to help your dog jump for joy.

Welcome to the January 2024 issue of our magazine! This month, we have a collection of articles and Member featured articles that highlight the powerful impact of senior dogs and explore the powerful puppy ecosystem needed for success. We also provide "Boredom Buster" activities for your pup during the winter and a winter guide to help you prepare your furry friend for the season. Join our Hunterdon Dogs Facebook community for engaging discussions, photo fun, and valuable advice from our neighbors and don't forget to subscribe to the magazine FOR FREE so you never miss an issue!

With wags and woofs,



Nesta

HUNTERDON DOGS



Hunter n Dogs

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WALL OF FAME

JANUARY 2024



January Hunterdon Dogs

WALL OF FAME

A few top pup photos from our community this month!



January Hunterdon Dogs

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January Hunterdon Dogs

WALL OF FAME





FUN FACT:

Just like in humans, regular exercise can significantly improve a dog's mental health. Physical activity helps reduce symptoms of depression and anxiety in dogs. It stimulates their minds, prevents boredom, and can reduce destructive behaviors caused by excess energy or anxiety.

NESTA'S LIST



FIVE FAVORITE INDOOR “BOREDOM BUSTERS”

Winter doesn't have to be a dull season for your furry friend. As the editor-in-chief of Hunterdon Dogs, I'm excited to share **five enjoyable indoor activities** that will not only keep your dog entertained but also foster an even deeper bond between you and your beloved pet.

NESTA'S LIST

BOREDOM BUSTERS



As the winter months roll in, bringing colder temperatures and shorter days, our beloved canine companions often find themselves spending more time indoors than they would during the warmer seasons. While some dogs may thoroughly enjoy the respite from outdoor activities, others might start showing signs of boredom or restlessness due to the lack of physical and mental stimulation. Here are five engaging indoor activities that will not only effectively bust boredom but also foster a stronger bond between you and your pup. These activities are designed to keep your canine companion entertained, physically active, mentally stimulated, and above all, happy during the winter months when venturing outdoors may not always be feasible. So without further ado, let's dive into the exciting world of indoor doggy enrichment!



SCENT WORK GAMES

Activity Description: Harness the power of your dog's beloved toys or treats and expertly conceal them under cups or in different rooms. Empower your dog to confidently utilize their exceptional sense of smell to effortlessly sniff out the hidden treasures. This engaging activity serves as a confident introduction to the world of more advanced scent work training.

Benefits: Scent work games leverage your dog's natural smelling abilities, providing mental stimulation and a sense of purpose. Owners enjoy watching their dogs' detective skills in action and can learn a lot about their dog's sensory strengths.

2 DOGGY DANCE PARTY

Activity Description: Put on some lively music and encourage your dog to dance with you. Use treats to guide them into movements like twirling, jumping, or weaving through your legs. Embrace the undeniable link between music and movement as you exude confidence and inspire your dog to dance harmoniously with you.

Benefits: A doggy dance party is a delightful way to bond and get some exercise. It boosts mood and energy levels for both dogs and owners. Plus, it's a wonderful opportunity to capture some heartwarming and funny moments.



3 INDOOR AGILITY TRAINING

Activity Description: Set up a makeshift agility course using household items like chairs for weaving, cushions for jumping over, and blankets for tunnels. This can create an entertaining and challenging course that promotes physical movement, coordination, and flexibility.



Benefits: Agility training enhances your dog's physical fitness and agility. It also strengthens your communication and improves obedience. For owners, it's an excellent way to stay active indoors and deepen your connection with your pet through teamwork.



4 INTERACTIVE PUZZLE GAMES

Activity Description: Puzzle games for dogs come in various forms, such as treat-dispensing toys, sliders, and hidden compartment games. These games require your dog to use their problem-solving skills to access treats.

Benefits: These games challenge your dog's mind, reducing boredom and promoting mental stimulation. For owners, it's a joy to watch your dog's problem-solving skills in action and can provide insights into their intelligence and temperament.



TUG-OF-WAR (WITH RULES)

Activity Description: Engage in a game of tug-of-war using a sturdy rope or dog toy. Ensure to teach your dog 'release' commands to maintain control over the game. By engaging in this activity, you can strengthen the bond between you and your dog while also providing mental and physical stimulation.



Benefits: Tug-of-war is a great physical exercise and can be a healthy display of power dynamics when done with rules. It strengthens your dog's teeth and muscles and can be a stress reliever. For owners, it's a way to physically interact with your pet and reinforce training commands in a fun setting.



FUN FACT:

Just like humans, a good night's sleep strengthens a dog's immune system. Well-rested dogs are better equipped to fight off infections and maintain overall health. Proper sleep is essential for a robust immune response.

A close-up photograph of a woman with brown hair, smiling warmly at the camera. She is holding a small, light-colored dog with floppy ears, which is looking directly at the camera. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

FEATURED ARTICLE

S E N I O R
DOGS

In this article, Ari pays tribute to Honeybee and Maximus, two senior dogs who impacted her life, and shares her experience, advice, and tips for anyone wondering if adopting a senior dog is for them!

A TRIBUTE TO HONEYBEE AND MAXIMUS BY

ARI FRIEDMAN

The Powerful Impact of Senior Dogs



THE POWERFUL IMPACT OF SENIOR DOGS

A TRIBUTE TO HONEYBEE AND MAXIMUS

By Ari Friedman

When you hear the word "senior," what comes to mind? Perhaps words like "old," "short-lived," or "high-maintenance," suggesting big medical expenses and substantial owner commitment. However, as someone who has owned and cherished two senior dogs, I associate this term with joy, reward, blessings, and an amazing opportunity. It's true that senior dogs may bring more medical costs due to their age, but the benefits far outweigh the costs in my opinion.

Initially, I harbored similar reservations, believing that a younger dog would provide more fun and fewer challenges. But the decision to adopt a senior dog revealed an unexpected depth of love and fulfillment, transforming my perspective on what it means to bring an older dog into your life.



DID YOU KNOW?

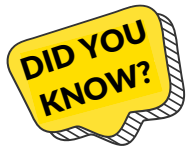
Personality on Display

With a senior dog, their personality is already developed and on full display. You'll know if they're a gentle giant, a lazy lounger, or a dignified dignitary, making it easier to find a dog that fits your lifestyle and preferences.

My Personal Journey with Senior Dogs

My partner, Andy Cohen, and I adopted Honey Bee, a red, smooth-coated dachshund, at age twelve from a local rescue here in New Jersey in 2016. Then, in 2021, Maximus, a black and tan smooth-coated dachshund, joined our family at

the ripe old age of fifteen from a rescue in Ohio.



