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**Games to play in wet weather, also Jogging with your best friend.**

I do not think there is anything that annoys a pet more than being inside, even in wet weather dogs just want to be outside. Parents of energetic puppies, know the struggle of entertaining a restless dog when you’ve limited indoor space. However, if you can keep the body moving and the mind occupied both yours and your dogs, with a few fun games that combine physical exercise with a mental challenge, you will also be providing ample opportunities for bonding. From of hide and seek, to scent training to an obstacle courses and staircase races, here are some great things to do with your dog on a rainy day. So, lets have a look at a few.

**Scent Work with Hidden Treats.**

Having your dog to discover a great treat just using its nose is a great workout for both the body and brain. Although all dogs have a great nose that can smell up to 130,000 time stronger than ours, sometimes they have to be reminded to use it. This game calls on the incentive of toys and treats to get your dog excited about exercising its nose. Set several containers, boxes, or plastic containers (I start with 3 or 4) upside down in a row, without your dog seeing what you’ve done, hiding a prize (a favourite toy, a bone, a treat, or something else with a familiar smell) under one of the containers. Then, encourage your dog to smell each box, you should find they pause at the one that contains a prize. When your dog gets it right, lift up the box to reveal the treat and get excited for its victory. After several rounds of this exercise, your dog will become more aware of the boxes and just how the game works, and therefore become more excited to go sniff out its prize. To make the brain work harder, keep adding boxes, spacing them out at farther intervals to increase the challenge as your dog's scent work improves.

**Hide and seek,**

If your dog knows "find it," or any command that prompts it to go looking for something hidden, then an indoor rendition of hide and seek makes great practice. It's essentially a hunting game, which allows the dog to channel its natural instincts. Start with another person, you, and the dog in one room, the other person can now go and hide. Shouting your dog just once for a separate room. Use your preferred version of the "find it" command to encourage your dog to search, giving vocal clues like "good" and "uh oh" to keep it on track. If you're the one hiding, call the dog by its name just once, allowing the dog to seek, after a few minutes if the dog has not found you call again.

If your using treats for them to find, You, can start by giving hints, like pointing or walking toward the hiding place, until your dog gets acquainted with the game's objective. When it finds the hidden object, make the praise worth the effort. Eventually, your dog should get faster when searching and start to revisit all the places where you've hidden objects previously. If the game gets too easy, move to more creative hiding places (under a laundry basket, or on a bookshelf above the dog's head). You can even stomp all around the house while hiding it to throw the dog off and make it more challenging.

If your dog doesn't know the "find it" command or anything similar, you can use a word it does know, such as "toy" or "ball." After hiding the object, pretend to look for it with your dog while asking "where's your toy?" or "where's your ball?" After finding the item a few times, your dog should respond to the question on its own.

**Under, Over, and Through**

Teaching a dog any new trick is great mental exercise, but it's extra beneficial if the trick involves physical activity. Under, over, and through is a game that helps puppies understand the relationships between you and them, stimulates older dogs' brains, and provides a workout, what with all the up, down, and around movement. Start by placing an apparatus like a kitchen chair, step stool, or some other sturdy, legged object in the middle of the room. Then, encourage your dog to crawl under it, perhaps by coaxing it with a treat at first. Use the "sit" or "stay" command to get your dog to stay under the apparatus. If your dog doesn't know those commands, use hand signals. Also practice crawling all the way through the object, walking around it, and jumping over the object, if your dog is big enough and knows the "jump" command. Teaching your dog to jump over an object is an advanced type of training and time-consuming trick that probably won't happen in a single day. Start with a low object and get higher as they learn. A broom is a good way to start, just stand it on a few books then move up to dining chairs. Every time your dog completes an action correctly, reward it with a treat.

**Stairway Dash**

I think this is one game my dogs love the most. If you have stairs in your house, create a game out of running up them to get rid of some excess energy. To get the most exercise from this game with the least risk to your dog's joints, start at the bottom of the stairs. Put your dog in a sit position, hold onto the collar, and throw the toy up to the top landing. Keeping your dog in a stay will create excitement and build-up, then let them go with a "ready, set, go”.Let your dog come back down the stairs at its own pace. Encourage a slower return, as it's the downhill that risks injury. After 10 or so repetitions of this, your dog will probably be yearning for a nap.

**Note that this exercise is only for dogs that are more than a year old. You can cause long-term injury playing this game with younger dogs as their joints aren't developed enough to take the impact.**

**Tag**

This childhood classic is a great dog game for kids. It encourages both running and practicing a lightning-fast recall, ultimately turning coming when called into a fun game. You'll need a partner for this. Each person starts with a pocket full of treats and stands on opposite sides of a room. One person calls the dog and rewards it with a treat, then the next person calls and rewards it with another. As the game advances, you and your partner can space out farther, so that you're in different rooms. The more your dog runs around the house, the more exercise it'll get. **But just a word of warning, dogs can get excited when playing this game, so caution with children should be your watch word.** To keep food intake to a minimum, you can eventually switch to giving it treats only every other or every third recall, using excited praise or a tug toy or ball as a reward the rest of the time. You can even up the ante by calling the dog, then starting to run away, so that recall becomes a game of chase.

