

How to Choose the Best Chew Toy for Your Dog

Toys are an important part of your dog's overall health and well-being. Having appropriate, engaging chew toys is important not only for entertainment but can also support their dental health and ease anxiety.

I came across an article about chew toys in the Cornell University DOG Watch publication. The article provides an array of information about selecting the best chew toy. Here's a synopsis of what they had to say.

There are an endless variety of dog toys on the market but not all toys are right for your dog. Every dog has his or her own preference. However, the key thing you need to keep in mind is safety first.

When choosing a toy best suited for your dog, you want to think about:

1. Is your dog young or extremely active?
2. Does he have any food allergies?
3. What size is your dog?
4. Is he a dedicated chewer or does he prefer to carry around a stuffed toy?

Most chew toys fall into the following categories:

Rawhide

- Cured animal hide that many dogs love to gobble up.
- Be aware that they can soften as they are chewed and can become lodged in your dog's throat.
- Monitor your dog as they enjoy rawhide.

Dental Chews

- While they don't replace brushing your dog's teeth, they can play an important part in a healthy dental routine.
- CET chews, Hextra chews, DentaBones, and Greenies are just a few on the market.

MORE»

Nylabones and Kongs

- These toys are made of hard rubber, nylon or synthetic materials and provide oral stimulation, which helps some dogs relax.
- Nylabones are similar to regular bones but they won't usually splinter or break as easily.
- You can insert your dog's favorite treat into some Kongs such as peanut butter, cream cheese, dog toothpaste, etc.

Puzzle Toys

- Engage your dog's mind, paws, nose and teeth.
- It will depend on your dog's preference whether or not he appreciates the stimulation or simply gets frustrated.


Stuffed Toys and Rope Toys

- Stuffed toys are best for gentler dogs and can be very dangerous for dogs with a strong prey drive.
- Keep a close eye on the squeaker inside stuffed toys as it can become a choking hazard.
- Rope toys can be fun but be sure to keep the ends knotted.
- If the rope ends become untied, your dog may shred and ingest the rope, resulting in digestive problems.

As Cornell University's article stated, the two key things to remember when selecting a chew toy for your assistance dog are:

- Everything in moderation...and with supervision.
- There is no substitute for human interaction.

Have fun!

Marcie and Whistle 

Cornell University College of Veterinary Medicine. (February 2011) "How to Choose the Best Chew Toy". DOG Watch. 15(2): 1.