Aging Process Varies by Breed: Larger dog breeds tend to age more quickly than smaller breeds. A Great Dane might be considered senior by 5-6 years old, while a Chihuahua might not enter its senior years until 10-11 years.

Honey Bee Ups and Downs

We are experienced in getting dogs to lose weight, and both these dachshunds had up to ten pounds to shed.

Honey Bee, a once severely obese dog from a foster home in Somerville, New Jersey, was tipping the scales at an alarming 26 pounds - nearly 10 pounds over her ideal weight of 15 or 16 pounds. However, after coming to us, we were able to help her slim down to a healthy weight, enhancing her mobility. Losing the extra weight made it easier for her to go up and down the porch stairs on her own and move around more comfortably.

We also discovered that she didn't like being confined in a crate, which led to some back issues (common for dachshunds) whenever she was inside with the door closed. We sought holistic treatments for her back issues, including supplements, injections, and acupuncture, which cost us over \$700. Thankfully, after a few months, her back improved and the issue didn't reoccur.

About four years later, we noticed that Honey Bee was urinating and drinking more frequently, which is often a sign of a urinary



tract infection according to vets.

However, it turned out to be Cushing's disease. One of the most noticeable symptoms was her pot belly appearance. Cushing's disease is considered an "annoying disease" and requires managing symptoms. It took several tests and medication monitoring to diagnose the disease and ensure the medication was effective. The expenses for diagnostics, ultrasounds, and the ACTH test totaled over \$2000. The monthly medication cost us approximately \$100 every five or six weeks. Once the medication dosage was determined and working well, annual follow-ups could be done if no symptoms occurred.

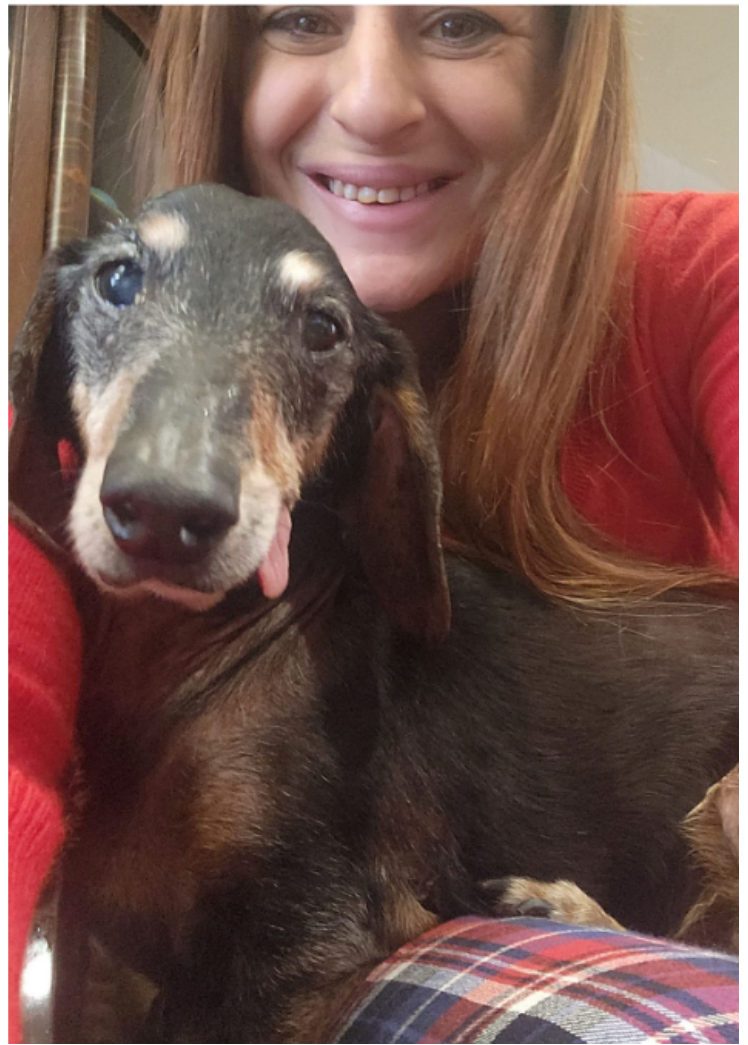
Honey Bee, our beloved dog, was affectionate and playful. Sometimes she would curl her lip when she wanted to be left alone, which we called "wicked witch." She was generally calm and enjoyed sitting on our lap and giving us gentle kisses. On July 4, 2023, after six and a half years, we had to say goodbye to her due to her loss of appetite and the results of an ultrasound indicating possible cancer in her spleen and kidney.

Maximus Ups and Downs

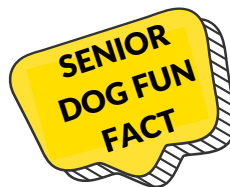
Regarding Maximus, many asked, "Why would you take in a fifteen-year-old dog? You won't have much time with him." Max lived in a home where he was fed table scraps, was severely overweight, and received no medical care whatsoever. It was a perfect opportunity to take him under our wing. He weighed a solid 26 lbs upon arrival, and with our dedication, in less than two months, he reached his ideal weight of 18 lbs. As he shed pounds, he playfully ran in the grass, attended weekly community dog walks, and danced on his back while making noises that seemed to come from a prehistoric era. This dog could make you laugh, and when he arrived at our New Jersey home, he acted as if he had lived here his entire life, marching around the house perimeter and yard as if he already knew it.

The medical care he needed turned out to be extensive and expensive, but we were devoted and determined to help this little guy and give it everything we had. He arrived with poor skin health and balding in many areas where the fur was unlikely to grow back due to long untreated thyroid disease or Cushing's disease. After regular vet checks and a visit to a dermatologist, shampooing three times a week with medicated shampoo was the best solution, combined with an allergy shot.

As for other health issues that occurred during the just over two years he spent with us: First, his thyroid levels were off, so he was put on medication for that. After a year and a half, he started drinking and urinating frequently and showed signs of aggression around food. Due to these symptoms, he was tested for Cushing's disease and then put on medication. In addition to being treated for both diseases, Maximus also had severe breath issues that seemed to be more deep-rooted. After a dental appointment with the local vet, it was determined that he had a tooth that had decayed and rotted into the root of his mouth and was severely infected.



It was also the tooth holding his jaw together. The tooth was removed to address the infection, but this resulted in a broken jaw that our vet took care of; he stitched him up okay afterward with no more infection in his mouth. After his dental work, since his bottom tooth was missing, his tongue hung out of the side of his mouth, making him an absolute character in appearance.



