



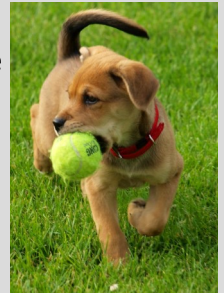
## Importance of Mental and Physical Stimulation for Your Dog (Part 3)

Article written by Renate Haveman, BVSc

In part 1 and 2 we talked about the importance of mental and physical stimulation. In this part we will be looking at simple ways to start working your dog's brain at home.

### Dog Puzzles and Toys that stimulate the brain

Puzzles for dogs can be simple to solve or very complicated and an excellent way of exercising your dog's mind. Whilst solving the puzzle your dog will try to find a treat, toy or other hidden object by himself. Your dog has to smell, look and feel with his nose or paw and some puzzles make noises, so that all your dog's senses are stimulated and his brain is 'exercised' in a different way. Thinking at the highest level is extremely tiring and can be fun for both owner and dog.



### Puzzles for every dog – young, old or recovering

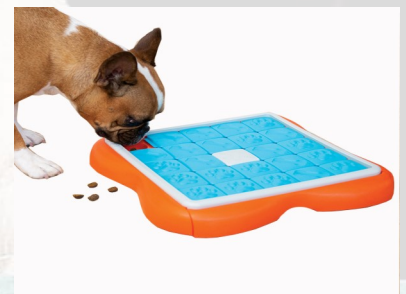
Brainwork is based on real co-operation between owner and dog and most have a lot of fun puzzling together. "Co-working" increases the bond you both have even more. Your dog will be better focused on you and prepared to "listen" to you even more. Obviously your dog needs to learn to wait first until you've prepared the game for him. Self-control is important when your dog puzzles.

For every owner who likes to do more with his dog other than walking round the 'block', for young dogs with a lot of energy, or dogs looking for a challenge, for dogs who don't want to go out in the rain, for dogs who are re-homed thinking their new world is still very exciting, for anxious dogs who would like to gain more self-confidence, for .... well, anyone really!

For dogs growing older or dogs recovering from an operation or injury and can't or aren't allowed to be very active, we can offer him the puzzles adapted to his physical condition. A good way to focus excess energy

Simple ideas to start with brain work at home:

- ◆ Work on new tricks
- ◆ Lick mat – Kmart around \$6
- ◆ Dog treat hunt in the house or garden
- ◆ Hiding treats under towel - working up to treats hidden in rolled up towel
- ◆ Treats hidden in shredded paper/rags/pieces of fabric in bowl or bag
- ◆ Treats hidden in muffin tin or egg carton + little balls/toys/fabric
- ◆ DIY snuffle mat to hide treats in



Online you can find a lot of different sources and ideas. Exploring Pinterest and Facebook can give you some great inspiration and just be creative with the stuff that you have at home or find some fun DIY projects to work on. Also have a look at some awesome puzzles and entertaining toys on <https://www.nina-ottosson.com/> and <https://www.kongcompany.com/>.



# Lameness in sheep:

Information supplied by [www.zoetis.co.nz/](http://www.zoetis.co.nz/)

Sheep are subject to a range of foot diseases that all cause lameness. These are especially common in wet weather when foot damage and skin inflammation pre-dispose sheep to developing infections.

## FOOTROT (INCLUDING SCALD)

Footrot is a highly contagious infectious disease. Virulent strains of footrot cause severe lesions and spread rapidly in warmer, moist environmental conditions.



### Signs

- Often affects more than one foot
- Lameness
- In mild cases (known as scald) there is some reddening between the toes
- In more severe cases, underrunning (i.e. separation) of horn from hoof. Starts at the inner wall, then progresses to sole, and eventually outer wall.
- Infected feet often smell.
- Infected feet may become flyblown.

### Causes

- The bacteria that cause footrot are *Dichelobacter nodosus* and *Fusibacterium necrophrum*.
- Unless there has been a previous footrot outbreak in your stock, the most likely way of introducing the bacteria to your property is by the introduction of new stock that are infected.
- The bacteria that causes footrot can live in the feet of a carrier sheep (or goat) indefinitely, even under dry conditions.
- A paddock which has had no sheep, goats or cattle in it for seven days is likely to be free from footrot.

### Control, Treatment and eradication

- Control of spread involves footbathing (for long or short term actions).
- Footbathing in 10% zinc sulphate helps treat existing lesions and reduce the spread of bacteria, improves the health, welfare and production of sheep, enhances the effect of a footrot vaccination program if used and provides precautionary quarantine treatment for introduced sheep.
- Eradication programs involve the identification and removal of all infected sheep from a flock when footrot is not spreading.
- All feet on all sheep must be inspected, and infected sheep or those requiring extensive foot trimming should be culled.
- In some cases salvage treatment with foot paring, footbathing and antibiotic treatment can be used.
- Repeat inspection is made four weeks after the initial inspection and continued with regular surveillance.





