

Animal Enrichment Best Practice Series

The 8 Components Every Animal Enrichment Program Should Have





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Best Practices VS Minimum Standards

Five Freedoms

1. Freedom from hunger and thirst
2. Freedom from discomfort
3. Freedom from pain, injury or disease
4. Freedom to express normal behavior
5. Freedom from fear and distress



Enrichment Defined

A process for improving the environment and behavioral care of confined animals within the context of their behavioral needs.



Purpose of Enrichment

To reduce stress and improve well-being by providing physical and mental stimulation, encouraging species-typical behavior and allowing animals more control over their environment.



NO shelter can provide the quality of life dog and cats enjoy in homes.

GET THEM OUT!



While there, however, every animal deserves an enriched living environment.



In order to comply with BEST practice enrichment:

Must be provided on a DAILY basis

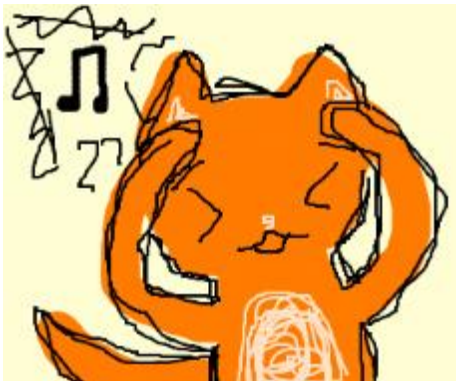
- just like the provision of food, water and other basic needs

Shelters should incorporate several enrichment strategies into their enclosure designs and daily operations to accomplish this goal.

It's difficult to give specific guidelines...

in regard to frequency and duration of activities

- Length of exposure to visual, auditory, olfactory stimulation
- Length of exposure to social (human and conspecific) stimulation



- Appropriateness of social time with conspecifics
- Type and amount of exercise

GENERAL Guidelines

The SAWA Enrichment Best Practice document outlines general guidelines and conceptual principles of each type of enrichment.

Your enrichment plan must allow for modifications based on **INDIVIDUAL** animals' behavioral and physiological needs.

Many factors to consider

- Age of animal
- Physical condition
- Emotional state (i.e. fearful)

While there is research available showing that enrichment can reduce stress in shelter animals, more research is needed on optimal frequency, duration and types of enrichment strategies.

A comprehensive enrichment program should provide:

- Comfortable living space (resting/sleeping)
- Species specific opportunities (hiding and scratching for cats, chewing for dogs)
- Social interaction (human and conspecific)
- Physical exercise
- Mental stimulation
- Sensory enrichment
- Novel experiences
- Variety

Enclosure Enhancements and Features

Each animal should have a clean, dry, comfortable living space that allows appropriate rest/sleep



Cat Necessities

- Soft bedding
- Perch
- Hiding place
- Separate functional areas
- Access to scratching surface



Dog Necessities

- Comfortable resting surface
- Novel toy
- Chew item



Photo credit – Humane Society of Boulder Valley



Photo credit – Humane Society of Boulder Valley

Opportunities for Species-Specific Behaviors

Scratching posts, rubbing brushes, chew items, digging pits



SOCIAL Enrichment - Humans

Minimum of 15 minutes/day
(unless afraid of people)



Especially for the Babies

Socialization period

3-12 weeks – dogs

3-7 weeks – cats



SOCIAL Enrichment - Conspecific

For well-socialized individuals who enjoy the company of others.

DOGS

- Pair walks
- Play groups
- Co-housing



SOCIAL Enrichment- Conspecific

For well-socialized individuals who enjoy the company of others.

