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Ways to Exercise Senior Dogs

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Posted by Chewy

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Socialization, regular activity and mental stimulation are the things that keep our furry friends young at heart—especially in their golden years. Just like humans, an old dog's metabolism and energy levels tend to slow down with age. In order to keep a senior dog fit, it is important to promote physical movement and mental engagement with activities that will keep your four-legged family member healthy and sharp.

Take a dip. When the weather becomes too warm for a comfortable walk, why not go for a swim? Swimming is a fun, low-impact activity that offers a mild workout for puppies and senior dogs alike.



Swimming is a non-weight-bearing sport that allows senior dogs to engage all muscle groups while taking pressure off the joints—and although not all breeds are water dogs, swimming can be introduced at any age. Be sure to keep in mind your pup's physical abilities when acquainting him with water, and do so at an appropriate pace. According to Dr. Sally A. Morgan, PT, CST of Holistic Physical Therapy for Pets and People in West Hatfield, Massachusetts, "Avoid [having senior dogs swim] in very cold or rough water, as their stamina will not be what it used to be. Overdoing it can cause sore muscles and stiff joints, so a big part of exercise with a senior pet is changing pet needs."

Gearing your dog up for success with the proper safety equipment, such as the [Outward Hound PupSaver Ripstop Dog Life Jacket](#), is important in keeping him secure and out of harm's way, especially for first-timers. As your pup gets more comfortable in his new environment, try incorporating his favorite water toy to keep him motivated.

Designate a play space. It's no secret that dogs love their freedom with ample space to romp and play. But we all lead busy lives, and it can sometimes be hard to keep an eye on our pup while checking off items on our to-do lists. Next time you're multi-tasking at home or on the go, consider opting for the [Frisco Dog Exercise Pen with Step-Through Door](#) over your pup's everyday kennel. With a variety of sizes to choose from and easy-to-fold construction, this designated play area is the perfect way to give your senior dog the freedom he deserves, while keeping him safe indoors and out. With more space for moving about, a playpen offers the opportunity for your dog to get up and moving throughout the day. For the ideal happy dog combo, try adding his favorite toy into the mix to keep his muscles and mind active.

Roll the ball, instead of throwing it. Fetch is always popular with the pups. This playtime game is mutually beneficial and builds a bond between humans and their animals while getting both parties physically involved. For old dogs, fetch can easily be modified to be less demanding in order to accommodate their physical needs and stamina. Try rolling the ball away from your dog, instead of throwing it, to shorten the distance he will need to travel to retrieve the toy. The [JW Pet Hol-ee Roller Dog Toy](#) is made of flexible, durable rubber and is water friendly for any kind of play.

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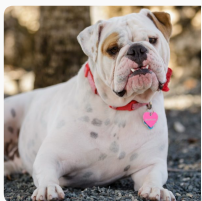


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