

A-OK9

SECRETS TO LIVING PARASITE FREE THE NATURAL WAY



The Natural Parasite Prevention Handbook

a-ok9.com



WELLNESS WARRIORS ASSEMBLE!

Here at A-OK9 we are super passionate about dogs. We're passionate about their health and wellbeing, their diet, and their longevity.

We love our dogs and it's our mission to support them in every way possible, so they can be here with us for as long as possible, and we want the same for you and your dogs too!

As a pet parent, you dream of giving your dog the very best life. Fun adventures, play and companionship, as well as a happy, comfortable home to share with you. We bet you didn't sign up for pesky parasitic freeloaders coming along for the ride, right?

The reality of life as a dog owner means fleas, ticks, worms and other pesky parasites often come along to spoil our fun, so sometimes that means we need to use potentially harmful parasite control products on our canine companions to ensure they are safe from these unwelcome visitors.

That's something that doesn't sit well with us here at A-OK9. We're also aware of the reality that health concerns, cancers and so much more are important to avoid. A multi-pronged approach is required, not just a blanket approach that applies the same generalised approach to every dog and their owner, no matter how individual or unique their situation may be.

It can be a difficult balance when we need to protect our dogs from parasites. We also know it doesn't have to be that way!

Let's take a look at these problematic parasites and what treatment options are available so that you can be an informed Wellness Warrior for your dog AND we'll also look at some game-changing ways you can set your dog up for a lifetime of success with handy training tips and fun games that you can play with your dog to supercharge their mental wellbeing and life skills too!



WHY ARE PARASITES SUCH A PROBLEM?

A parasite is an organism that lives in or on another organism, known as the host, and it benefits by deriving nutrients (i.e. gets its food) at the expense of its hosts.

In this case, this happens at our dog's expense! What's more, in addition to pinching our dog's nutrients, parasites are also known to carry diseases! As well as making our skin crawl, those parasitic pests can really affect our dog's health and wellness so we're here to help you level up your knowledge so you can truly be the best pet parent and wellness warrior for your pooch!

As your dog's best owner and advocate, you have two main categories of parasites to be aware of: **internal parasites** and **external parasites**.



INTERNAL PARASITES

Internal parasites like roundworms, hookworms, whipworms, tapeworms, Giardia and more live inside your dog's body. They can be transferred a number of ways and can affect your dog (and their organs) in a wide variety of ways too, from simple irritation all the way through to life-threatening conditions if left untreated.



Roundworm



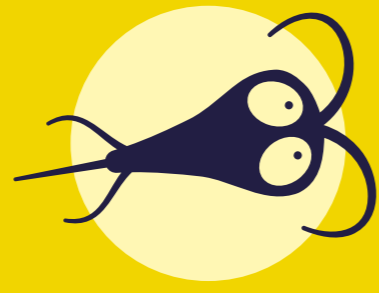
Hookworm



Whipworm



Tapeworm



Giardia

DID YOU KNOW? Worms can lead to weight loss, diarrhoea, vomiting, the unmistakable butt scoot and itchy rear.

Internal parasites can largely go unnoticed until clinical signs become apparent, and some of the most common signs and symptoms of intestinal parasites are:

- Diarrhoea (with or without blood or mucus)
- Scooting
- Vomiting
- Coughing
- Difficulty breathing
- Distended abdomen
- Weight loss and loss of appetite
- Poor condition and dull coat
- Decreased activity and lethargy
- Worms or segments (tapeworms) visible in the faeces

EXTERNAL PARASITES

External parasites like fleas, ticks, mites (and more) live on your dog's body. They can be found living in your dog's hair coat, buried in their skin or crawling around on your dog's body, in some cases producing an infestation.



Fleas



Ticks



Ear Mites

DID YOU KNOW? Fleas cause scratching, hair loss, skin infections, skin allergies and can transmit other parasites, such as tapeworms, to your dog.

