



protect. teach. love.

YOU & YOUR PET
**PLAY &
CHALLENGE**



**How can I
encourage
my pet
to play?**



Play & Challenge

Why does my pet want to play?

Wolf cubs hone their hunting skills through play with their siblings and pack members and by toying with small prey or morsels brought to them by their parents. The wolf is the ancestor of modern dogs, but modern dogs remain like immature wolf cubs and generally do not develop the habits of an adult wolf.

Our pet dogs have a natural instinct to practice hunting skills, like wolf cubs, but in a diluted form. Pet dogs do not generally go on to engage in predatory hunting like a mature wolf would.

Kittens of the African Wildcat practice their hunting skills in the same way as a wolf cub. The African Wildcat is the ancestor of modern cats but the difference between pet cats and dogs is that the cat's instinct to hunt is less diluted. Kittens practice hunting through play and often put it into practice as adults.



“Toys provide hours of occupation and help prevent boredom”





Toys allow pets to engage in hunting behaviour such as stalking, pouncing, chasing and catching. Toys can be chewed or pulled apart to reveal potential treats. They provide hours of occupation and help prevent boredom and the development of behavioural issues.

Pet toys need to appeal to pets, not to their human owners. It should not matter if the owner finds a toy appealing, it matters what the pet thinks. Toys that have been developed in conjunction with animal behaviourists and vets will fulfil a pet's requirements to express natural behaviour, as they understand how animals think and function.

We like to think that owners will find our toys attractive but our primary aim is to ensure your pet's quality of life is improved as a result of playing with them.

Why should I give my pet toys?

As explained, our pet's play is likely to mimic hunting or foraging skills. Play is important because:

- It exercises both the mind and body. It allows pets to develop skills, which empower them. It avoids boredom and prevents or improves behavioural problems.
- Owners should join in playing with their pets. During play, owners reduce their social status to be equals with their pet. This closing of social distance promotes trust and friendship.

“Pet toys need to appeal to pets, not to their human owners”





“To maintain interest new toys need to be introduced and old toys rotated”

- Dogs, more than cats, want to endear themselves to their owners by pleasing and accommodating them. By playing with their dog, owners provide the dog with company and an opportunity to please the owner.
- Toys are often the catalysts that initiate play. Pets are naturally inquisitive because discovering something new might be beneficial to them. To maintain interest, new toys need to be introduced and old toys rotated. Ideally pets have a ‘toy box’ and a different toy is brought out for each day of the week. The toy of the day could then be hidden somewhere in the home or garden for the pet to find.
- Toys can be used to encourage foraging if they are hidden under objects like blankets or bedding and they encourage exploration if they are hidden around the house or garden. This exercises the dog’s body and senses.





Types of toy

There are many types of toy, which allow pets to express their natural instinct and provide them with stimulating challenges.

Our range of dog toys fall into three different categories and each category allows the pet to practice different play activities. The range includes **treat dispensing and treat holding toys**, **puzzle toys** and challenging **enrichment toys**. Enrichment toys promote activity and create a longer lasting playtime.

The dog toys are available for adult dogs and puppies with various sizes within each group. Some toys, which dispense treats through an opening during play, have a Treat Meter™ - soft and adjustable rubber prongs that move aside to allow for easy stuffing of treats and food into the toy. As the dog plays, treats will randomly fall through the opening, rewarding the dog and encouraging further play for hours of fun. The Treat Meter prongs can be cut to make an easier flow of food and treats.



Our cat toys are designed to keep cats of all ages engaged, active and stimulated by randomly dispensing treats and dry food. They are adjustable and adaptable to individual cats enabling you to increase the challenge over time.

Linkables™

Linkables are the new progressive way to play with and challenge your dog! Thanks to the unique patented design you can mix and match the Links to create an ever-changing toy combination for your dog and the two-part connection point allows you to choose the level of difficulty.

Start with one shape and encourage your dog to interact with the toy. Once he easily empties the toy, add another Link to increase the challenge. Linkables 'grow' with your dogs' skills. When your dog has mastered two Links, add a third, then a fourth to keep the fun going.





Safety and responsibility

Our toys have been manufactured to be as safe as possible for pets. Dogs in particular, explore objects with their mouths, much like young children. If indigestible objects of a certain size are swallowed they can cause bowel blockages, which may require surgical intervention.

Each toy comes in a variety of sizes and each is appropriate for a size range of dog. Owners must choose the correct size toy to reduce the risks of them being swallowed whole or quickly broken up into large pieces which may cause a blockage if swallowed. Many pet toys are designed to be chewed and destroyed slowly and only small pieces break off which if swallowed will pass through the bowel. Eventually the bulk of the toy may be reduced to a size that could be swallowed and at this point owners have a responsibility to throw it away and buy a new one!

Our Promise

PetSafe® is committed to improving your pet's quality of life through continued innovation in collaboration with animal professionals.



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Written and developed in conjunction with David Chamberlain BVetMed, MRCVS, Veterinary Consultant to PetSafe.

For any queries or questions please don't hesitate to contact us:

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