**Teach It to Clean up Toys,**

Clean-up time can be a lot more fun and efficient when your dog knows how to put its own things away. This trick is a process that starts with the drop command. Have your dog pick up a toy, then, after a few seconds, say "drop" and place a treat in front of its nose to get it to drop the toy. Effectively swapping the toy for the treat. This works best with a toy you know is less valuable than the treat in question. After several repetitions, your dog should drop the toy on command without the incentive of a treat.

Then, introduce the toy box. Position it just in front of you between your legs, and above your dog's head so that when you say "drop," the toy drops directly into the box. Once your dog is used to that action, you can spread the toys all over and begin saying "clean up" or "put it away" as it picks the toys up and takes them to the box.

As your dog gets better at it, you can increase the difficulty by moving the box just 6 inches at a time further away from you.

**Why not make an Obstacle Course**

Setting up an indoor obstacle course is a lot of work, but also a lot of fun. If you're stuck inside on a rainy day, then why not? Here are some household items that can be turned into obstacles.

* A sturdy milk crate, stool, or other item to balance on
* A kitchen chair to jump up on or run underneath.
* A box with two open ends that can be crawled through.
* A pole balancing on two stools or boxes that can be leaped over.
* A hula hoop to jump through.
* A frisbee or ball to catch.

First, you'll want to train your dog to sit or stand beside you, as agility training is all about proximity. To do this, put your dog in a sitting position and, after a few seconds, reward it with a treat. Once your dog knows to stick by you, you can slowly guide it through a DIY course made up of just one or two of these obstacles. Introduce more as your dog get used them. First, you'll probably have to lead the dog with a treat, rewarding and praising it enthusiastically every time it completes an obstacle correctly, or if the effort is put in to try. Eventually, your dog will follow your hand gestures or you. You can make it more challenging by encouraging the dog to complete the course while carrying a toy. Tailor the game to your dog's physical ability and size, the types of tricks it enjoys.

**Some outdoor exercise, you can do with your dog.**

**How to Start Running with Your Dog**

Everything you need to know to build endurance, stay safe and have fun exercising together.

* [**Wildlife**](https://www.treehugger.com/wildlife-4846032)
* [**Pets**](https://www.treehugger.com/pets-4846034)
* [**Animal Rights**](https://www.treehugger.com/animal-rights-4846031)
* Running with your dog is an excellent way to get both you and your pooch into top shape.But before you grab a leash and head out the door, there are some important things you want to consider. To keep your dog safe and you happy, check out this list outlining how to get started and what to do during and after your runs. This will ensure you have the most fun and the least worry while out on paths and trails together.
* Start at the right age and fitness levelBefore doing anything, consider if your dog is capable of running with you. Small dogs, extra large dogs, dogs with short snouts (called brachycephalic breeds), as well as older dogs and puppies might not be fit to be your running buddy. We have a [list of breed types](https://www.treehugger.com/best-dog-breeds-for-running-companions-4862357) that typically make great running partners. If you think your dog is an ideal companion for athletic outings, then read on!

While puppy energy seems limitless, you definitely do not want to take a young puppy out running with you. The impact of running can harm their joint and bone development, and lead to serious medical problems later on including early arthritis or fractures. Wait until your dog's bone growth plates are closed something that usually happens between 1-2 years old depending on the breed before you take her on long runs. You can ask your vet when that time is for your specific dog. Once your dog is done growing, then she's ready to start strengthening up for longer runs.

In the meantime, you can jog for a few minutes alongside your puppy, puppies just love to run and lots of encouragement from you will encourage them to stay quite close. Socialize your pup to people, dogs and other animals and training for obedience so that transitioning to running on busy trails will be a cinch. Your dog will meet lots of new people and animals and encounter many different distractions while out with you, so getting your new puppy used to just about anything that you might come across is a great way to gear him up for outings in the parks or on the trails.

On the flip side, you don’t want to push your older dog to running further it will take time, for your dogs to develop stamina, and as your dog get older they require less exercise anyway. Overexertion could push into problems like joint pain, dysplasia, stress on their heart and vital organs, and other negative consequences. Again, if you’re unsure talk to your vet to see what your older dog is capable of doing before you launch into a long run. Also ask about things like joint supplements to help your aging dog recover more quickly after your runs.