They Can Learn New Tricks: Contrary to the old adage, senior dogs can't learn new things. While they might be slower learners compared to younger dogs, they can still enjoy and benefit from mental stimulation and learning new commands or tricks.

His last four and a half months with us were spent working with a cardiologist to treat his congestive heart failure when he started coughing out of the blue. Sadly, after many medications and monitoring, the disease took him from us. The expenses exceeded \$4,000 for X-rays, echocardiograms, heart medication, and check-ups. Congestive heart failure does not always take a dog this quickly, but we were not fortunate enough to get another year or two with him. He was also seventeen at the time.


Not everyone will choose all the paths we took, but this guy deserved all of it. I would not change any of the decisions made for him.

No matter all the health issues and expenses, the joy these two brought to our family is indescribable. The heartache is real, and the loss hurts immensely. It is the same for every pet we lose. We always want more time with them. I describe loss as something that will never get easier, but I know that healing does.

The reward I have received for providing an amazing life for these two dogs is one you will know if you experience it and choose to give a senior dog a chance. May your heart be open, kind, and loving. Thank you for allowing me to share this with you. In loving memory of my beloved Honey Bee and Maximus, aka Maxisaurus!

Adopting a senior dog is a noble and rewarding decision that comes with specific responsibilities that require an adopter's full dedication, a well-thought-out plan, and a strong commitment to ensure the well-being of the dog in its later years.

If you are considering adopting a senior dog, read this checklist to help you think through some of the things you want to consider before taking the leap.



Senior Dogs Need **Dedication, a Plan, and Commitment!**

Dedication

- **Health Care Needs:** Older dogs may have more health issues and require frequent veterinary care, which necessitates a dedicated caregiver.
- **Routine:** Senior dogs benefit from a stable and consistent routine, which requires an owner's steadfast attention.
- **Special Accommodations:** As dogs age, they may need special accommodations, like orthopedic beds or assistance with mobility, which a dedicated owner must provide.

A Plan

- **Financial Preparedness:** A plan should include financial considerations for potential medical treatments and special diets.
- **Emergency Situations:** Having a plan for emergencies ensures that the dog receives immediate care when needed.
- **End-of-Life Care:** It's important to plan for the dog's end-of-life care, making decisions about palliative care and humane euthanasia when the time comes.

Commitment

- **Time Investment:** Senior dogs can require more time for care, companionship, and comfort, especially as they adjust to a new home.
- **Emotional Attachment:** Committing to an older dog means forming an emotional bond during their golden years, providing them with love and comfort.
- **Quality of Life:** Owners must be committed to maintaining the dog's quality of life, even as their needs change with age.

NEVER MISS AN ISSUE!

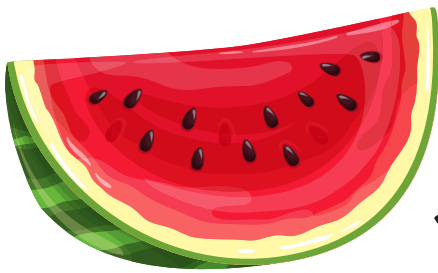


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CAN MY DOG
EAT THAT?

**A few “fruity”
thoughts...**



YES!

Watermelon

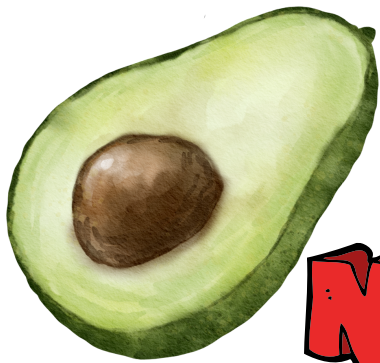
Watermelon is safe and healthy for dogs when given in moderation and prepared correctly. It keeps them hydrated, provides low calories, and contains beneficial nutrients like vitamins A, B6, and C, and potassium. The small amount of dietary fiber aids digestion. However, it's important to remove the seeds and rind to prevent intestinal blockage or gastrointestinal upset. Watermelon should be given in moderation to avoid digestive issues. Some dogs may be allergic or sensitive to watermelon, so introduce it slowly. Overall, watermelon can be a refreshing and nutritious treat for dogs when given safely.



YES!

Blueberries

Blueberries are safe and healthy for dogs. They are packed with antioxidants, low in calories, high in fiber, and rich in vitamins and minerals. Blueberries can support overall health, aid in digestion, promote brain and heart health, and contribute to a healthy weight. When feeding blueberries to your dog, remember to give them in moderation, avoid added sugars, be mindful of potential choking hazards for small dogs, and introduce them slowly into the diet. Overall, blueberries are a nutritious and tasty treat for dogs and can be a great addition to their diet.



No!

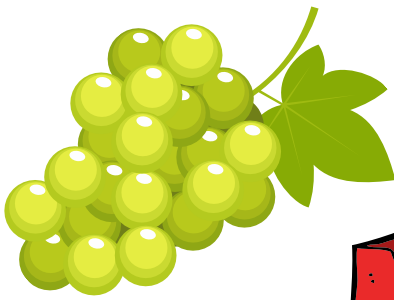
Avocado

Remember!

When introducing treats or new foods, it's important to start with a small amount to avoid the possibility of an upset stomach. For most dogs, a few berries or a small slice of about an inch or two is a good starting point.

Avocado Dangers for Dogs Avocados can harm dogs due to:

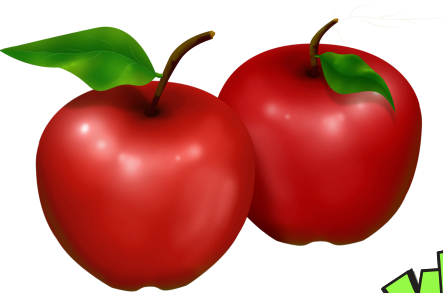
- **Persin:** Avocados contain persin, which can be toxic to dogs in large amounts. It's best to avoid feeding avocados to dogs.
- **Choking and Blockage:** The avocado pit can cause choking and blockage, especially for smaller breeds.
- **High Fat Content:** Avocados are high in fat, which can upset a dog's gastrointestinal system and contribute to conditions like pancreatitis.
- **Gastrointestinal Irritation:** Some dogs may have aversion to avocados, resulting in vomiting or diarrhea. To keep dogs safe, it's advisable to keep avocados away from them. If your dog ingests avocado, contact a veterinarian. It's generally safer to choose other fruits and vegetables as treats.



Grapes

No!