Some of the most common signs of external parasites on your dog are:

- Fleas or flea dirt
- Excessive scratching
- Excessive chewing
- Red and inflamed skin
- Hair loss
- Dry coat
- Scaly appearance to skin and/or fur
- Crusting and discolouration of skin
- Black debris in ears
- Restless behaviour

DID YOU KNOW? Ticks become more active during warmer months and attach to your dog to feed on their blood. They also transmit Lyme disease.

Aside from affecting your dog's health, wellness and potentially making them sick, internal and external parasites can also cause disease in people, so keeping these pesky parasites in check is a vital part of being the awesome pet parent you are!

So what can you do? How can you protect your dog, ensure their wellbeing and tell these pesky parasites to BUG OFF once and for all?



SO HOW CAN YOU TAKE CONTROL OF PARASITES?

When it comes to controlling and getting rid of parasites, there are a few options available! There is **husbandry control**, **pesticide control** and **superfood control**.

This means you can tailor your approach to parasites according to the level of risk in your area, your own circumstances, and your dog's overall health and wellbeing.

Pesticide Control

Of course, we know that in some areas a chemical approach is simply unavoidable.

These will be areas where there are high numbers of disease-carrying parasites or heartworm areas. In these areas, you need to make sure you use multiple methods of control, such as superfood, husbandry and chemical control.

However, in most geographical locations this is NOT necessary. It is also worth noting that some parasites aren't prevented by the blanket approach, such as Giardia, which is very common.

Husbandry Control

To dissuade parasites, part of your action plan should include brushing, bathing and assessing your dog's physical health.

Being hands-on with your dog can help you stay ahead of anything that crops up, and you'll be familiar with any lumps, bumps or changes in their physical appearance, their coat, their eyes, ears, teeth and more.



TOP TIP: FIGHTING FLEAS & WORMS

If you feel that your dog might have fleas, take a damp cloth and drop a few droplets of water onto any "flea dirt" you can locate on your dog. If it starts to disintegrate and turn into red streaks, your dog might have fleas.

It's also worth knowing that fleas sometimes carry tapeworm larvae. This means that if your dog swallows infected fleas when grooming, they also become infected and the larval

tapeworm is able to develop into an adult tapeworm in your dog's intestines.

But! Did you know that in some countries you are able to send your dog's stool away to a lab to get a worm egg count? You can also talk to your vet about routinely checking through them, as well. This allows you to determine if worms are a problem for your dog, rather than a blanket approach.

