

Ideas for Dog Learning Activities

Beginning Level

Need more ideas for your dog project? There are hundreds of things you can do! This list is organized by topics that match the chapters in the 4-H *Dog Resource Handbook*. You are being asked to complete **at least five** activities each year. Use this list and your imagination, and then write your ideas in your *Dog Project and Record Book*. Have fun!

Characteristics of Dogs

- Explain the differences between carnivores and omnivores.
- Define the term “dog” and describe three dog characteristics.

Breeds

- Explain the purpose of the American Kennel Club.
- Name two groups of dogs according to the AKC and name five breeds of dogs within each group.
- Compare the purpose of sight hounds and scent hounds. Name three breeds in each group.
- Explain the purpose of the terrier group and name three terrier breeds.
- Explain the differences among standard, miniature, and toy poodles.

Conformation

- Define the term conformation.
- Define bite and determine what type of bite your dog has.
- Name three types of ear conformation and describe what type your dog has.
- Name the four main eye shapes and determine what eye shape your dog has.
- Define tail carriage and describe the common tail carriage for your dog.

Grooming

- Groom your dog.
- Describe your dog’s coat type and explain how to groom it.
- Name five types of grooming equipment.
- Discuss why you do not use human toothpaste when brushing a dog’s teeth
- Describe the steps in bathing a dog.



Selection

- Name five things you should consider before owning a dog.
- Describe your dog's living arrangements, including housing, bedding, and location of food and water.
- Explain why it is not good to keep a dog tied outside on a chain.
- Identify five problems that might occur if a dog is allowed to run loose.

Communication and Behavior

- Name three ways dogs communicate and include example from your own dog.
- Identify two reasons why dogs bark.
- Name three types of body posture.
- Describe three signs of a relaxed dog.
- Describe three signs of an alert dog.
- Name three signs indicating the play bow posture.
- Describe three signs indicating active submission body posture.
- Describe three signs indicating passive submission body posture.
- Describe three signs of offensive threat body posture.
- Describe three signs of defensive threat body posture.
- Pass the CGC test with your dog.
- Serve as a "crowd" member for the CGC test.
- Describe five ways to prevent dog bites.
- Demonstrate how to "stand like a tree" and "lay like a log" to prevent dog bites.

Puppy Care and Socialization

- Describe the five things you should do when preparing to bring a new puppy home.
- List five do's and five don'ts when crate training a puppy.
- Describe how to housebreak a puppy.
- Name five things you are responsible for when caring for a puppy.
- Establish an exercise routine with your puppy or dog.
- Describe how to feed a puppy and why you should be one the one to do it.

Beginning Training Techniques

- Describe positive reinforcement and show how to use it with your dog.

- Describe two ways to get your dog's attention.
- Play Puppy in the Middle with the help of one or more people and your puppy or dog
- Play Fast Food with your family and puppy or dog
- Play Hide and Seek with your puppy or dog.

Obedience

- List five types of inappropriate clothing for an obedience class.
- Show your dog in the appropriate obedience class.
- Enroll in an obedience class.
- Teach your dog basic obedience commands.
- Train your dog to do any of the sub-novice exercises as listed in the *Dog Resource Handbook*.
- Teach your dog to do any of the rally exercises as listed in the *Dog Resource Handbook*.

Judging

- Learn the sub-novice score sheet.
- Describe and demonstrate the dog errors (not the handler errors) in at least one of the judging exercises as outlined in the *Dog Resource Handbook*.

Showmanship

- Show your dog in a showmanship class.
- Work with your dog to perform at least one of the showmanship exercises described in the *Dog Resource Handbook*.
- Learn how to show a dog's bite.
- Learn how to show a dog that is normally tabled.
- Attend an AKC show that has Junior Showmanship.
- Describe five kinds of appropriate and five kinds of inappropriate clothing for a showmanship class.
- Keep a scrapbook of your showmanship activities.
- Learn the showmanship score sheet.

Performance Events

- Enroll in an agility class.
- Teach your dog at least one of the following agility skills: A-frame, open tunnel, closed or chute tunnel, tire jump, or pause table.
- Explain agility to someone.

Working Dogs

- Name five jobs for working dogs.
- Research one working dog occupation and record what you learned.
- Prepare and exhibit a poster on assistance dogs.
- Research the history of guide dogs.
- Read a story about an assistant dog and his/her partner.
- If certified, visit a nursing home or healthcare facility with your dog.
- Fulfill the requirements to become a 4-H PetPAL.

Showing Your Project Dog

- Write a thank you letter to a show sponsor or award donor.
- Describe the six elements of good sportsmanship.
- Show your dog at a fun match.

Anatomy and Physiology

- Identify 10 to 15 dog parts.
- Show where 10 to 15 dog parts are on your dog.
- Describe the purpose of the dog's pads.
- Identify one system of the dog and describe its function.
- Explain the purpose of chewing.
- Name one function of the endocrine system.
- Name the five senses of the dog and explain the purpose and function of each.
- Test your dog's sense of hearing by calling him from the same distance using different volumes and pitches of your voice.

Health

- Name and describe one disease.
- Explain the importance of vaccinating dogs.
- Check your dog for fleas.
- Go with your parent/guardian when he/she takes your dog to the vet.
- Explain why it is important to brush your dog's teeth.

Nutrition and Exercise

- Name three reasons why dogs should be fed high-quality diets.

- Name two advantages and two disadvantages of dry dog food.
- Name two advantages and two disadvantages of semi-moist dog food.
- Describe how, how much, and how often you feed your dog.
- Explain why you should not feed your dog chocolate.

Reproduction

- Explain why it is important to have your dog sprayed or neutered.
- Have your dog spayed or neutered.

Careers

- List and describe four dog-related careers.