



## Getting the Most Out of Playtime

All dogs, like young children, need toys to entertain them and relieve the boredom that can lead to destructive behavior. When purchasing toys for your pet, please take into consideration the safety, durability and all-around appropriateness for the age, breed and chewing habits of your dog. Small toys that were fine when your dog was a puppy may now be a choking hazard, so please continue to re-assess your pet's playthings as he or she grows and matures.

### Good Toys

We suggest the following toys:

- Nylabones
- Galileo bones (for strong jawed dogs)  
Buster Cube toys (or other interactive food toys)
- Sterilized bones (can be stuffed with various food items to occupy your pup)
- Kong toys (can also be stuffed with food items)
- Rope or tug toys
- Fuzzy "chew men" or stuffed animals with all plastic parts removed\*
- Vinyl or latex squeaky toys\*
- Tennis balls\*

*\* Best with supervision. Use with caution; if your dog shreds these toys, they will not be safe play items.*

### Bad Toys

We also recommend that you **AVOID** the following products, which represent possible choking hazards, often cause vomiting and diarrhea, and/or can cause intestinal obstructions requiring surgery:

- Rawhide
- Pig ears, cow hooves, snouts, tails, etc.
- Balls that are too slippery and/or too small
- Bones from human meals (will break or splinter easily)

### Good Games

Your dog will want (and need) you to spend quality, interactive play time with him. While there are many games you may play with your dog, some of the **most common, safe games** and activities include:

- Hide and Seek
- Find It
- Fetch or Retrieve
- Tug of War (if done appropriately)

### Bad Games

On the other hand, we strongly recommend that you **AVOID** the following:

- Games involving teasing of the dog
- Games involving stimulating the dog with your hands, especially around the mouth and face, especially those in which the puppy is nipping at your hands
- Tug of war where the dog is lifted off the floor holding onto the object
- Games involving chewing on inappropriate objects, such as old socks, shoes, etc. (Your dog may have difficulty distinguishing between an old sock and a new sock or his shoe versus your shoe.)
- Unsupervised children (generally under ten years of age) playing with the dog
- Rough play with children of any age

### **How to get the most out of your dog's toys**

- Rotate your dog's toys on a regular basis, keeping four or five available at a time
- Keep a variety of toys with a variety of uses available
- Remember that "found" toys are often more exciting and attractive to your dog than those introduced outright
- Keep most of your dog's toys interactive, as interactive play with you is the most important type of play for your dog