## Dog thinking twice about jumping on and off the ute?

**Noticing any dogs lagging behind the pack or taking longer to recover after a big day's work lately? Hesitant to jump? They may be showing the first signs of Osteoarthritis.**

Smooth running dogs are an important part of your workforce but can be taken for granted. We tend not to appreciate just how useful a speedy, agile dog is, until something breaks or parts wear out! Sometimes it's wear and tear on dogs' joints that cause them to slow up or break down. Osteoarthritis can hamper a dog's performance throughout the year, but during winter, colder weather exacerbates the subtle signs of mild arthritis, so you're more likely to start noticing symptoms. No matter what the weather does however, being proactive ensures that everything has been done so these valuable experienced workers are maintained to maximise your investment in them.... And because they're your best mate – right?!

Degenerative joint disease or Osteoarthritis is a debilitating disease whereby pain and stiffness develop as a result of wear and tear on the joints. Cartilage reduces stress on bones by acting like a shock absorber, minimizing impact on joints. Over time, excessive repetitive forces damage cartilage, and inflammatory changes occur, eventually leading to cartilage destruction, subsequent damage and remodeling of the underlying bone; joints become painful causing lameness. That's when you might start getting a few first refusals to jump... it hurts.

These changes are not curable, but you can lessen the pain and inflammation associated with them. Acting early can slow the progression of arthritic damage. Taking a proactive approach to extend the longevity of dogs' careers will pay dividends financially and can be viewed as a best practice welfare policy.

### **How many different osteoarthritis signs can you recognise in your dogs?**

- Less energy, lagging behind the pack, sleeping more
- Stiffness, especially first thing, increased stretching
- Slower to rise after rest or recover after a big day
- Hesitating jumping on and off the ute or over fences
- Swollen joint/s or licking a single joint frequently (pain)
- Lameness or shortened strides
- Change in behaviour/aggression, less patience with young dogs



### **How can you help them stay top performing athletes for longer?**

**Discussing your dog's issues with us and getting a thorough vet exam** is a great place to start. In moderate to severe cases vets may prescribe pain relief/ anti-inflammatory medication – This may take the form of a monthly tablet, or daily pills / liquid – added to feed. There's a series of injections that we sometimes recommend too, based on the principle of providing the building blocks to make joint fluid... think of it like an oil & filter change for your dog! There are also joint supplement tablets available without prescription for mild arthritis, or to use in conjunction with anti-inflammatories. Plus prescription diets for dogs with arthritis. So, plenty of options, plenty of help. It's not 'one-size fits all.'

**Reconsider your kennel setup...** could it do with some renovations? Fully waterproof and draft free are bare necessities. Ensure dogs have a good layer of insulation underneath them to alleviate transfer of cold from the ground. Thick padded, dry beds help alleviate excess pressure on sore joints and provide more warmth. Dog jackets are a great idea too, especially for the light conditioned and older dogs.

**If you're breeding pups,** consider seeking hip and elbow radiography scores when selecting a Heading or Huntaway stud and bitch. In many other breeds of dog this is an established technique to improve joint architecture, using genetics to reduce the predisposition towards arthritis in future generations.

A good quality diet is essential for any working dog, but the right ratio of calcium: phosphorus given to growing dogs is critical to help avoid degenerative joint disease initially – we can recommend diets for pups to grow safely.

**Balance the workload.** When work on farm for the dogs is erratic, they must have at least one exercise period every day to help prevent stiffness. Steady, little and often work for dogs on treatment for arthritis is better than massive muster days followed by long periods of no work. It just makes sense, welfare wise and financially, to get



## DIY CAT TOY

information sourced from [www.hillspet.co.nz](http://www.hillspet.co.nz)

It's no secret that cats love to play, but they're also picky about their choice of entertainment. And because cats grow bored very easily, you have to mix up her playtime every once in a while to keep it fresh and exciting. Interested in keeping your furry friend's interest? Try this creative DIY cat toy:

### The Ghost

Your kitty will love to bat around this spirited creature, and not just on Halloween; it doubles as a cat-sized pillow!



### What You'll Need

- A cotton t-shirt
- Thin piece of cloth ribbon, 20 to 25cm long
- Metal jingle bell
- Scissors
- Black permanent marker

### How to Make It

Cut two squares out of the t-shirt—one 10cm by 10cm and one 5cm by 5cm. Fit a tiny, metal jingle bell in the middle of the smaller square for a source of alluring noise, and loosely wad this up into a ball. Place the ball in the middle of the larger square and wrap around the balled fabric. Tie the ribbon around the bottom of the ball securely to create the head.



For your cat's safety, trim the ribbon close to the ghost's neck so she doesn't chew or swallow the ribbon. Draw a spooky face for your ghost and you're ready to go! When the fabric begins to fray or the ribbon becomes loose, simply replace with a new ghost (she obviously likes it).

John visited his 70-year-old survivalist grandpa who lived off the grid.

On the first morning of the visit, John's grandpa prepared a breakfast of turkey bacon and eggs. John noticed a film-like substance on his plate, and asked, "Are these plates clean?"

His grandpa replied, "They're as clean as cold water can get them. Just go ahead and finish your meal."

For lunch, Grandpa made hamburgers.

Again, John was concerned about the plates, as his appeared to have specks of dried egg on it. "Are you sure these plates are clean?" he asked.

Without looking up, Grandpa said, "I told you before, those dishes are as clean as cold water can get them!"

Later, as John was leaving, his grandpa's dog started to growl and wouldn't let him pass.

John said, "Grandpa, your dog won't let me get by!"

Grandpa yelled to the dog, "Cold Water, go lie down!"