

# Paws for Thought

## “The Importance of PLAY”!

For those of you that know me, you have heard me say hundreds of times... let your dog be a DOG not a couch potato!!

It's very important that we remember that certain breeds are bred for different reasons and that, from the moment the puppy is born, it uses 'play' to learn more about itself - its own strength and weakness in comparison to its siblings, its ability to run... and how fast. We have to give an 'outlet' for their instinctive desires!

(Please note that dogs with strong predatory instincts will be less likely to develop behavior issues if they have this 'outlet' and are constantly stimulated)

They key to getting your dog on the right path begins with learning which games, how often and which toys are appropriate. You must take into consideration the breed, size, family structure, other animals and/or pets, etc. For example, if you have a pet turtle... the

last thing you should do with your dog is give him a toy that looks exactly like your other pet! Very unfortunate incidents occur this way... we need to pay close attention to what we introduce our dog(s) to!

I recommend always having one or two toys that are special for your bonding time with him/her... a toy that he/she associates to 'fun time' with you! (ie: Dumbbell training)

Instead of going to dog parks only, where you have no control over the setting or other uncontrollable dogs which can be dangerous and may lead to other VERY unfortunate outcomes... go for hikes, city walk with your dog! Bond with him/her! Play hide and seek! Fetch!

You will notice that your dog becomes a happier dog once play is incorporated into their lives. And for yourself... less stress and more relaxation!

## Behaviour Problems



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