Grapes and raisins are highly toxic to dogs and can cause acute kidney failure, a condition that can be fatal. The toxicity varies widely between individual dogs, making any quantity potentially dangerous. Symptoms of grape or raisin toxicity include vomiting, diarrhea, lethargy, and signs of kidney failure like decreased urination. These symptoms can appear rapidly, often within a few hours of ingestion. There's no known safe amount and no antidote for this toxicity. Treatment focuses on decontamination and supportive care. Immediate veterinary attention is crucial if a dog ingests grapes or raisins.

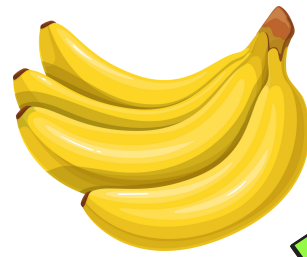


Apples

YES!

Apples are a safe and healthy treat for dogs, offering several benefits:

- **Nutrients:** Rich in vitamins A and C, and fiber, supporting skin, muscle, nerve health, and the immune system.
- **Dental Health:** Chewing apples can help clean teeth and freshen breath.
- **Low in Protein and Fat:** Suitable for older dogs or those with dietary restrictions.



YES!

Bananas

Bananas are safe for dogs in moderation, offering several health benefits:

- **Nutrients:** Rich in potassium, vitamin C, vitamin B6, and manganese, beneficial for heart, kidney, brain health, and bone growth.
- **Low Cholesterol and Sodium:** Healthier than many commercial treats, suitable for dogs with certain health conditions.
- **High in Fiber:** Good for digestion and can help regulate bowel movements.
- **Natural Sugars:** Provide a quick energy source, ideal for active dogs.

However, feed bananas sparingly due to their high sugar content, and always remove the peel to prevent digestion issues. Introduce gradually to check for any adverse reactions.

Remember!

Always consult your veterinarian when trying a new food or treat!

Precautions:

- **Remove Seeds and Core:** Seeds contain cyanide and can be toxic, while the core poses a choking hazard.
- **Moderation:** Given their sugar content, apples should be fed in moderation, especially for diabetic or overweight dogs.
- **Preparation:** Wash and peel apples to remove pesticides and reduce digestive issues.



FUN FACT:

Dogs learn from each other. Exposure to different play styles, behaviors, and temperaments helps dogs become more adaptable and flexible. They can pick up positive behaviors and tricks from their canine companions.

FEATURE ARTICLE

Hunterdon Dogs
Member **Heesun
Andes**

In this article, Heesun dives into all the important aspects of Puppy Socialization that you might not be aware of. We know that the checklist for ensuring proper socialization can sometimes feel overwhelming, but don't worry, you're not alone in this! Raising a confident puppy requires a collaborative effort from the whole community. So let's work together and make sure your puppy gets all the socialization they need!

CREATING YOUR PUPPY'S RICH ECOSYSTEM

The Importance of Good
Puppy Socialization and
Husbandry Education





The Importance of Good Puppy Socialization and Husbandry Education: Creating Your Puppy's Rich Ecosystem

By Heesun Andes

Welcoming a new puppy into your home is an exciting experience for everyone involved. It represents a commitment to nurturing and shaping a new life. As responsible dog owners, we are often familiar with the usual guidelines for puppy socialization - introducing them to different stimuli, strangers, children, other pets, unfamiliar sounds, surfaces, and new experiences. **However, there is one aspect that is sometimes overlooked or undervalued:** understanding and adapting to your puppy's unique developmental stages. These stages determine the most appropriate methods of socialization for their current phase of growth

Heesun Andes

Heesun Andes, Founder of Pet Karma Dog Training LLC in Clinton, NJ, began her career in dog behavior under the guidance of Dr. Ian Dunbar and Laura Monaco Torelli. She worked with veterinary hospitals in New Jersey, including All Pets Vet Hospital and Hunterdon Hills Animal Hospital. Heesun started Pet Karma Dog Training LLC to educate pet owners about the importance of puppy socialization.

Heesun and her team created Puppy Kindergarten classes at veterinary hospitals, offering a curriculum that includes AKC Tricks, Puppy Parkour, and K9 Nosework.

Currently, Heesun and the Pet Karma Team teach industry leaders worldwide how to develop ethical and successful dog training businesses and group class curriculum for puppies.

and help in establishing the necessary relationships to build your support network.

Consider this scenario: if your puppy enters a fear stage and suddenly becomes afraid of nail trims, it is crucial that everyone in your network is informed. Failure to do so may result in a groomer or veterinarian unwittingly creating lasting negative associations not only with nail trims but also with paw handling and the entire vet or grooming environment.

Another example could be when your dog walker does not align with your training methods and allows your puppy to approach other dogs or people during walks, or fails to maintain an appropriate distance from stimulating situations. This unintentionally teaches the puppy to pull and react towards stimuli, potentially leading to leash reactivity.

Can you see why it's so important to create an aligned ecosystem and communicate clearly with them? Making your objectives explicit to every team member and collaborating with a trainer to establish a cohesive approach can significantly enhance the long-term effectiveness of your puppy husbandry efforts.

What You May Not Have Known about Puppy Socialization and Puppy Play

Socializing your puppy is like giving them a VIP pass to the world! As they grow into their developmental stages, your priorities shift notably between their initial fear period, typically between 8-12 weeks, and the subsequent several fear periods that can occur from 4-18 months of age.

Remember:

It is crucial to inform your "puppy" network of any changes in behavior or personality.

Make sure anyone who works with your puppy is aligned with your training methods.



During the 8-12 week phase, many puppies undergo their first fear stage. Adjusting to a new environment requires a sensitive touch as they leave behind their familiar surroundings. **How they are introduced to various stimuli—novel sights, sounds, smells, people, wildlife, environments, surfaces, equipment, and other puppies—is of utmost importance during this period.**

Between 8-14 weeks, organizing supervised off-leash puppy play proves highly advantageous. It fosters social skills, refines bite inhibition, and makes them comfortable in new environments. However, many puppies are experiencing a fear period and especially during the adolescent stage (4-18 months), they enter more sensitive fear phases. At this point, it's not solely about puppy play; it's about creating a secure environment away from overwhelming stimuli. It's about nurturing your adolescent dog's confidence by presenting choices, setting clear boundaries, and teaching them to concentrate in distracting environments.

Although supervised puppy play remains valuable, it should occur in controlled environments where puppies have established connections. As puppies transition into adolescents and young adults, they not only test limits but also get physically stronger, requiring closer supervision to prevent accidental injury.



Why is Puppy Socialization Essential?

Behavioral Development: Socialization plays a pivotal role in shaping a puppy's behavior and how they view the world at large. Effective socialization helps puppies become comfortable and confident in different surroundings, reducing the likelihood of fear-based behaviors, anxiety, and aggression as they grow older. A well-socialized puppy is more adaptable and less likely to develop behavioral issues in unfamiliar situations.

