

## **Boredom**

There are so many toys available for pets in the stores today, that you can easily become bemused with which ones are most appropriate for your pet. With so much variety, unless you have recently won the lottery you must make a choice that suits both the needs of your pet and your pocket.

Toys can be classed as either: -

- **Interactive**, (i.e. need somebody or another animal to play with), or
- **Pacifying**, (ones which reward the animal for his own actions).

Plies & tugging toys are interactive and not much fun to play with on your own, but with the family and other pets they're great for playing tug-o-war. Whilst food filled toys or edible dog treats are rewarding enough on their own. Boredom is a contributing factor to many pet behaviour problems and providing stimulating and interesting toys for your dog will provide psychological relief, achieve a sense of satisfaction and benefit their teeth too.

Safety is a very important factor when selecting toys. Most dogs love to chew and will chew enthusiastically, if this describes your dog then selecting a harder product will be necessary. Select a size that is too large for your dog to swallow and replace old worn out toys. Whenever a new toy is introduced, I would advise you supervise your pet until you are sure it is suitable and being used correctly.

Squeaky toys are great fun, but the squeaks themselves can be removed from toys very quickly by pets and become a danger if swallowed. Whenever choosing a toy to keep your pet amused and active, look at the toy from the pet's point of view. If you were an animal what benefit would you get from that toy? There are a whole range of toys available that can keep your dog from getting bored, which allow you to place a portion of the pets daily diet into the toy and then the pet has to spend time working for their meals. This activity keeps pets active, amused and mentally satisfied. All our domestic pets are fundamentally scavengers having to find their meals day to day and teaching them to work for a portion of their daily allowance is both natural and stimulating