**Socialization and leash training**

Whether a puppy or not, you need to take the time to socialize your dog to anything you might encounter while running. You don’t want to run with a dog that is reactive or fear aggressive toward people or animals you meet. Dog training classes are a wonderful way to get the tools and interaction you need to get your dog ready for running on busy trails. If your dog simply isn't happy in busy places, that's okay too. Just plan on running on-leash over less popular trails and paths.

It's also important to train your dog to run on a loose leash with you. Being pulled by a dog while running is damaging for both of you and you'll spend more time being frustrated than happily running along. Getting started, your dog might be super excited that you’re running together. After all, running is play time for your dog. So take the time to train your dog to understand that running time is running time no jumping, tugging the lead, running in front of you or other annoying and potentially dangerous behaviours. Show her how this is no different than your daily walks, you're just going faster. Taking the time to train your dog not to pull on leash no matter what smells tempt her along the path or what people, dogs or other animals you encounter, will be key to a joyful jog together. We'll cover this below.

**Starting slow, toughening up, and recovery time**

We often overestimate how much dogs can run. They are made to run, after all, right? Well, yes, but out unfit is out of unfit no matter the species. If your dog usually only runs a mile or two a day, don’t immediately launch into a 10–15-mile runs. Some dogs are built for endurance, others are not Greyhounds, Stafford Bull Terriers etc. Dogs need to build up their endurance and muscles just like we do. So, start slowly and build fitness so that your dog can stay healthy.

No matter your dog's fitness level, allow some time to warm up. It's great for both of you to walk the first 5 to 10 minutes to get muscles limbered up for the run. This is especially important if you had to drive to the place where you're doing your run. Also, make sure your dog doesn't eat right before a run. We all know how unpleasant it is to run on a full stomach and dogs feel the same way. Their meal should happen about 60 minutes or more prior to running. If your dog is lagging behind you, slow down or even end your run. Pushing your dog too hard can lead to injuries.

After each run, check your dog's paws for soft spots, scrapes or cuts. It can take a little while for a dog's paw pads to toughen up. If there is any sign of injury, allow time for her paws to heal before running again.

**Warning**

Watch for any signs of soreness or limping the day after a run to determine if your dog needs more time for muscle recovery. If limping lasts longer than a day, it's time to head to the vet to make sure the injury isn't serious.

Your dog will let you know what her limits, watch the heat level, recovery time and everything else if you pay attention to her movement and energy level. Treat your dog as an individual, and not a breed statistic, and you'll find your way to the perfect balance for optimal health.

**Choosing the where and when**

Dogs have tough feet, but they aren’t impermeable. Even if you've let your dog's paws toughen up over time to be able to handle different surfaces, it's important to watch where and when you run to keep those paws happy. Avoid running on hot surfaces like asphalt at mid-day, and hard surfaces like concrete sidewalks. Whenever possible, go for shaded surfaces and dirt or grass so that your dog's feet and joints aren’t harmed. If you're running in a neighbourhood, you can have your dog run on grass lined curb sides, or perhaps you can go to a local school yard and do laps around the grassy field together. Getting off the concrete as much as possible will be good for both of you.

The same consideration is needed for the weather. Running when it is too hot or too cold for your dog can make it a miserable experience for both of you. Know how your dog handles heat or cold and plan your runs accordingly. This might mean running in the early morning or late afternoon to avoid the hottest part of the day or skipping runs together when the weather is too cold for a short-coated dog.

**Commands for a smooth run**

Because you’re moving faster, you’ll want to add in some commands to allow you to make quicker movements. Teach your dog a command like “close and back” to cue her to make a turn when you hit a corner or fork in the trail. You can get specific by training your dog “left” or “right”, but you don’t have to make it that complicated. I use close if I’m turning away from the dog and back when turning into the dog. Basically, it’s a way to say, we’re deciding on what direction to go, and I need you to watch me, so we don’t run into each other.”

You’ll also want cues for distractions, especially if you’re running on lead. A rocket recall is a must, along with a fail proof “leave it” command in case you encounter something like food or other hikers or dogs that don’t want your dog to approach. If your dog doesn’t have these commands down solid (and let’s not underestimate how difficult it is for a dog to have perfect recall and perfect leave it when off lead and having fun), then it is best to keep them on the lead. We can assume you will not always be running with your dog on the lead since safe off lead situations will arise, of course makes perfect since to run off the lead when not on the road. It is also important to solidify behaviours for courteous interactions on trails and paths no running up to strangers, staring down or barking at other runners, dogs, horses, or anything else encountered on your run, maintaining a solid sit stay, and even having a rock-solid down stay are all important. Following lead laws and having a well-behaved dog will help keep paths, trails and park areas open to dogs. Badly behaved dogs increase the risk that dog friendly areas will stop welcoming pets and you’ll have fewer beautiful places to enjoy a run with your four-legged companion.