Building Confidence: Introducing a puppy to novel sounds, sights, smells, and experiences helps build their confidence. Early positive encounters with people, other animals, and environments instill a sense of security and ease, enabling them to navigate the world with assurance. This is most impressionable from 7-12 weeks of age.

Preventing Fear and Anxiety: Dogs that lack proper socialization may become fearful or anxious in unfamiliar situations. This fear can lead to aggression or withdrawal, impacting their ability to interact positively with other dogs, people, or new environments. Just remember, even if you adopt your puppy later, it is never too late to boost your pups confidence!



How to Socialize Your Puppy Effectively

Get an Early Start: Collaborate with a professional specializing in puppy and adolescent stages to initiate socialization from as early as 8 weeks when your puppy joins your home. By 12 weeks, the window for socializing with strangers begins to close, so early socialization is time-sensitive. Just keep in mind, many puppies go through a fear stage from 7-12 weeks, so how people and experiences are introduced is very important. If you've adopted a puppy at 6 months, don't give up on understanding your pup's timeline which remains vital to optimize their growth and learning. They may have to start with private lessons, but many can transition into a group setting as well.

During the 8-16 week stage, the focus for pet guardians involves acclimating the pup to family life: potty training, independence, bite inhibition, and domestic manners.

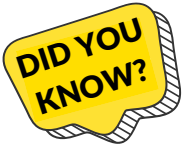
Understanding your puppy's fear stages, body language, and the impact of proximity on confidence building is crucial. Collaborating with professionals can help create a diverse network for your puppy by engaging key community figures. Many of us have a tendency to try to go at it alone (I missed out on a lot because of this when Trinity was a puppy), but it's so much easier with a supportive community.

Positive Exposure: Make interactions positive and rewarding by using high value reinforcers such as treats, praise, real life rewards like exploration and toys to associate new experiences positively, helping your puppy

relate unfamiliar things to pleasant feelings and enrichment.

Monitor Reactions: Observe your puppy's reactions closely. If signs of fear or stress appear, such as excessive yawning, whale eye, trembling, panting, or avoidance (eg. Puppy keeps trying to move away or hide from children), calmly remove them from the situation and reintroduce later in a more gradual manner.

Gradual Exposure: Introduce new experiences gradually and under controlled circumstances. For instance, start with short, calm car rides, gradually extending the duration as your puppy becomes more comfortable.



For clients local to Hunterdon County, Pet Karma still runs their signature Puppy Kindergarten every Wednesday in Clinton, NJ, and Heesun also offers private lessons. In 2024, Heesun will be partnering with Dr. Charlie of Stockton Veterinary Hospital and working on several conservation projects in 2024-2025 with the Karen Pryor Academy.

Tips for Creating a Supportive Ecosystem for Your Puppy: **Building Your Team**

- **Research the breeder or shelter where your puppy originated,** learning about their upbringing, handling and gentling, potty training, and the environment provided.
- **Find a fear-free local veterinarian willing to collaborate with your trainer and other pet care providers.** Effective communication about your puppy's needs is essential. Emails and office hours are a great way to communicate. Cc your entire team in the email.
- **Inquire within your community about fear-free groomers using positive reinforcement methods.** Evaluate the grooming environment for noise levels and traffic. Consider a mobile groomer for a quieter, controlled setting.
- **Evaluate pet sitters, daycare facilities, and boarding centers** for their approach to puppy socialization, fear stages, and preventive measures against overstimulation.
- **Choose a trainer or behavior consultant local to you who specializes in puppy socialization,** focusing on those using science-based positive reinforcement methods, and avoiding aversive, balanced, or fear-based training techniques.

For more tips on Puppy Socialization, training, and creating your ecosystem, you can contact Heesun directly.

Email: petkarma7@gmail.com for your free consult.



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HUNTERDON DOGS COMMUNITY

TOP CONTRIBUTORS

NOVEMBER



TOP CONTRIBUTORS IN NOVEMBER

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8 Sue Demont

9 Kristin Joy

10 Jean Stephanie



FUN FACT:

Cocker Spaniels were originally bred for hunting game, specifically birds. Their name 'Cocker' derives from their use in hunting woodcock, a type of game bird, in England.



THE COCKER SPANIEL

The Cocker Spaniel, a breed synonymous with boundless energy, expressive eyes, and luxurious fur, has captured the hearts of dog enthusiasts worldwide. Known for its amiable nature and elegant appearance, the Cocker Spaniel is more than just a pretty face. This article delves into the breed's history, characteristics, and care needs, making it a comprehensive guide for potential owners and enthusiasts alike.



Happy and Healthy: The Essential Cocker Spaniel Lifestyle

Regular Exercise is Key: Cocker Spaniels have a natural zest for life, and regular exercise is crucial in keeping them fit and content. Daily walks, interactive play sessions, and even structured activities like agility or fetch can greatly contribute to their physical and mental well-being. They're not just about burning off energy; these activities help maintain healthy weight and prevent boredom.

Important Reminder:

Always be mindful of the weather conditions. Cocker Spaniels can overheat in hot weather or get chilled in the cold due to their sensitive coats. Adjust exercise routines accordingly to keep them comfortable and safe.

Grooming Goes Beyond Beauty: Those luxurious coats and floppy ears are more than just eye-catching; they require consistent care. Regular grooming, including brushing, bathing, and professional trims, are essential in preventing matting and skin issues. Their long ears also need frequent cleaning to prevent infections.

Diet and Nutrition Matter: Providing your Cocker Spaniel with a balanced, nutritious diet is vital. These dogs can have a tendency to gain weight if not fed properly. Ensure that their diet is appropriate for their age, size, and activity level, and avoid overfeeding. Fresh water should always be available.

Important Reminder:

Never underestimate the importance of dental care. Regular brushing of your Cocker Spaniel's teeth can prevent dental diseases, which are common in the breed. This not only keeps their pearly whites shining but also contributes to their overall health.



Is a Cocker Spaniel Your Perfect Match?

Cocker Spaniels are undeniably one of the most endearing breeds, often referred to as the teddy bears of the dog world. They exude a unique blend of friendliness, affection, and a keen desire to please that makes them ideal companions. If you're surrounded by kids, caring for grandparents, or seeking a loyal companion for yourself, a Cocker Spaniel could fit perfectly into your life, matching your steps and filling your days with joy and love.

A COCKER SPANIEL IS FOR YOU IF...

→ You Love a Dog with a Friendly Personality

If you're looking for a dog that will greet you with a wagging tail and eyes full of affection, a Cocker Spaniel is a great choice. Their friendly disposition means they generally get along well with everyone, including children, other pets, and visitors.