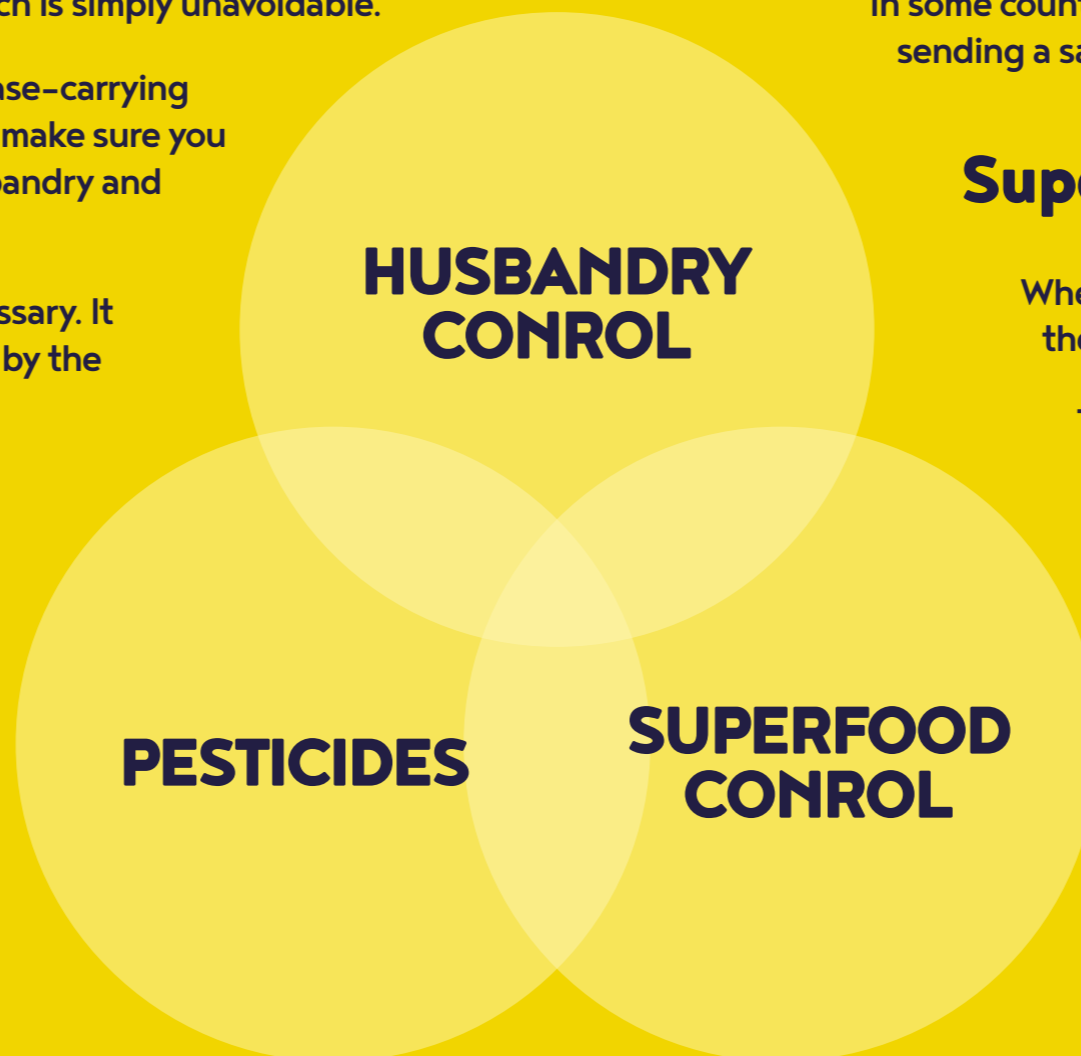
In some countries, you can also monitor your dog's stools for worms, by sending a sample to a laboratory which will perform a faecal egg count.

Superfood Control

When you think about it, dogs are in contact with parasites all the time.

There will always be worm eggs, fleas and ticks in the environment, but some dogs are less susceptible because their immune system has a protective ability against them.

And this is just one of the ways superfoods can help!



PESTICIDE CONTROL

AKA: Traditional Treatment Options

The anti-parasitic market has been dominated for many years by a traditional blanket approach to treating worms, ticks and fleas - solely using potentially harmful chemicals and forgetting about other methods.

These traditional treatment options are where we pop pesticides on or in our dogs on a regular basis, sometimes without understanding the potential risks!

We all know about traditional treatments like spot-ons, tablets, chews, collars and more. These treatment options all contain pesticides and pesticides that are harmful, not only to our dogs but to humans and the environment too!

If you use topical drugs, you're either applying a pesticide directly to your dog's skin that stays there for a period of time, or you're applying a chemical that is absorbed into the bloodstream and then sits in a layer of tissue under your dog's skin, waiting for that insect to bite!

If your dog is on a monthly worming tablet, they are ingesting those potentially harmful pesticides.



So how do antiparasitic treatments work?

Well, let's dig a little deeper and find out. Some of the common pesticides include:

1. Fipronil and imidacloprid, which spread through your dog's hair follicles and onto their skin where they persist for several weeks and are toxic to parasites by contact or ingestion.

2. Isoxazolines, are absorbed into the bloodstream, passing into a layer of tissue that sits just under your dog's skin. If a parasite bites, they ingest the chemical.

