

# TAKE THIS KONG AND STUFF IT!

## Enrichment to help satisfy your dog's instinctual needs to chew and play.

A filled KONG is a great way to keep your dog busy and redirect unwanted behaviors like chewing habits, getting underfoot, rearranging your house, or barking at the neighbors. It is also a great mental exercise and can help dogs deal with being alone. And it can get your puppy through the teething stage.

### Choosing a KONG

- Start with a few clean KONG toys appropriately sized for your dog.

### Fill it up – start by making it easy

- The first couple of times, just place kibble or treats in the KONG so it will be easier for your dog to remove the food and stay motivated.

### Make it more challenging

- Once your dog figures out that the KONG is a great chew toy AND it may have treats inside, you can up your game with layering. Here is the strategy:
  - Fill about 1/3 of the inside with treats or kibble.
  - Fill the rest of the inside with kibble or treats mixed with one of these healthy choices: canned dog food, plain yogurt, mashed banana, meat baby food, small bits of carrots or apples, blueberries, peanut butter, or cheese.
  - Leave a treat, like a dog biscuit, sticking out of the KONG. This will give your dog an immediate payoff and motivation to keep working on the KONG.

### Try a frozen KONG

- Freeze two or three KONGs at a time, stuffed with a variety of combinations. Here are some easy and healthy recipes to try:
  - Peanut butter or plain yogurt with dry dog food.
  - Canned sweet potatoes or pumpkin mashed with Cheerios.
  - Mashed banana with Goldfish crackers.
  - Low sodium beef or chicken broth mixed with dry dog food.
  - Canned green beans and carrots mixed with dry dog food or Cheerios.

### Try a "KONGsicle"

- Plug the hole in the small end with a dab of peanut butter or cheese, then place KONG in a cup and fill with water, low sodium chicken or beef broth. Place in freezer overnight.
- These are great for hot days – but messy – so it's best enjoyed by your dog outside.



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### TANTALIZER

Place a morsel of freeze-dried liver, a dab of peanut butter or cheese into the small hole on top.



### DESSERT

Fill about 1/3 of the inside with something yummy, such as yogurt, pumpkin or dog treats.

### MAIN COURSE

Fill the rest of the inside with kibble – mixed with canned food, oatmeal, peanut butter or cheese.

### APPETIZER

Leave a nice tidbit – such as a biscuit – sticking out. This will give your dog an immediate payoff and motivation to keep working on the KONG.

Remember to clean thoroughly after each use. Putting on the top rack of the dishwasher is recommended.