→ You Have Time and Patience for Training

While Cocker Spaniels are intelligent and generally eager to please, they do best with consistent, positive reinforcement training. If you're willing to invest the time in training and enjoy the process of teaching and bonding with your dog, you'll find a Cocker Spaniel to be a responsive and capable learner.

→ You're Ready for a Commitment to Grooming

A key aspect of owning a Cocker Spaniel is embracing their grooming needs. Their beautiful coats require regular brushing, and they'll need professional grooming sessions to keep their fur mat-free and their skin healthy. If you enjoy or are willing to learn the art of dog grooming, a Cocker Spaniel can be a rewarding choice.

→ You Want a Companion for Various Activities

Cocker Spaniels are versatile and adapt well to different lifestyles. They're happy to join you for a hike, play fetch in the yard, or cuddle on the couch. If you want a dog that can be both active and relaxed, fitting into your routine seamlessly, this breed could be the one for you.

→ You Value a Deep Emotional Connection

Cocker Spaniels are known for forming strong emotional bonds with their owners. They're sensitive, empathetic, and often in tune with their owner's feelings. If you're looking for a dog that is emotionally responsive and makes a deeply connected companion, a Cocker Spaniel is an excellent choice.



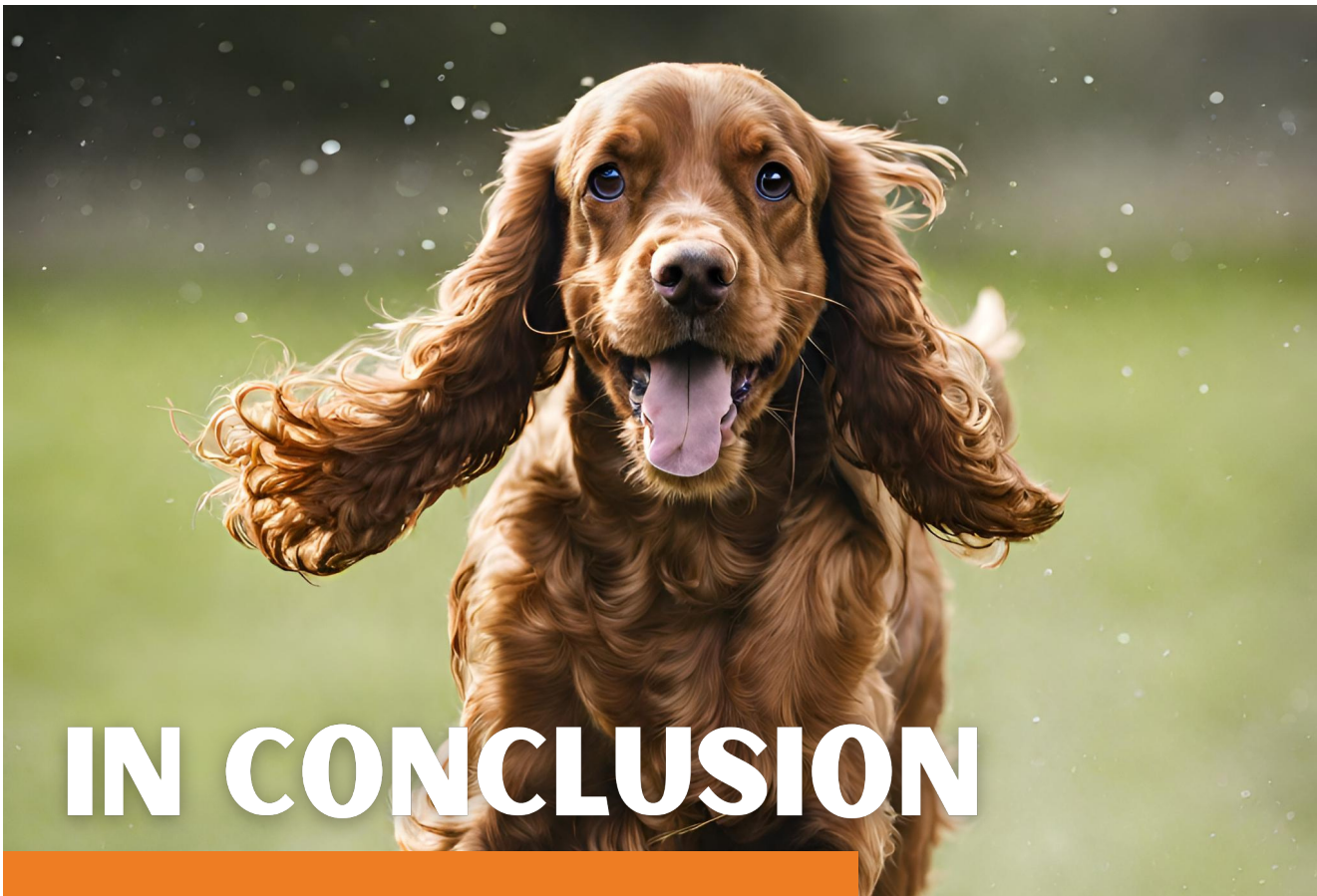
American Vs. English: The Tale of Two Cocker Spaniels

The American Cocker Spaniel: The American Beauty

1. **Refined and Graceful:** The American Cocker Spaniel is smaller with a more refined appearance, known for its beautiful, flowing coat and shorter muzzle. This breed was developed to be slightly more suited to being a household pet while retaining some of its hunting instincts.
2. **Celebrity Status:** Here's a fun fact – the American Cocker Spaniel soared in popularity in the 1950s, partly due to the Disney movie "Lady and the Tramp". Lady, the charming and elegant lead character, is an American Cocker Spaniel, showcasing the breed's endearing qualities.
3. **A Show Ring Star:** The American Cocker Spaniel is known for its success in dog shows. Its luxurious coat and poised demeanor make it a frequent winner in the show ring.

The English Cocker Spaniel: The British Cousin

1. **More Robust and Rugged:** The English Cocker Spaniel is generally larger and sturdier than its American counterpart. It boasts a stronger build, which was a trait selectively bred for efficiency in hunting and navigating the rough British countryside.
2. **Diverse in Colors:** One fun fact is that English Cockers come in a wider variety of colors and patterns compared to the American breed. They can be found in solid colors, roans, and even with lovely ticking patterns.
3. **A Hunter at Heart:** Originally bred as a hunting dog, the English Cocker Spaniel has a keen sense of smell and is an expert at flushing and retrieving game. This trait makes them not just great companions but also skilled working dogs.