These pesticides are persistent, lasting weeks to months. This can be a worry if you discover your dog does not tolerate chemical control, but another consequence is that with continued exposure to low-level concentrations, the parasite may develop resistance to treatments.

CONCERN FOR OUR CANINE COMPANIONS

Have you ever worried about what would happen if your dog doesn't tolerate those traditional anti-parasitic treatments and their active ingredients?

Perhaps you've heard worrying stories of reactions to these drugs?

You'll also notice that the packaging warns of toxicity, instructing people not to get the pesticides on their skin and if they do, to wash it off immediately.

We are even told to not let our dogs swim immediately after application as there is increasing evidence about the pollution caused to our rivers and water courses! And by extension, these pesticides must also be in our homes. It's scary to think about!

Indeed, some of the pesticides used in parasite prevention treatments have been banned in agriculture for many years!

It makes you wonder, doesn't it? What are those pesticides doing to you, to your home, to your beloved dog and even to the environment?

At A-OK9 that doesn't sit right with us and we know that there are other options!

NATURAL AND HOLISTIC TREATMENT OPTIONS

While we know that it's natural for dogs to cross paths with parasites at some point in their life, we also know that getting on top of and staying ahead of those pesky parasites is absolutely vital and finding more natural and holistic ways to tackle fleas, ticks, worms and more is key for the wellness and longevity of our dogs!

Here at A-OK9, we've got some top tips for you to help your dog take a stand against those parasitic freeloaders!

COUNT THOSE WORMS!

Worm counts, or faecal testing, is where your vet takes a sample of your dog's faeces and sends them to be checked for signs of worms – and some even test for lungworm, certain stages of heartworm and giardia as well.

Regular worm counts throughout the year are a great way to see if your dog does in fact have worms – or not – and help you to take a more holistic approach to your dog's worming by preventing unnecessary overuse of anti-parasitic treatments.

Worm counts can also help you decide (with the help and advice of your vet) what the best treatment options might be for your dog (if you even need them)!



FABULOUSLY FRESH AND FERMENTED!

Fresh fruits and veggies are extremely beneficial for your dog, as are fermented veggies, kefir and so much more.

- Fermented veggies
- Grated veggies
- Kefir
- Carrots
- Banana
- Beetroot
- Apple
- Coconut (dried and oil)

Plus, there are some other super additions to your dog's diet that can help, such as apple cider vinegar, bone broth, turmeric and black pepper (to activate the turmeric!).

These foods are a super addition to a dog's daily diet and items that are high in fibre are great for your dog's tummy too! Some fruits and veg (especially when grated) even help clean up your dog's gut and act as a natural dewormer.

GET HAIRY SCARY!

Yep, we said it! Did you know that a great natural dewormer for dogs is actually feeding natural chews with fur still on?

As your dog consumes the animal fur chew, the hair sweeps through their digestive tract and traps those pesky worms as it goes – taking them out with the trash so to speak.

You can find all sorts of hair-on chews, most often in a raw, dehydrated form. From rabbit, goat, kangaroo, lamb and cow ears to furry animal hide pieces and more, there is a hairy scary, fur-on, natural chew for every dog no matter their age, size or breed!

Given a few times a week, these natural furry chews will help to deworm your dog, clean their teeth and so much more!

IMPORTANT NOTE: These natural fur chews are just that – natural. They will likely be dehydrated, but that's it. They aren't treated in any way, so they aren't to be confused with rawhide and other chemically treated or synthetic, potentially unhealthy and unsafe dog chews and products.

SUPPORT DIGESTIVE HEALTH WITH PROBIOTICS!

We believe a healthy gut creates a happy dog.

Adding pre and probiotics into your dog's diet is a sure-fire way to improve their gut health and their immune system and promote overall wellbeing and vitality!

We have a supplement for that!

CHECK OUT PROBIO-K9



SUPERFOOD CONTROL

ALL-NATURAL SUPERFOOD POWER!