**Hydration and overheating**

Two of the most important things you'll need to pay attention to during your run when it comes to your dog is her hydration level and signs of overheating. Your dog will let you know how much water he needs during a run. It depends on everything from size of the dog, intensity of the workout, weather, and of course the individual dog. While all dogs will vary on how much water they need to take in, there is a general rule of thumb for how you allow them to drink. Provide your dog with small sips every couple miles, depending on the size of the dog and how they handle heat, this can mean anything from a couple quick laps to wet his mouth, to half a cup of water or more. For longer runs or for locations where there’s no water sources, bring a water bottle and (if needed) a little collapsible bowl. Don't force your dog to take more water if he is turning down your offer, and also be prepared to take the water away if he is gulping it down like there is no tomorrow. A little bit of water provided often will keep him hydrated without upsetting his stomach during exercise. If the weather is hot, you should also cool off your dog’s head, have a cloth wet and rub the dogs head and neck to cool it. After his run when he is cooled off, let him drink until he walks away.

During your runs, especially on warm days, check for signs of overheating. These include heavy panting with an enlarged tongue (shaped like a spoon), foaming at the mouth, weakness, trouble standing up, wobbly or uncontrolled movement, and glazed eyes. As soon as your dog begins to look overheated, find a shady place to let him rest and cool down. Help cool him by wetting him down especially his head, belly, and paws with water. And if your dog begins to vomit or takes more than 10 minutes to cool down, get him to a vet. Overheating can be fatal to a dog.

**The right equipment**

Collars might not be the best option when running with your dog, especially not corrective devices like choke chains, martingale collars, or even gentle leaders. These can be potentially harmful to your dog by restricting breathing, providing harsh unintended corrections (if you trip, or you both misread cues and go in different directions while at full speed), or restricting head or neck movement. And definitely ditch any retractable leashes. A flat collar with a 6-foot leash is perfectly fine if your dog is obedient on leash and great at reading your cues for speed and direction. But if your dog is already having trouble with leash commands and you add in speed, a correctional device can spell trouble and an unpleasant experience for everyone involved. Seek advice from a knowledgeable and experienced trainer if you need help training your dog to run obediently by your side.

The best combination for running is an obedient dog, a slightly loose-fitting flat collar and a 6-foot leash that preferably loops around your waist so you can run hands free. However, this isn’t the case for everyone. He might want to run after an off-lead dog chasing a ball in the park, and don’t even get me started on squirrels that bolt across the path. I don’t want to give him sudden yanks to the neck which could be very damaging, and likewise I don’t want to be suddenly yanked to one side. So, we switch up our gear, flat collar, and canvas leash for running in our neighbourhood with few distractions, and a harness and canvass leash for running on park paths and trails where there are more chances for sudden distractions.

For trail running, we use a harness and 3-meter training lead. A harness made for all day wear; The lead can be fitted to a waist band that loops around your waist so you can run hands-free. If a hare darts across the trail in front of us or a deer bolts from behind a bush, you are likely to be dragged over so running off lead always best, when in a park. Depending on your dog’s fitness level, he can wear a pack to carry his own water. This shouldn’t be done until after your dog has been running with you for a while and is in great shape already. If at that point you feel your dog has a tough enough stature to manage a weighted pack, then you can look into options. If you’re training your dog to run by your side and ignore distractions, you may want to carry a treat pouch with you. You can use one that clips to the leash, or hooks around your waste. And finally, have a simple first aid kit for dogs ready to go. You can keep it in the car on shorter runs or carry it with you on longer runs. The kit can include antiseptic and bandages for cleaning cut paws, tweezers for removing splinters, eye wash and other medications or supplies you think you might need.

**Maintaining a healthy diet and weight.**

It's important not to let your dog become overweight, since the added weight stresses their muscles and joints and can cause them to fatigue early. It is something that can happen even when running miles, a day with you, especially among breeds like Labradors that tend to be heavy-set. So, watch your dog's cookie intake as closely as you watch your own. That said, if you're increasing exercise, you might want to increase food intake as well.

Check your dog's ideal weight. As you start your running routine, if they dip below that, increase how much food you give to keep the ideal weight. Of course, if you're trying to help your dog lose a few extra pounds to get down to an ideal weight, then do your research about the best strategy for balancing increased exercise with the right amount of daily food intake.

**Be ready to admit it if your dog isn’t the best running partner.**

Let's be realistic, some dogs just are not meant to be running partners. A huge Newfoundland, an older Labrador, a tiny Pomeranian they probably are not going to cut it as a running buddy unless you're jogging slowly once around the block (and if you are, then great). But if you are trying to get in 5 or 10 miles a day, or hitting mountain trails on the weekends, or perhaps there's the summer heat or winter chill to contend with, you'll want to be prepared to admit that maybe your best friend needs to wait for you at home.