IN CONCLUSION

In the end, the Cocker Spaniel stands out as more than just a breed; it represents a heartwarming blend of joy, companionship, and beauty. Whether you're drawn to the English or American variety, these dogs bring their own special sparkle into your life. With their soulful eyes, merry tails, and affectionate natures, Cocker Spaniels have a unique way of becoming not just pets, but cherished family members. Their adaptability to various lifestyles and environments makes them suitable for a wide range of owners, from active individuals to families with children. The commitment to their care, from regular grooming to loving companionship, is rewarded tenfold with their unwavering loyalty and love. As you consider welcoming a Cocker Spaniel into your home, remember that this decision brings with it a journey of joy,

learning, and mutual growth. These dogs don't just require your care; they offer an opportunity to experience the world with a bit more joy and a lot more love. Whether it's a leisurely walk in the park, a playful afternoon, or a quiet evening at home, a Cocker Spaniel makes every moment a little brighter. If you're ready for a life enriched with wagging tails, soft cuddles, and loyal companionship, then the Cocker Spaniel might just be the perfect addition to your family.

Fun Breed Fact

Per the AKC breed standard, Cocker Spaniels stand 13.5 to 15.5 inches at the shoulder and weigh between 20 to 30 pounds for both males and females.



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WINTER **ESSENTIAL GUIDE**



**PREPARING
YOUR POOCH
FOR WINTER**

WINTER ESSENTIAL GUIDE

A golden retriever is sitting in a snowy field, looking towards the camera. The dog has a red collar. The background is a soft-focus snowy landscape.

PREPARING YOUR POOCH FOR WINTER

10 ideas to help you prepare your pup for winter!

As November ushers in crisp air and a hint of winter's impending embrace, it's time to ensure that your four-legged friend is ready for the seasonal shift. Winter brings its own set of challenges for our canine companions, from colder temperatures to potential hazards. Fear not, devoted dog lovers, for this essential guide is here to help you prepare your pooch for a cozy and safe winter wonderland.

1. Bundle Up, Pup!

Just as you reach for that extra layer when the temperature drops, your dog can benefit from a little extra insulation too.

Consider investing in a snug-fitting dog sweater or coat to keep your furry friend warm during chilly walks. Breeds with shorter coats or those less accustomed to colder weather, in particular, will appreciate the added warmth.

2. Paw Protection Matters

The cold pavement and icy sidewalks can take a toll on your dog's sensitive paws. Equip them with booties to shield their paws from freezing temperatures and potential irritants like salt or de-icing chemicals. Not only do booties provide protection, but they can also be a stylish winter accessory for your canine companion.

Fun Fact: When it's cold, dogs conserve energy by curling up in a ball – a clever way to minimize heat loss and maximize warmth.

WINTER ESSENTIAL GUIDE



3. Hydration Station

While it's crucial to stay hydrated in the summer, the importance of hydration often gets overlooked in the winter. The dry air and indoor heating can contribute to dehydration. Make sure your dog has constant access to fresh water, and consider adding a splash of warm water to their meals to keep them well-hydrated.

4. Winter Walk Safety

Shorter days and longer nights mean more walks in the dark. Stay visible and safe by attaching reflective gear to your dog's collar or investing in a light-up leash. This not only ensures their safety but also makes you both more visible to others during those early morning or late-night strolls.

5. Cozy Indoor Spaces:

Create a warm and inviting sanctuary for your pup inside. Set up a comfortable bed away from drafts, and consider adding extra blankets for them to snuggle in. Dogs, like us, appreciate a cozy spot to retreat to when the winter winds howl outside.

Not sure where to start when creating a cozy indoor space for your pup?

- 1 Choose a Warm and Draft-Free Location.
- 2 Provide a Cozy Bed or Blankets
- 3 Add Interactive Toys and Puzzle Feeders if you feel adventurous!

6. Watch Out for Frostbite

Certain dog breeds are more susceptible to frostbite, particularly those with shorter coats and exposed skin. Keep an eye on areas prone to frostbite, such as the tips of ears, tails, and paw pads. If your dog starts lifting their paws or shows signs of discomfort during walks, it's time to head back inside.

Something to Consider

Extremities like ears, paws, and the tip of the tail are more prone to frostbite in dogs, especially in certain breeds or those with short hair

WINTER ESSENTIAL GUIDE

7. Maintain a Healthy Diet

Winter is not the time for a diet overhaul, but it's essential to adjust portions based on your dog's activity level. Dogs tend to be less active in colder weather, so monitor their weight and adapt their diet accordingly to prevent winter weight gain.

8. Grooming is Key

Regular grooming is crucial during the winter months. A clean and well-brushed coat provides better insulation and helps prevent matting, which can harbor moisture and lead to discomfort. Don't forget to dry your dog thoroughly after outdoor adventures to prevent them from catching a chill.

9. Winter Health Check

Schedule a winter health check-up with your veterinarian. Discuss any specific concerns related to winter, such as joint health for older dogs or the appropriate diet for maintaining energy levels in colder weather. A proactive approach to your dog's health ensures they'll be ready to embrace the winter season with vigor.

10. Embrace Indoor Enrichment

Finally, recognize that winter might mean more time spent indoors. Keep your dog mentally stimulated with interactive toys, puzzle feeders, and engaging activities. A happy and occupied dog is less likely to succumb to winter blues.



Just Remember...

As you prepare your pooch for winter, remember that each dog is unique. Pay attention to their individual needs and preferences, and tailor your winter preparations accordingly. With a little extra care, your pup will be ready to frolic in the winter wonderland with you, ensuring that this season is filled with warmth, joy, and shared adventures.