At A-OK9 we know that superfoods are **powerful**. There are so many superfoods out there that can help tackle and target those pesky freeloaders parasites, while also improving your dog's health, wellness, immunity and more!

Let's take a look into some of the **best superfoods** for parasite prevention, and **how they work!**





Pumpkin Seeds

Pumpkin seeds contain the amino acid cucurbitacin which paralyzes worms. The paralyzed worms then drop off the intestinal walls and are eliminated from the digestive tract.


In a human study, pumpkin seeds demonstrated a 75% success rate in the elimination of tapeworms! Additionally, pumpkin seeds are excellent sources of vitamin B and zinc helping to boost the immune system.



Black Cumin Seed

Black cumin seed has been used for centuries as a traditional remedy against all stages of intestinal parasites. Studies have shown that it seems to reduce the ability of the parasite to lay eggs and attach itself to the intestinal wall whilst simultaneously damaging the adult worm, leaving it more susceptible to the dog's immune system.

Fennel




Fennel is a perennial herb and is rich in potassium, zinc and vitamin C. Fennel is also an excellent source of the essential oils anethole, limonene, anisic aldehyde, pinene, myrcene, fenchone and cineole. Anethole in particular has been found to have powerful antimicrobial properties but is also thought to be effective against worms and parasites due to the volatile oil.

Ginger

The relevant parts of ginger are the rhizome and root. Active constituents of ginger include gingerol, ginger-dione, shogaol, and sesquiterpene and monoterpene volatile oils. These active ingredients have a variety of pharmacological properties including reduction of fever, pain relief, cough suppression, anti-inflammatory, sedative, antibiotic, weak antifungal, destruction of parasitic worms and other properties.

Indeed, research has shown both ginger powder and ginger extract had anti-parasitic effects with respective maximum reductions of 25.6% and 66.6% in eggs per gram (EPG) of faeces when treated.



Cinnamon

The active component of cassia cinnamon is in the bark. This is where the volatile oil, cinnamaldehyde, is found, which gives cassia cinnamon its odour and taste. Studies have shown that cinnamon works alongside ginger to reduce infection of Giardia.



Peppermint

Mentha x piperita is a plant frequently used to aid gastrointestinal symptoms. Studies have shown that peppermint extracts inhibit the growth and adherence of *Giardia lamblia*, the parasite that causes giardiasis.

Vitamins A, Zinc and Selenium

Vitamin A plays an important role in intestinal barrier function and studies indicate parasitic infections are significantly lower in groups with higher levels of vitamin A. Further studies have shown that vitamin A in conjunction with zinc reduces incidences of giardia.

Selenium is an essential trace mineral found in soil, water, and some foods. In humans, selenium functions as a co-factor for the antioxidant enzymes essential for cell growth and survival. Studies have shown that deficiencies in selenium lead to higher levels of parasitic infection.

Probiotics and Prebiotics: Enterococcus Faecium and Inulin

The health of the gut microbiota is an additional factor which may interfere with parasitic infections; however, the existing interactions between enteric flora and protozoan parasites are still poorly understood.

The intestinal microbiota is essential in providing nourishment, regulating epithelial development and innate immunity and it has been shown that healthy microbiota can reduce the severity and duration of parasitic infection.

So how can you harness the power of these almighty superfoods and add them to your dog's diet in a simple, easy to feed way?



SAY HELLO TO BUG-K9!

At A-OK9, our expert team of vets and nutritionists have developed a solution that harnesses superpowers from all these natural ingredients to provide year-round protection from parasites including fleas and worms!

Bug-K9 fights the war against parasites in 4 key ways:

1. Boosts the immune system
2. Repels parasites before they can infect the dog
3. Targets parasites that are already in or on the dog
4. Supports the dog's gut microbiome

CHECK OUT BUG-K9



Through the awesome power of natural superfoods, Bug-K9 is an all-in-one immune-boosting anti-parasitic that combats fleas and worms and more in one simple and easy-to-give formula!

