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**How To Keep Your Dog Mentally Stimulated**

**By Adam Katz**

I was having a conversation with a friend of mine and I thought I would quickly send this out to you, before I leave for the weekend.

We were discussing how to keep your dog's mind stimulated.

Remember: Bored dogs cause problems. If you don't keep your dog's mind stimulated, chances are that he'll find activities to stimulate his mind, himself. And you won't like those activities.

A dog that is mentally stimulated on a daily basis is a happy dog. And happy dogs don't cause dog problems.

Here's a quick list of how to keep your dog mentally stimulated:

1. Exercise. Lots of exercise. If you can incorporate exercise with another activity such as playing, "Find the ball," or doing some agility exercises, then that's even better.
2. Brain teaser toys. I'll be adding some of these to our web site store, later next week. There are a number of cool toys that actually challenge your dog's mind. For example, one of the more popular ones is the "Buster Cube," a plastic cube that releases a pellet of food, every third or fourth time the Cube is rolled over.
3. Small rituals done at the same time of day, every day. For example; feeding time, grooming, walks, "cookie" time, car trips around town, etc...
4. Dogs like to work. Teach your dog to bring in the newspaper, carry mail back from the mailbox or to walk out with you when you take the trash out. (Whenever I go through the drive-thru window at McDonald's, Forbes – my dog – gets to carry the trash bag to the trash receptacle when we're finished. Sound silly, right? But the dog loves it!)

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5. Do obedience training with your dog. Obedience training requires your dog to use his brain and think. Knowing that he will be praised for making the right decision and corrected for making the wrong decision (and allowed the opportunity to make the right decision again) instills a sense of responsibility in your dog and demands that he use his noggin. Remember: Dogs are bred to work. They've been blessed with super-human instincts and drives and they need an outlet for those drives.

That's all for now, folks! Adam

Adam G. Katz is the author of the book, "Secrets of a Professional Dog Trainer: An Insider's Guide To The Most Jealously Guarded Dog Training Secrets In History." Get a free copy of his report "Games To Play With Your Dog" when you sign up for his free weekly dog training tips e-zine at:

<http://www.dogproblems.com>

### **Is Your Dog Ever A Pain In The Neck?**

**By Adam Katz**

Do you ever experience those moments when your dog is a proverbial, "Pain in the neck"?

Maybe you're sitting at your desk, and your dog won't stop shoving his head into your lap... demanding attention?

Or maybe she's just restless for whatever reason. Or feeling needy?

Well, there's really three things you can do:

#1: You can put the dog in the kennel/crate. Just because your dog is demanding attention, doesn't mean that he's always going to get it. Remember: You're the Alpha dog. You're the pack leader. If you let your dog decide when to play, you're communicating an important lesson: That you're NOT the pack leader, and you DON'T make the decisions. I recommend putting the dog in the crate when you're sure that your dog has already been exercised, played with, and given attention. In other words: When you know his demand for attention is a dominance ruse.

#2: Put the dog into a formal "down-stay." Even though your dog won't be actively doing something, he will be inactively concentrating (and becoming conditioned) to hold the "down-stay" for longer and longer periods of time. How long can you expect your dog to hold a "down-stay" exercise for, while you're in the same room? How about 2-3 hours! Don't believe me? I have a drawer full of testimonials from readers of my books and dvds who regularly have their dogs hold the "down-stay" while they watch t.v., drink coffee, wash the dishes, work on the computer, etc...

#3: Even better than #1 and #2, you can use your dog's restless mood to practice active obedience exercises. Channel her need for attention into something positive. You'd be surprised at how just 10 minutes of working your dog through the various obedience routines (sit, down, heel, come, stay) can "wear your dog out," mentally. Then, finish up with a good 20 minute (or more!) "down-stay" exercise

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while you're going about your household chores.

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