

I love rolling in poo and rotting carcasses and eating some or all of it

Most dogs love running in water, rolling in mud or sand. Some dogs particularly appreciate to roll in poop or rotting carcasses. This behavior might be an ersatz of an ancient hunt behavior consisting of imprinting the smell of a potential prey and bringing the information back to the group in order to go back out on a team hunt.



Some of our dogs love to eat poo. A study of free-ranging dogs in Africa* revealed that faeces could made up approximately 20% of their daily diet. If we find this behaviour disgusting, it is nevertheless a completely normal dog behaviour. So let's teach our dogs a "smacking sound" 💡 and let's use it when we would prefer that they abstain from carrying out that natural behaviour.



A **smacking sound** (tongue clicking, whistling, ...) is used to attract our dog's attention and inform her "Please stay away from that", or "Come back in my direction please". It can be used in many situations of daily life to get the dog out of trouble or unwanted situations, or to teach her to walk on a loose leash. In order to be as clear as possible, the smacking sound will be accompanied by a clear body language.

* Butler and du Toit, *Diet of free-ranging domestic dogs (Canis familiaris) in rural Zimbabwe: implications for wild scavengers on the periphery of wildlife reserves*, 2001.

Let's remember:

Dogs have specific basic needs. For their welfare and optimal development, it is essential to meet those needs, as much as possible. A dog who can't express her basic needs is likely to develop unwanted behaviours and become unhappy.

Let's never punish a dog, especially not if she is performing a behaviour meeting basic needs! If this behaviour bothers us, let's make sure the dog doesn't get the chance to be in a position to express this behaviour, or let's take her out of it as soon as possible.

Other normal behaviours are :

- Chewing
- Digging holes (to find small animals or to hide treasures)
- Smelling peers, as well as humans
- Doing nothing: watching the world goes by
- ...

Far from being complete, this brochure invites you to question common thoughts on the species *Canis familiaris*, and encourages you to open up to the true nature of dogs, the very one that seduced our ancestors. In order to do this, it's good to gather information from very different people, but above all, to trust your instinct! Let's show empathy and put ourselves in our dog's paws: "Why does she do that?", and even more important "Does it make her happy?". If the answer is "Yes", then all that is left for us to do is to share this happy moment with her! A dog who can really be a dog is a happy dog 😊



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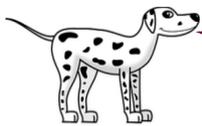
I AM A DOG!

4 things dogs do...

because they are dogs!



Here are some of our dogs' favourite activities that can communicate their basic needs or their instinct. Often misinterpreted by humans, these activities are nevertheless highly fulfilling for our furry friends, without risking our lives, nor the quality of our relationship with them, just the opposite really! So, what are we waiting for to let our dogs express their true nature?



I love helping myself to food left unattended and leftovers

For dogs, what does not belong to someone (understand: is not clearly guarded or claimed by an individual), belongs to whomever is interested. It is therefore normal for a dog to help herself to food left unattended on the table. It's also totally "natural" for our dogs to check out the leftovers or our meals, or even to make hers, the prewashing task. Moreover, in dogs – as in humans – eating is a social



activity. Not surprising then when our dog pops into the kitchen or up on the table when we are about to have dinner.

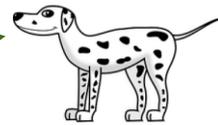
Let's do a "hand signal"  when we sit at the dinner table, or when we leave our food unattended, to let her kindly know that this is not meant for her.

If some of these behaviours towards food bother us, let's teach our dog with kindness, patience and consistency what we expect from her.



The **hand signal** is a universal language understood by every species. It can mean « No thank you, not now », or « I'm the one in charge right now ». Depending on the situation, the animal will easily understand its meaning. It is done by showing the animal the palm of our hand (this is a soft movement).

I love sniffing all the scents I encounter



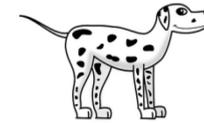
If the dog analyses her environment primarily with her sight, she catches its scope and all its details through her nose. Dogs need to use their nose, be it to trail a rabbit in the garden or the last dog that went on this very path a couple of hours ago, or just to get to know a novel object, or a newcomer.



Activities that allow dogs to use their noses are deeply relaxing, they do however also require a lot of concentration. Let's take advantage of our daily walks to walk

slowly and let our dog have the opportunity to use her nose: her walk will be all the more fulfilling and satisfying, giving her a deep sense of relaxation and "tiredness".

Equally, let's have our dog explore new things and new places whenever it's possible. Let's encourage her to explore new things we bring home if she fancies it!



I love my «family's» company to sleep

Dogs need 14 to 18 hours sleep a day. Puppies might even need up to 20 hours sleep a day.

For dogs, sleeping is a highly social activity, be it with other dogs, or their human family.

Depending on the situation, dogs will look for a warm or



a cool place to sleep. They also enjoy resting their head on a cushion, on the arm of a sofa, ... and even on a dog or human friend, to find true comfort! They enjoy sleeping on or under things, as it can give them a feeling of security. This feeling of security while sleeping can also arise from the proximity of a dog or human friend while sleeping, and is of uttermost importance to allow truly restoring sleep (so called deep sleep). Avoidance of disturbances of all sorts, and especially noises, will also make for a proper sleep.