By taking this multi-pronged attack, the risks of other common parasites such as Giardia, which are not prevented by the blanket chemical approach, can be reduced.

But maybe you're worried about whether natural remedies are effective? Why would there be so many chemical solutions available out there if the natural ones worked?

Parasites aren't new to the planet. We've actually been treating and preventing them for centuries. The Bug-K9 superfood blend takes inspiration from ancient medicines and herbs to protect our dogs in a much kinder and less invasive manner.

And you don't have to wait to start using it! It's suitable for puppies from 8 weeks old and it is fine to be given all year round alongside the other awesome A-OK9 supplements. In fact, daily feeding ensures a greater effect on repelling external parasites!

What about Lungworm and Heartworm?

Both of these parasites can be a concern in certain areas, so this is where a tailored approach is vital.

However, even if a pesticide treatment is used, you can still support your dog's immune system with superfoods. Lungworm also has an intestinal stage which may also be susceptible to a more natural treatment.

Some laboratories can test stool samples for lungworms and there is a blood test that can be done for various stages of heartworm too!



LET'S DITCH THE BLANKET APPROACH

with a Multi-Pronged Attack

When might pesticide treatments be needed?

It's true that in areas where heartworm exists or there are high numbers of disease-carrying parasites, a chemical approach is simply unavoidable.

In this case, you can still incorporate your natural, holistic options and Bug-K9 into your regime, as well as using multiple methods of control, however, in most geographical locations this is NOT necessary, and this is great news!

What if my dog can't handle the pesticide approach?

Combining Husbandry Control and Superfood Control, along with fresh and furry natural options as well as regular testing, will help to combat parasites and guard your dog against fleas, ticks and worms.

Don't forget, Bug-K9 has your back too! It's a 100% natural superfood alternative to using pesticide control you can add to your dog's daily food!



CURIOUS TO KNOW MORE?

Level up your knowledge and what you know so you can keep taking awesome action to protect your dog, guard their health and give their wellbeing the ultimate boost!



Listen to this informative podcast as Tom and Lauren (founders of A-OK9) discusses how natural ingredients can help with parasite reduction and provide top tips on forming a more tailored approach to your dog's parasite prevention plan.

[LISTEN HERE!](#)



Listen in as Tom and Lauren take you on a vitally important journey – one of becoming more conscious of your dog's wellness and overall wellbeing so that you can set them up for a (very long) lifetime of health and absolute success!

[LISTEN HERE!](#)



Listen in as we dive into tips, strategies and superfoods that we can use each and every day to ensure our companions, our friends, our teammates, and our furry family members are as healthy as possible for as long as possible for supreme wellness success!

[LISTEN HERE!](#)



HUSBANDRY CONTROL

AKA: Grooming and Handling

When it comes to keeping parasites under control, one of the most vital options to complement your superfood and/or pesticide control (where it's needed), is of course, husbandry control.

Daily grooming and handling is going to be your number-one go-to when it comes to managing and keeping an eye out for external parasites like fleas, ticks and more.

Regular brushing, bathing and keeping your dog's coat in tip-top condition may not necessarily prevent fleas and ticks, but a well-managed coat will be more comfortable for your dog in daily life and will help you deal with anything that pops up quickly and easily.

Having a dog that is happy and trusts you when it comes to grooming and handling is also a vitally important

aspect of becoming your dog's best guardian and advocate.

Whether it's standing or laying quietly and calmly as you brush them or check them over for fleas and ticks – or even if it's making sure your dog is comfortable being bathed, having their ears, teeth, paws, nails and every other inch of their body handled and looked at – it's important your dog is comfortable, confident and happy with handling and grooming!

We've touched on this briefly, but now it's time to dive in and chat about how that can look practically in your day-to-day life with your dog. So, we've got some super husbandry and handling training exercises (we like to call them games!) that you can work on with your dog to really help support their health, wellbeing AND boost the effects of your other parasite control measures!

