

**WHAT IS A DOGS
STRONGEST SENSE?**



**WHY DON'T WE HELP
THEM USE IT MORE ?**

Did you know a dog can smell 100,000 times more than a human?



Since smell is their strongest sense it can also be the greatest opportunity. Sniffing can help with providing amusement, calming, reduce frustration and generally wear them out. By encouraging some healthy sniffing you do not need a big yard or running space to keep your beloved pooch happy and satisfied!

Why not make your dog a sensory garden?



Since the dogs strongest sense is their nose it only makes sense that we should use this to enrich their environment and help them use up excess energy by utilizing their mental energy in a positive and productive manner.

Some of the many reasons I would use a sensory garden:

- Encourage passive activities to encourage calm interaction
- It will keep your dogs mind occupied and reduce destructive behaviour
- Your dog is getting older but still wants to act young and can't
- Great activity for dog's who suffer from anxiety or other behavioural problems, especially if you are on a behavioural plan that restricts the areas your dog is ready to explore
- Excellent way to prevent boredom in small backyards
- Running or off lead exercise is not possible or recommended for your dog due to physical or other restrictions
- Encourages independance and reduces separation anxiety
- It is highly beneficial for all dogs to engage in fun, passive activities as too much physical exercises can encourage them to be over-alert and unable to choose to relax on their own

Things you can include in the garden!



Plants you can include:

- Pet grass
- Catnip
- Arthritis herb
- Raspberry lemonade Nemesia flower
- Marigolds
- Lavender
- Yarrow
- Cinnamon
- Valeria
- Any other plant or herb that is not toxic for dogs to ingest

Other items you may want to include:

- Stones
- Mulch
- Pea straw
- Sandpit
- Wading pool
- Windchime
- Water feature
- Obstacles or tunnels (old tyres, wooden benches, etc.)
- A range of different sights, sounds and textures to entice all of their senses you can be creative with what you introduce here

Some of the reasons why I made one for my dogs!



I have a very interesting mix of dogs with different temperaments; Kayan the Husky X is super relaxed and likes to keep the peace with everyone, Zuto the Kelpie X is full of energy and at times can be over-the-top and Mavro the big black guy lost his sight at a young age causing many insecurities. As they have hit maturity Zuto and Mavro have had some ups and downs with their relationship due to some undesirable behaviours from Zuto that can scare Mavro and a lack of patience and understanding from both of them.

Encouraging more sniffing helps them bond and interact in a non-confrontational way, it also gives Zuto something better to do than chasing birds out of the yard and barking at them. All feeding is supervised with these guys, so leaving food toys for them is not a good option for my home. Sniffing entertains and motivates them as much as a food dispensing toy would, it also has some valuable health benefits. Sniffing can be a displacement or avoidance behaviour; using this avoidance tool can over-time increase curiosity as they are allowed an opportunity to escape, therefore making this a very useful tool in many behavioural plans. Although it is more effort initially it's a great alternative to another food toy.

And the results are?



AMAZING!!
HAPPY DOGS!

They are comfortable spending more time together, Mavro has more spaces to hide his toys and then find them again. Zuto is decreasing his undesirable behaviours and spending more time with his brother instead of avoiding him. I have another way to redirect unwanted behaviours which over time will become a habit for all of them. Kayan loves to have a good sniff too and it gives him more spaces to practice his lying down and relaxing skills. Senses are such a big deal for Mavro as he is missing one so it gives him something else to do each day which he absolutely loves! 😊

Obviously this won't fix all your problems but it is just one more handy tool. Once set-up it is an affordable way to keep your dogs entertained, focussed and happy.