

Exercise

AND YOUR FOUR-LEGGED FRIEND



Exercise is so important for your pet. It helps keep them physically fit, but did you know it's really important to keep them happy, too? Imagine if you couldn't go outside for walks, or play with your friends, and you had no toys or games to play with in the house. Life would be pretty boring! Our pets are no different, and it's up to us as their human family to make sure they're fit, active, happy and healthy! How much exercise your pet needs and can cope with does depend on their age and if they have any health problems, so always check with your parents before trying anything new.

Dogs

One of the easiest things you can do to keep your dog happy is take them for a walk! Going for a walk every day is vital - and if you have a dog that likes to stop and sniff a lot - let them! Dog's noses are amazing (so much better than ours!), and they get so much information from 'scenting' - and a slow walk, sniffing everything as they go, can actually be just as tiring as a walk that's miles long where they're running free!

Check out our guide below on how much exercise different breeds of dog need. This will depend on your dog, their health, age and even their personality, but it's good to have a rough idea! And remember, this is their daily amount, which doesn't have to all be done in one walk, but is better being broken up into shorter walks throughout the day.

A green circular icon with a double-headed arrow at the top. Inside the circle, the number '2' is in a large font, with 'HOURS' written vertically below it. To the right of the circle is a plus sign. A brown Labrador Retriever is peeking over the top edge of the icon.

• Labrador Retriever
• German Shepherd
• English Springer Spaniel
• Border Collie
• Siberian Husky
• Dalmatian

A black and white Border Collie dog is looking up at the camera with its mouth open, showing its tongue.A green circular icon with a double-headed arrow at the top. Inside the circle, the number '1' is in a large font, with 'HOUR' written vertically below it. To the right of the circle is a plus sign. A brown Pug is peeking over the top edge of the icon.

• Staffordshire Bull Terrier
• West Highland White Terrier
• Border Terrier
• Whippet
• Pug
• Cocker Spaniel

A brown Cocker Spaniel dog is looking directly at the camera with a slightly open mouth.A green circular icon with a double-headed arrow at the top. Inside the circle, the number '30m' is in a large font, with 'm' representing minutes. To the right of the circle is a plus sign. A brown Chihuahua is peeking over the top edge of the icon.

• Bichon Frise
• Miniature Dachshund
• King Charles Spaniel
• Yorkshire Terrier
• Pekingese
• Chihuahua

A small, tan Yorkie dog is looking up at the camera with a happy expression.

Other ideas to keep your pooch active include flyball, agility, hide and seek games, scent games, and simply playing with toys!

Cats



Most cats will take care of themselves when it comes to exercise - after all, they do tend to have the freedom to roam where they want, when they want! But they'll still benefit from some playtime with their favourite person (you!) every day. Cats prefer short bursts of play or activity throughout the day, mixed in with quite a lot of sleep, so remember that if you're planning some playtime! Here are some of our favourite games:

Chase games

Cats love to run and pounce on things - it's what they'd do in the wild! Try a ball, a scrunched up piece of paper, or dragging some string across the floor for them to chase after - and always let them 'catch' the toy at the end so that they feel like they've won!

Food toys

Why not try some food toys or puzzles for your cat? It keeps their brain active and they get a tasty treat out of it too!

Give them places to explore

Cats love to be up high, and they love to explore. Give them things to climb on and things like boxes to hide in. Sometimes, the simple things are the best!



Smaller pets

With our smaller pets such as rabbits, guinea pigs, hamsters, gerbils and rats, one of the most important things you can do is give them space to run around, jump, and basically have a good stretch of their legs! This could be in a special run, or a secure area of your garden (for rabbits and guinea pigs), or having space to run around and explore in rooms in the house.

Give your pets toys to play with when they're out and about, and in their hutch or cage - that way, they can play whenever they want to! Most smaller pets love to forage - so try hiding their food around their home, so they have to sniff it out and move things around to get to it - it's a game most small pets love.