HANDLING BASICS #1

THE MOUSE GAME

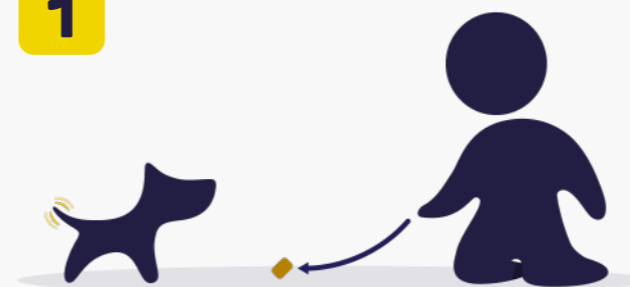
This is such a powerful game for you and for your dog, especially when it comes to handling and husbandry, but it also helps with training on a broader scale, teaching your dog a level of self-control, tolerance of frustration and calmness.

In terms of handling, this game is such a great foundation level as it grows value in stillness and prepares your dog for any and all handling you might need to do in the future. It's a powerful tool to have in your cooperative care toolkit for your dog!

YOU WILL NEED:



1



To start, gently flick, bowl or toss food towards your dog to get them ready to play – you can even scatter a small amount of food while you prepare for the game.

2



Take a small handful of food, place it down and as your dog goes towards it, cage it with your hand. They might sniff, scratch, lick or bite at your hand (wearing gloves can help!)

3



As soon as your dog pauses or stops trying to get the food, even for a moment, lift your hand and release some food by flicking it to them – and play again!

4



You can also vary the game by delivering food directly to your dog, or allowing them to come in and “get it” before caging the food again and playing another round!



HANDLING BASICS #2

THE MIGHTY MIDDLE GAME

This game is an awesome game for growing a dog's confidence in handling and husbandry. They get to learn that being in close proximity to you is the BEST deal, and the game also helps get them comfortable with being handled.

It's the perfect game to help with observation during vet visits (and so much more) and can become an absolute favourite position for many dogs, so it's definitely one to include in your dog's cooperative care toolkit!

YOU WILL NEED:



1



Begin with food in both hands and your dog facing you. Lure them around the back of one leg with one hand, while reaching through from front to back with your other hand and lead them through into 'Middle' position.

3



Build flexibility by bringing your dog into Middle from both left and right and put lots of value into the static position and add duration with a high rate of feeding/ reinforcement. You want your dog to know that Middle is a great place to be!

2



Feed when they are in position to reinforce that as the place of value. Throw a piece of food away to release your dog and as they come back, lure them into Middle again and feed in position to keep building the value.

4



Level up by introducing light touches to their back and/or sides as your dog stands in Middle. If they leave position, they aren't comfortable yet. Build value and keep your touches light and brief and make sure you reward generously.

HANDLING BASICS #3

THE HEAD LOW GAME

This is another fab game for husbandry and handling foundations! It's a calming game and can give your dog a form of consent and communication during handling, where your dog stands targeting an object as you practice handling them.

If they lift their chin from the target at all, they are asking for everything to stop, and if they return to the target again, they are willing to proceed. Great for nail trims, grooming, vet work and so much more which makes it perfect to include in your dog's cooperative care toolkit!

YOU WILL NEED:



1



Begin in front of your dog, holding an item that they can safely target, like a coaster, jar lid, a small folded towel or you can use your hand.

3



Reward by throwing food away to reset, then re-present the target to see what they offer. It can help to touch the target to your dog's chin so they understand what you're looking for, as long as your dog is comfortable.

2



Offer your object a little distance away from your dog. Reward any focus or interaction they offer with their head/chin toward the target.

4



Reset again, but now represent your target and hold it just beneath your dog's chin and see if they seek to touch it with their chin. Once your dog understands the game you can transfer this to any object to grow their skills!

