



# Environmental Enrichment: Types of Enrichment

Croney Research Group

# Exposure to multiple types of enrichment matters!

1. Addresses unique dog preferences for activities
2. Increases comfort with diverse environmental factors, items, dogs, and people
3. Minimizes fearful responses, stress, anxiety, and boredom
4. Supports continued engagement due to novelty of experiences
5. Increases sense of control over their environment, bodies, and how they interact
6. Promotes engagement in natural, rewarding behaviors

**Learn More At-a-Glance : [Enrichment, Stress, and Improved Welfare](#)**



A black and white dog is splashing in water, with water droplets and bubbles around its head. The dog has a white blaze on its face and is looking towards the camera.

# Categories of Enrichment

1. Social
2. Nutritional
3. Occupational
4. Sensory
5. Physical

**Learn More At-a-Glance : [Enrichment Application](#)**



# Social Enrichment

- With humans: passive, play, petting, training
- With dogs: group housing, play sessions
- With other animals: greeting, smelling, watching



# Nutritional Enrichment

- Chews (for safety, make sure they can not be broken into small sharp pieces and are digestible!)
- Puzzle feeder
- Scavenger hunt for snacks
- Variety of treats

Note: Chews (example: calf hooves) are also beneficial for periodontal disease prevention. Be careful to not give chew items that will damage teeth – closely monitor for wear and breakage



# Occupational Enrichment

- Positive training for specific activities (e.g. skills, tricks, jobs, sports)
- Obstacle courses
- Puzzles, games
- Digging, swimming, herding





## Sensory Enrichment: Sights

- Movement  
(balls, flirt poles)
- Color
- Light



# Sensory Enrichment: Sounds

- Music
- Audiobooks
- Natural sounds



## Sensory Enrichment: Smells

- Scented toys
- Herbs & spices
- Commercially available animal scents
- Dogs allowed to investigate smells on walks
- Foraging
- Scent work



## Sensory Enrichment: Tactile

- Substrates (e.g. gravel, sand, grass, cloth, wood, tile, metal, water, carpet)
- Hold in mouth (e.g. soft, hard, smooth, rough)
- Receive (e.g. grooming, petting)



## Sensory Enrichment: Tastes

- Variety of treats during interactions
- Chew items
- Varied textures
- Varied diet



# Physical Enrichment

**Furniture** – elevated resting areas, hiding areas, ramps, steps in the indoor and outdoor portions of the home pen, and pools, platforms, tunnels, digging boxes in the play yards

**Toys** – especially if easy to chew (careful with safety) or noisy, dogs may or may not prefer to have toys suspended



A photograph of a brown and white puppy standing on a sandy beach. The puppy is looking towards the camera. The background is a blurred beach scene with the ocean in the distance.

## Learn More:

- [Enrichment in Kennels Handout](#)
- [Quick Tips for Success: Environmental Enrichment in Kennels](#)
- [Canine Environmental Enrichment Log Handout](#)
- [The role of caretaker interactions in environmental enrichment for kenneled dogs](#)
- [Implementing Environmental Enrichment for Dogs](#)
- [At-a-Glance: Enrichment Application](#)
- [At-a-Glance: Enrichment, Stress, and Improved Welfare](#)



Authors:

Taylor Rezvani, PhD, Traci Shreyer, MA, Candace Croney, PhD

©2021 Candace C. Croney, PhD. All rights reserved.