



Activities For Your Home Alone Dog

Dogs are pack animals who crave companionship. However, the reality of life is that you will sometimes have to leave your dog home alone. With just a little bit of advance planning, you can help make your dog's alone time enjoyable. Here are a few ideas.

- Give your dog a good amount of exercise before you leave. Take him for a walk or toss the ball for him. If he's tired and settles down for a nap as soon as you leave, the time will fly by.
- Most dogs love having a canine companion. Consider getting a second dog. (We have great dogs available for adoption, and would be happy to suggest a dog that might be suitable.)
- If you have a fenced yard, consider installing a doggy door. Not only will this allow your dog to go outside to relieve himself, it provides for a change of scenery. (If your dog is an escape artist, make sure your yard has been made escape-proof. See our sheet on "Digging.")
- Hire a dog walker, or take your dog to doggy day care. (Most dogs get pretty tuckered out at doggy day care. You may find that a couple visits a week is plenty.)
- Take turns with a friend or family member hosting each other's dogs.
- Play a music CD. (There are some that were created specially for dogs.) Or, leave on the TV or radio.
- Send your dog on a treasure hunt. Leave special toys hidden around the house for your dog to find, or toss their kibble around on the floor.
- Leave your dog with a special treat that will keep them busy and happy, such as a stuffed Kong. (Please see our training flyer "Using a Stuffed Kong Toy" for suggestions on how to use a Kong most effectively.)
- If your dog has severe anxiety when home alone that results in destructive behavior, please consult with your vet about whether an anti-anxiety drug would be appropriate.

Important Safety Note About Toys: Dogs should be introduced to new toys under supervision. If you are not certain that a toy does not present a choking hazard, do not leave your dog alone with it. Keep toys clean.

The Austin Dog Alliance, a non-profit 501(c)3 organization, provides the following programs:

- **Rescue:** Our foster parents provide a nurturing home environment for dogs.
- **Youth Outreach:** Dog-related educational programs for area schools and youth groups.
- **Deaf Community:** Uniquely tailored youth and adult dog training taught in sign language.
- **Dog Training:** We provide a wide variety of fun and educational dog training classes.
- **Pet Therapy:** We provide seminars, classes, evaluations, placement, and support to therapy teams in local schools, hospitals, and nursing homes.