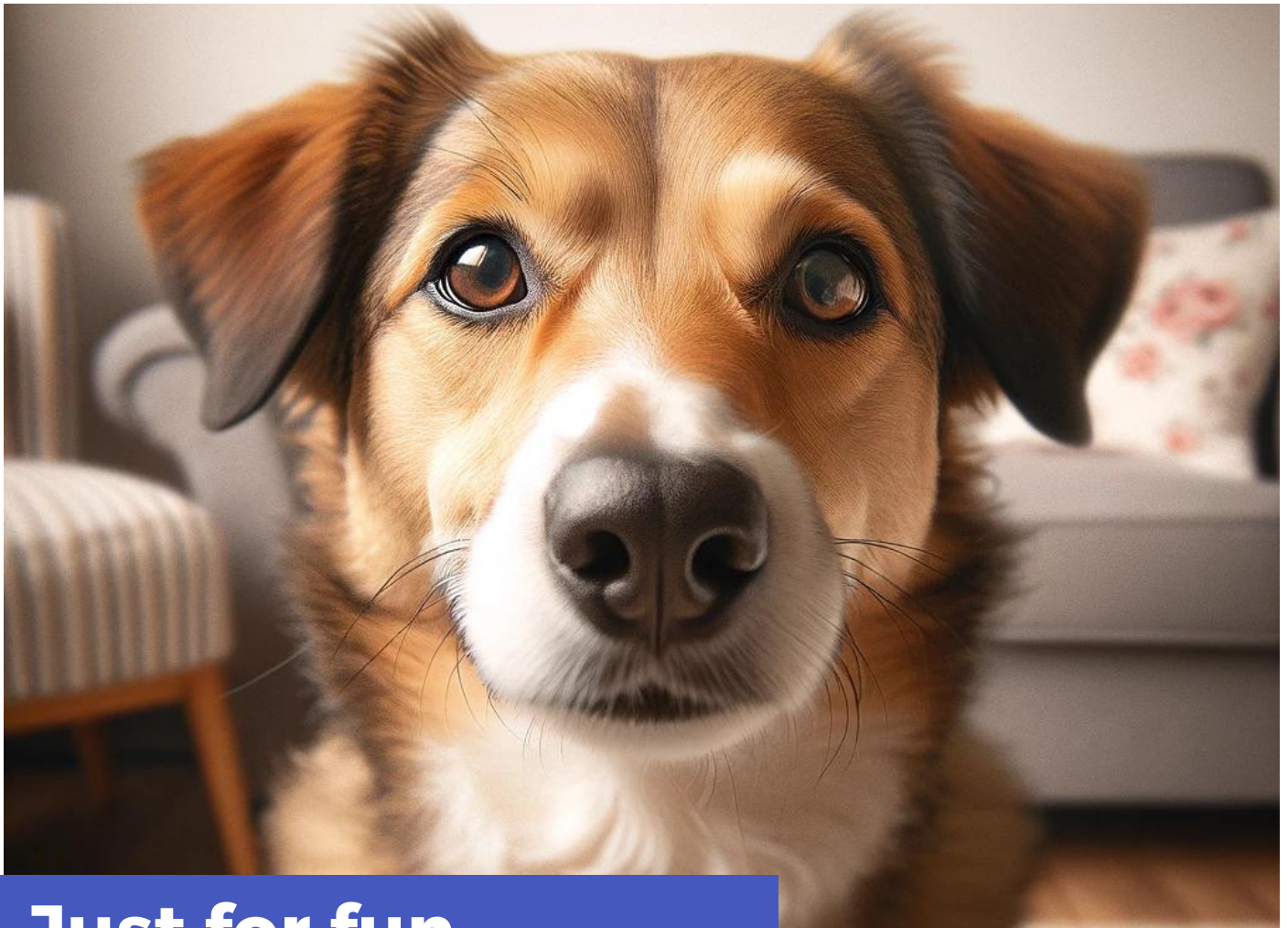
FUN FACT:

Dogs have an incredibly keen sense of smell. Your belongings carry your scent, which can be very comforting to your dog. Sleeping on items that smell like you can make them feel closer to you, especially when you're not around.

A close-up photograph of a young dog, possibly a Jack Russell Terrier, with brown and white fur. The dog is sitting and looking directly at the camera with large, dark eyes. Its ears are floppy and brown. The background is a plain, light gray.

Just for fun

**5 Relatable Moments
Every Dog Lover Can
Appreciate!**



Just for fun

Dogs, those delightful creatures with their endearing quirks and affectionate personalities, never fail to bring an abundance of laughter into our lives. It is truly remarkable how their mischievous behavior, such as their sneaky snack thievery, manages to tickle our funny bones and fill our hearts with joy. And let's not forget about those guilty faces they make when caught red-pawed in the act! These comical dog moments are simply irresistible and are guaranteed to leave any dog lover doubled over in laughter. So, let us fully embrace the sheer delight and humor that our furry friends bring, and allow their amusing antics to continue brightening our days with endless laughter and infectious smiles. After all, life is always better with a dog by your side, making every moment a comedy show worth cherishing.

FIVE RELATABLE MOMENTS

EVERY DOG LOVER CAN APPRECIATE!

Just For Fun



"The Sneaky Snack Thief"

We've all been there - you turn your back for a second, and your delicious snack mysteriously disappears from the coffee table. In this hilarious dog moment, we witness the cunning skills of a food-loving pooch who can snatch a treat with lightning speed. From stealthily swiping a sandwich to perfectly timing their jump to catch a falling chip, this canine culinary connoisseur will leave you in stitches and wondering if they ever consider auditioning for a magician's assistant.



"The Unlikely Pillow"

Dogs have an uncanny ability to find comfort in the most peculiar places. Picture this: you settle down on the couch to watch your favorite TV show, only to find your furry friend perched comfortably on your pillow, snoring away. This comical moment highlights the hilarious reality that dogs have no concept of personal space. They'll claim any soft surface as their own, be it your pillow, your favorite sweater, or even your laptop keyboard!



FIVE RELATABLE MOMENTS

EVERY DOG LOVER CAN APPRECIATE!

Just For Fun



"The Zoomies"

Ah, the infamous zoomies! Every dog owner knows the sheer joy of witnessing their pup go into turbo mode, sprinting around the house like a wild tornado. Whether it's after a bath, during playtime, or just because they have an excess of energy to burn, the sight of a dog zooming around with pure unadulterated glee is guaranteed to crack you up. Just make sure you clear any fragile items out of their way before the zoomie session begins!



"The Guilty Face"

You come home to find a mess of shredded paper strewn across the living room floor. When you confront your furry friend, they give you that infamous guilty face - head down, eyes wide, and tail tucked between their legs. But despite their best efforts to look innocent, their guilt is written all over their adorable canine expressions. It's impossible not to burst into laughter at their comically failed attempt at innocence.



FIVE RELATABLE MOMENTS

EVERY DOG LOVER CAN APPRECIATE!

Just For Fun



"The Language Barrier"



We often find ourselves engaging in one-sided conversations with our dogs, pouring out our hearts and souls, only to receive a blank stare in return. This hilariously relatable dog moment highlights the communication gap between humans and our furry friends. Whether it's asking if they want to go for a walk or explaining why they can't have that last piece of pizza, dogs have a unique talent for looking utterly clueless while simultaneously melting our hearts.

In concluding this delightful journey through the whimsical world of dogs, it's clear that they are not just pets, but sources of endless amusement and love. Each story paints a vivid picture of the joyful, sometimes chaotic, but always entertaining life with a dog. These stories remind us of the unique bond we share with our canine friends - a bond filled with laughter, surprises, and unconditional love.



HUNTERDONDOGS



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