



Recycle and Reuse

Owning a dog can be expensive but there are ways of entertaining your furry member of the family cheaply and of course doing your bit for the environment at the same time!

Dogs are very intelligent and need mental stimulation to keep them entertained to prevent unwanted behavioural problems from developing.

Recycle

Every day we put all sorts in the bin when we've finished with it but some of it could be used again.

Egg box

Save up your egg boxes, place some food or treats inside each box and hide them around your house for your dog to find. This is a fabulous game for scent work but he also has to work his way into the box when he finds them.

Toilet roll holder/ Kitchen roll holder

Save your loo roll and kitchen roll holders as they make brilliant parcels. Fold over one end, place food inside and fold over the other end. You can hide numerous tubes around the home for your dog to find. He then has to open them when he finds them

Milk/ drinks bottle

Make sure these are clean and throw away the lids. Place food inside and offer to your dog. These make cheap 'treatballs'. Make sure your dog doesn't chew and eat the plastic as this can harm his insides, best to supervise your dog with this one.



Using a plastic drinks bottle, take off the cap. Take a piece of material and rap the bottle with the material. You can tie the end with string or pieces of material to secure it. Makes a wonderful crunchy toy for your dog to mouth.

Cardboard box/ Newspaper/ Shredded paper

These come in all sizes from biscuit bar boxes to big delivery sized boxes. You can fill the bigger boxes with newspaper and scatter food or a toy inside and encourage your dog to hunt or with smaller boxes you could fit them inside one another and encourage your dog to find the reward.

If you don't mind a bit of mess place your shredded paper in a box and scatter your dogs food inside.





Pringles Tube

Remove the cap and save for the exercise below. With scissors cut horizontal slits into the tube so you can place cardboard tags into them big enough for your dog to pull on. You can start off with one and as your dog gets the hang of this game you can add more cardboard tags. Place food inside the tube and add the cardboard tag. Encourage your dog to use his mouth to pull on the tag to reveal the food – just like the children's game Kerplunk!

Caps

These can be unwanted reusable can caps, from Pringle tubes or Nescafe Azera tubs. These make brilliant items for your dog to target with, especially if you wish to teach closing the door!

Tissue Box

You could teach your dog to pull a J-cloth from the box. This is best taught with clicker and for dogs that aren't going to try to eat the cloth. You could place food inside and hide somewhere in the house or inside another box for your dog to find.

Before throwing out unwanted dog toys they could be donated to the local rehoming shelter to get some last minute fun!

Other:

Towels

Take an unwanted towel and cut two slits all the way to the top of the towel so you can plait it. Tie a knot in the end and place food into the plait for your dog to get out. The really lovely thing about this is if it gets destroyed it can go in the bin, or if its still usable then can be washed.

T-Towels

Take three T-towels and place food under one, two or all three of them whilst your dog is waiting. Send your dog to find the food and then work out how to get the food out from under the T-towels.



Watering Can

Place a toy, like a tennis ball, inside for your dog to work out how to get it back out.

Reuse:

Muffin Tin

You can place tennis balls into the Muffin tin with food underneath. You'll be surprised how long it takes your dog to get the food out. These make really cheap versions of the Nina Ottosson toys



Tennis Balls

Cut a hole into the side of the ball to make a cheap treatball! Ideal for small breeds.



Tennis Balls and T-Shirts

Using an old tennis ball and T-shirt, rap the tennis ball with the T-shirt and secure it either with string or a band of material.

Tennis Balls and Socks

Instead of throwing out your unwanted socks turn them into dog toys! Tie a knot at the toe end, place a tennis ball inside and tie another knot on the other side so the ball doesn't come out.

Flower Pots

You can use several for this one if you wish. I like to use three and place food under one, two or all three pots for the dog to work out how to either lift them or knock them over. Sometimes dogs can be a little strong with their mouths and destroy the pots. Be careful they don't eat any plastic and supervise at all times.



Frisbees/ Chocolate Tin Lids

This can be done in the garden on concrete or on the kitchen floor. Place food on the ground and put the Frisbee or chocolate tin lid over for your dog to work out how to get the food out.

Marrow Bones

I prefer to use the raw marrow bones as they are healthier than the ones stuffed with goodness knows what! Raw bones are perfectly safe for dogs its cooked bones that are dangerous. Once your dog has emptied the bone, sterilise using boiling water. Allow drying and stuff with anything your dog will enjoy. For example banana, mashed potato, boiled egg, tuna, mackerel, raw mince etc. These bones can be frozen and used time and time again.

The ideas that have been listed are just the tip of the iceberg. Use your imagination with things before you throw them away but make sure they are safe to give to your dog and supervise him if he decides to eat or chew inedible objects.