CATS

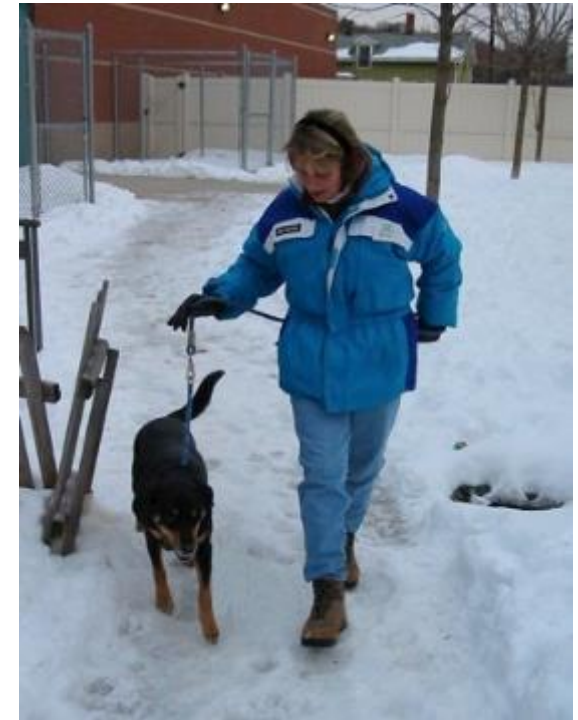
Colony housing



Physical Exercise - Dogs

Minimum of 15 minutes/day

walking, running, fetch games, agility, play (humans and/or dogs)



Physical Exercise - Cats

Minimum 2 hours/week

interactive play, time out of cage



Video – Cat Wheel

Video credit – Nevada Humane Society



Self Play



Photo credit – Nevada Humane Society



- Exercise
- Mental stimulation

Social Play



- Exercise
- Social stimulation
- Mental stimulation



Play Yards



Mental Stimulation – Cognitive Enrichment



Engage the brain

Problem Solving Challenges

FEEDING enrichment



Video – Feeding Enrichment

Video credit – KPA Shelter Training & Enrichment



Investigatory Opportunities

- Explore novel objects
- Stimulate the 'seeking' sense
 - Foraging opportunities (hidden toys/treats)



Operant Training

- Opportunity to think and learn
- Increase sense of control



Trick Training

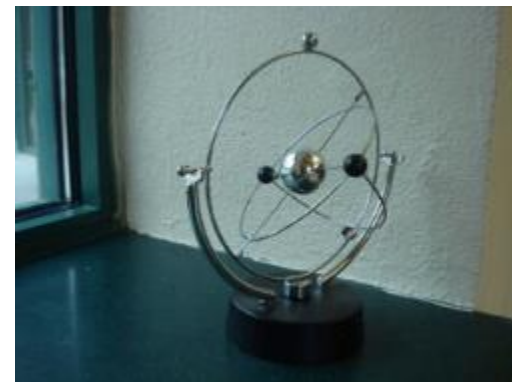


SENSORY Enrichment

- Stimulating all of the senses
- Be mindful that reducing certain sights, sounds and smells is sometimes required to reduce stress.
- Loud startling noises, intense foreign odors, visual access to arousing or potentially frightening stimuli or other animals should be avoided.

Visual Stimulation

- Mobiles
- Lava lamps
- Perpetual motion
- Aquariums
- Televisions
- Bubbles



Room with a View



Olfactory Stimulation

- Novel scents in air (never on bedding)
Extracts mixed with water (vanilla, banana, almond, etc.)
- Pinch of dry spices (cinnamon, cumin, nutmeg, ginger) on the floor
- Prey scent – rodent bedding
- Catnip



