

Exercising Your Dog

Certain activities you do with your dog such as running on a treadmill, playing on a spring pole, weight pulling, and playing tug, have all been cast in a negative light by people on both sides of the “pit bull” issue. Additionally, owning a treadmill or a spring pole has even been classified as “dog fighting paraphernalia” in some city ordinances. This is, of course, ridiculous. Dogs are largely under-exercised and mentally under-stimulated, and any activities we can do to exercise their brain and their body can help to burn energy and make their lives more fulfilling. Some of our favorite dog activities are listed below, along with our physical and mental stimulation ranking.

Treadmill

Teaching your dog to run on a treadmill can be a great energy outlet and can make exercising your dog more convenient to your schedule, the hot summer months, the icy winter months, and in unexpected inclement weather. **Physical: 4, Mental: 2.**

Spring Pole

Teaching your dog to play on a spring pole can be a great way to exercise your dog, stimulate him mentally, and build a working relationship between dog and handler. Spring pole can be a fun way to provide an outlet for this drive and teaching the dog to work for the reward of tugging the spring pole toy, as well as the discipline to promptly let go on command, can be a great bonding exercise for the dog and owner. **Physical: 3, Mental: 3.**

Weight Pulling

Even though weight pulling started out with the northern sled pulling breeds, for some reason it is often erroneously portrayed as a “cover” activity for dog fighters. A lot of good people and great dogs are involved in weight pulling and have no connection to dog fighting what-so-ever. Weight pulling and even cart pulling can be great activities for dog and handler; especially higher drive dogs who need a more intense energy outlet than just a walk around the block. **Physical: 5, Mental: 4.**

Tug

The activity with perhaps the greatest mythology surrounding it is the game of “tug.” People may advise you not to play tug with your dog because they believe it will increase aggression, make the dog want to bite, or is somehow an exercise in “dominance.” None of these are true. When the dog “wins” the rope, it brings the rope back to you – because without you pulling it, the rope is just a rope. The dog is just playing and you can rest assured that tug will not ruin your relationship, quite the opposite in fact. **Physical: 2, Mental: 3.**

Interested in these activities? Look for a club in your area or talk to a trainer, learn, and enjoy!

For educational purposes only. Unless specifically trained by Game Dog Guardian professional training staff, Game Dog Guardian and Pinups for Pitbulls does not warrant results from any exercise program. Any weight pulling, spring pole, or treadmill exercise program should be first learned and carried out by professional training staff for that activity or certified professional dog trainers.