

Dog Senses



**Maggie's
Rescue**

Dogs have five main senses - understanding them will help you understand a lot of our recommendations and their purpose. Let's use their senses to our advantage!

1. Sight

Dogs:

- See the world in red-green, like colour blindness in humans
- Are sensitive to moving objects
- Have poor vision for detail compared to humans
- Have good night vision compared to humans

A dog's sight is very different to a human's. Dogs see in colours with less clarity and detail. They can see better in low-level light and have the ability to detect movement far greater than us.

These attributes often help our hunting and tracking dogs. This can be seen when you throw a toy or ball at your dog. Dogs are stimulated by the action of the object being thrown, but if they miss where it lands and it sits stationary, your dog may not be able to find it despite being near it.

Visual stimulation is a wonderful way of enriching dogs. Some dogs seem to love watching TV and movies whilst others will not find this motivating. With advances in technology and High-Res devices, you may find your dog taking an interest in your favourite movie. Make this the time of relaxation set up a comfy pace on the couch and enjoy it together!

There have been several movies specifically created for our canine companions. *Woofing Heights* is a film specifically created for reducing stress, particularly for those dogs with noise phobias: <https://dogsmoonthly.co.uk/2016/11/01/worlds-first-stress-busting-films-pets/>

2. Hearing

Dogs:

- Have 4x more acute hearing than humans
- Can hear high frequencies
- Can hear ultrasonic noises



A dog's sense of hearing is far more acute than a human's. Dogs can hear things that we cannot. They can detect noises at a range 4x greater than we can. We often think our dogs are barking at nothing, but this is rarely the case.

Calming Music

Through a dog's ear, classical music has been scientifically proven to settle and relax our dogs. It can assist in relieving stress for noise-sensitive dogs whilst blocking out audible triggers that they can potentially hear resulting in more settled and calm behaviour.



Through a Dog's Ear: <https://youtu.be/f-szLQy7JHg>

Audio Books for Dogs

Studies have suggested that listening to audiobooks can positively influence our dog's behaviour and assist in settling our dog particularly when their human companions are away. Playing audiobooks can assist in settling through the comfort of the human voice, encouraging them to be more relaxed and sleep.



Dog Audio Books: <https://www.audible.com/ep/dogs>

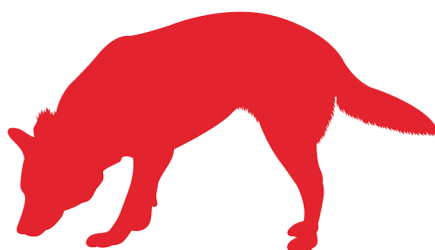
3. Smell

Dogs:

- Have a nose that is 1000x more sensitive than humans (they have a specific 'vomeronasal organ' which is situated between the nasal cavity and the brain for fast delivery and interpretation of smells)
- Can discriminate between thousands of different odours
- Can detect low concentrations of odours

A dog's sense of smell is its most highly developed sense. This is how our dogs explore their world and gain information. When walking our dogs, they naturally sniff the environment. When doing this they are gaining information about who and what was there before them. They are also leaving scents and messages for the next dog that passes. It is like social media for dogs!

We can use our dog's incredible olfactory to assist in training, and in fun scent games like nose works. Dogs absolutely love games that allow them to use their noses because they are naturally good at it!



There are several sniff-it-out games you can play. According to experts, 20 mins of sniffing is as rewarding as a 1-hour walk. So, put your dog's snout to work; space some tasty treats inside scrunched-up paper or pillowcase. To create variety, you could also try using vanilla, coconut, ginger and valerian. These can help reduce our dog's level of barking. Coconut and ginger have been found to increase relaxation and assist in sleep.

4. Taste

Taste is linked closely to our dog's sense of smell; the sense of smell is more important than what our dog taste. If it smells good, most likely our dogs will consume it. Feeding our dogs is a daily requirement, and there are amazing and endless ways of making mealtime fun and stimulating.

4. Touch

- Puppies use their mouth to assess the feel of an object e.g. a ball
- Dogs can feel pain like you and me (e.g. Choker chains hurt!)

Touch is the first sense your puppy develops, and the one that they mostly rely on in their first few weeks of being born. Your dog's sense of touch involves being touched by humans as well as touching objects around them. This is how they feel the world around them and communicate with other dogs.

Physical affection, petting, brushing and massage are all positive and important ways to communicate with your dog through touch. There are many activities that we practice to support your dog's sense of touch.

Massage

Massaging your dog has proven benefits for you and your dog. It is relaxing and a lovely way to spend quality time with your dog. It can also help you keep track of your dog's health by finding any unusual lumps or bumps.