Video - Spraying in Kennel

Video credit – Kelley Bollen



Active Olfactory Stimulation

- Scent boxes
- Tracking opportunities



Pheromones



Auditory Stimulation

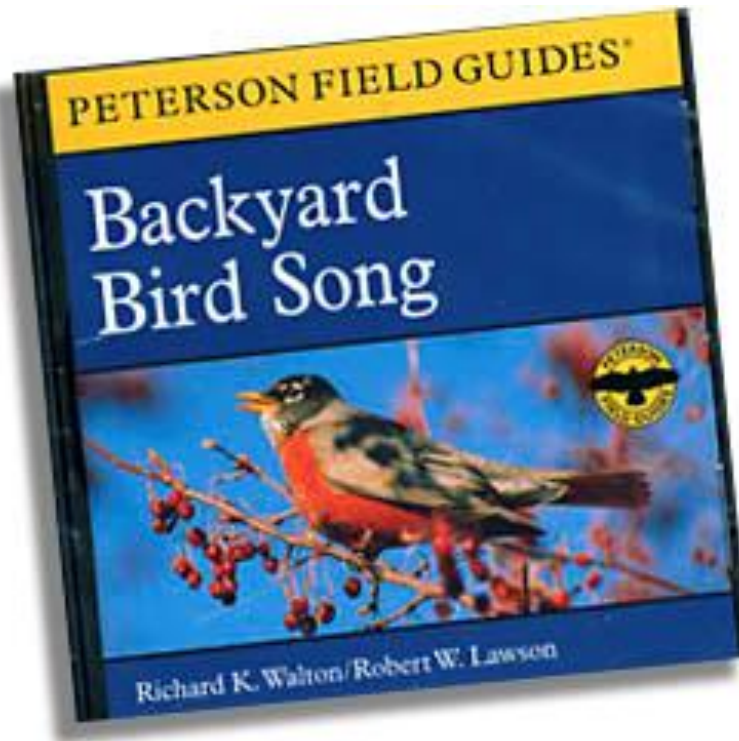
Care must be taken as to the type of sound, volume played and duration of exposure

- Music
- Audio books
- Sound machines
- Wind chimes





Biologically Significant Sounds



Video – Bird Song

Video credit – Kelley Bollen

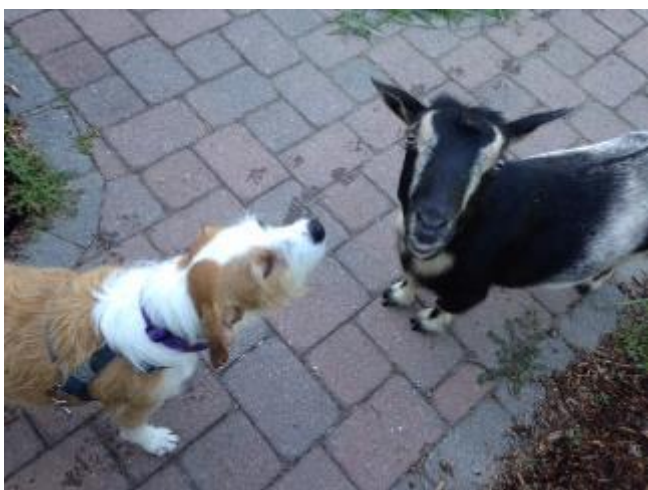


Taste Stimulation

- Novel food items – treats
- Variety in diet
- Ice blocks



Novel Experiences



Outdoor Access

- Fresh air
- Sunshine
- Visual
- Auditory
- Olfactory



A Change of Scenery



Ensure VARIETY

DATE	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Sun	
<i>Meal in Kong/Feeder ball</i>								
<i>Radio - soothing music</i>								
<i>Olfactory Enrichment</i>								
Air Freshener spray								
Tracking Game								
Find It Game								
<i>Exercise</i>								
On-leash walks								
Aerobic (running)								
fetch								
chase games								
agility								
recall games								
<i>Social Contact (human)</i>								
sit quietly								
petting								
brushing								
massaging								
"do nothing"								
<i>Social (with other dogs)</i>								
play group								
<i>Clicker training</i>								
basic commands								
tricks								
impulse control								
free shaping games								

Ensure VARIETY

- Schedule regular assessments
 - ✓ Individual level
 - ✓ Programmatic level
- Remember the 4 steps:
 1. OBSERVE
 2. RECORD
 3. REVIEW
 4. ADJUST

Questions??





SAWA Best Practices Webinar Series: Animal Enrichment

aspcapro.org/animal-enrichment-webinar-series

- **Animal Enrichment Best Practices** (*recording*)
- **How to Plan & Track the Best Enrichment Program Ever** (*recording*)
- **Do Try This At Home: Cheap & Fun Enrichment Ideas for Shelters**

Wednesday, February 21, 3-4:30 ET