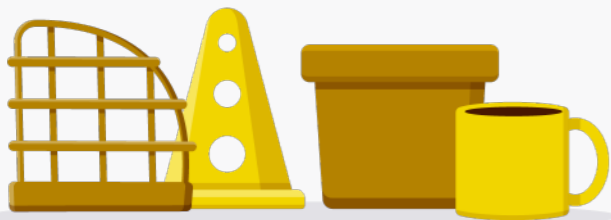
HANDLING BASICS #4

THE CONE GAME

This is a vital exercise for all dogs as it is the foundation of teaching your dog to love wearing a muzzle – and it helps get them comfortable with having their head and face handled AND it's a fun game that grows their optimism and confidence too!

If your dog ever has to visit the vet or even the groomer, they may require a muzzle on, especially if it is an emergency and your dog is unwell or in pain. This is yet another super powerful tool to have in your dog's cooperative care toolkit!

1



Make sure you have an object your dog can safely put their head in, like a large cone, mug, muzzle or plant pot.

3



As your dog turns back and moves towards the cone again 'mark' and reward movement closer and closer to the cone until they can touch it, each time still feeding away from the cone.

YOU WILL NEED:

YOU



DOG & FOOD



CONE OR MUZZLE



2



Present the cone to your dog and if they look at, move toward or sniff the cone, mark 'yes' and reward by tossing food away from you (and the cone).

4



Present the cone and see if they can put their nose into the cone. Mark 'yes' and toss a piece of food away from the cone. Build duration gradually and level up by changing out your cone for other objects.

HANDLING BASICS #5

THE FORWARD FOCUS FUN GAME

This game is really where it all starts to come together! You can layer up all these games to create the ultimate level of happy handling and husbandry for your dog!

This game is a great foundation training exercise to help your dog enjoy being handled, whether it's during vet visits, being checked for fleas and ticks, grooming and so much more so it's a must in your cooperative care toolkit for your dog!

1



With your dog in a standing position, warm up by playing Mouse Game, either on the floor, or with some pieces of food in a bowl. When your dog offers a level of self-control, you can get started!

3



You can add some movement and a light, gentle touch as a distraction. Can your dog still offer forward focus if you move an arm towards them, or gently stroke their back? Can they show self-control and only release to the food when invited?

YOU WILL NEED:

YOU



YOUR DOG



YOUR DOG'S FOOD



2



Now your dog knows the game, you can add a gentle restraint to your Mouse Game (hold your dog by their collar or pop a hand on their chest) before letting your dog get their reward... And repeat!

4



In lots of short, positive sessions, work up to being able to touch every part of your dog's body. If they move out of position, you've gone too fast so work at their pace and release your dog to the food often as a pressure release.

WANT TO KNOW MORE?

See these games in action!

Mouse Game



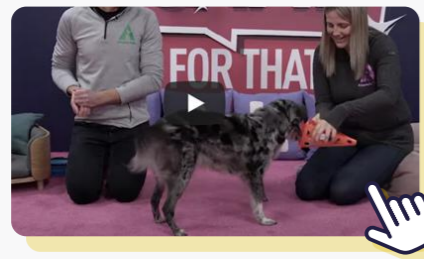
Head Low



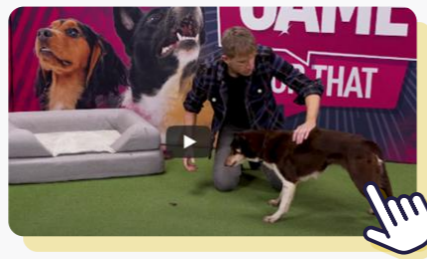
Middle



Cone Game



Forward Focus Fun



A-OK9 TICK TWISTERS!

Free yourself and your pets from the burden of 'ticky situations'!

Perfect for summer walks in long grass, our A-OK9 Tick Twisters mean you'll never have to worry about your furry friends picking up ticks ever again! These handy tools can be used on humans, cats and any other animal which may find themselves playing host to nasty parasites.

GET YOURS HERE!



A-OK9



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