

## 🐾How to Stuff A Kong🐾

### *What is a “Kong”?*

Kongs are very tough, hollow chew toys available in various “chew levels”, sizes, and for different stages of life.



### *Stuffing Strategy*

- 🐾 Pick up five Kongs for your dog or puppy. Make sure to choose the right Kong for your dog’s stage of life. While you’re at the pet supply store, pick up a small tin of freeze-dried liver.
- 🐾 Back home, place three or four of the cubes of liver in a plastic bag, place a towel over the bag and break up the cubes into smaller pieces. Take the pieces of freeze-dried liver and sprinkle them into the entire bag of your dog’s dry food, shake up the bag to distribute the pieces evenly and let it sit overnight.
- 🐾 Since you’ll be packing the Kongs with your dog’s food, it’s important to portion out his freeze-dried, liver treated food daily. Place the food into containers for Kong stuffing, training, regular meals, and so on. This will ensure that your dog is not overfed.
- 🐾 When stuffing your dog’s Kong the goal is to stuff them tightly enough so that your dog works hard to get to the goodies inside, which satisfies his need to chew and helps diminish stress.
- 🐾 Rub a small amount of butter or peanut butter on the inside of the Kongs. Next, place a high-level treat like a small piece of boiled chicken (or any other favorite treat) into the Kong. Then, fill the Kong about halfway full with the liver-treated dry food. Follow the dried food with a spoonful of canned wet dog food. Lastly, “plug” the Kong with a yummy piece of carrot. Using carrots will get your dog hooked on them, and they are the perfect low-calorie snack (if your dog’s eating his Kong on carpeting, use a biscuit instead!).

### *Why so many Kongs?*

Having Kongs prepared makes it easy to toss them to your dog whenever necessary. Give your dog a couple of Kongs in the morning; one after he’s gone outside to relieve himself and one a few minutes before you leave. This keeps his focus on the Kong and not on you leaving, helping to ease any anxiety surrounding your departure.

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When company comes over, teach your dog that people knocking are welcome because either you or the guest goes right over to the fridge, grabs a Kong, requests him to “[Sit](#)”, and then tosses him a Kong. Done frequently enough, particularly when your dog is a puppy, your dog will quickly learn that good things happen when guests come over. The act of trotting to the fridge with a guest discourages nuisance behavior like [jumping](#) up and barking excessively. This is one of the many things that should be done to help socialize a puppy or adult dog.

De-stuffing Kongs takes quite a while for a dog. Busy? Stepping out for a while? Taking your dog on a car trip? Toss him a Kong stuffed with the tasty treat concoction described above and he’ll be well entertained. It’s also a perfect reward after a good training session.

### **Customize the Kongs**

You can use anything you want to stuff the Kong, as long as it’s a part of your dog’s daily food ration. Be creative! There are limitless possibilities of what you can do with a Kong.

- 🐾 Fruit makes a great treat, including bananas and cantaloupe (stay away from acidic fruits like oranges and grapefruits).
- 🐾 A small amount of organic, plain yogurt is a good treat; make sure to introduce it to your dog a little at a time to get his system accustomed.
- 🐾 In the summer, you can make Kong-cicles by plugging up the Kong’s smaller hole with a bit of carrot or apple, placing the Kong on an ice cube tray standing upright, and filling the Kongs with low-sodium chicken broth. Toss a few small pieces of carrot in for crunch, freeze them, and then let your dog enjoy them!

### **Important Training Tie-in**

There’s a crucial element every dog custodian needs to incorporate into daily life and training. Your dog should perceive you as the giver of all good things in life; food, toys, walks, anything he wants that’s safe in the environment like sniffing grass, greeting people and other dogs or anything else he sees as great fun. So use all of the many opportunities you have to show him this “law of nature” by having him “Sit”, “Down” or any other request before rewarding him with it.

*Note: Training handouts are written by i Love Dogs’ consulting trainer, [Eugenia Vogel](#), who has more than 20 years experience as a professional dog trainer and behavior consultant as “Canine Coach.” For more questions about canine behavior, visit i Love Dogs’ [Ask-A-Trainer](#) section on [iLoveDogs.com](#)!*

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