



We put a twinkle in your eye, a smile on your face, a song in your heart, skills in your hands, so that the time with your family dog will be some of the best times of your life.

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Issue 71

Living With Dogs: The Chase Is Up!

Is your dog a chaser? The urge to chase turns some dogs into frenzied running machines who are difficult to stop. Their brains seem to leave their bodies as they launch themselves after tennis balls, cyclists, cats, or every dog on the horizon. Chase behaviour can be embarrassing and obsessive, as well as dangerous. Some breeds may be more prone to chase-related issues, such as sighthounds who were bred to chase and catch prey, or herding dogs who were bred to control movement.

Did You Know: Just how good IS that nose?

The average dog brain is about one tenth the size of a human brain, however the part responsible for smell is around 40 times larger than it is in humans.

They have WAY more scent receptors than we do. For every one scent receptor a human has, a dog has around 50.

That wet nose actually assists your dog with their sniffing skills. This thin coating of mucus helps to capture scent particles as they draw in air.

Dogs have been trained to use their noses in incredible ways, and can detect mines, drugs, explosives and even cancer.

Appreciating canine sniffing superpowers might inspire you to let them sniff just that little bit longer on your next walk (they'll love it!).



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cont.

... the chase is up!

Chasing is inherently reinforcing for many dogs - it releases a burst of feel-good chemicals which are difficult to resist. This is why dogs may chase even when exhausted or in pain, or why your border collie only has eyes for the ball and won't engage in anything else in the environment. This lack of control isn't your dog being deliberately naughty - they are acting on instinct, performing a behaviour sequence completely natural to them.

If you feel your dog's chase behaviour has become an issue, the first step is to prevent them from practising this addictive behaviour. The more often they chase, the harder it is to break the cycle. This may mean your dog spending more time on lead and avoiding places full of chase triggers. If your dog is fixated on chasing cars, for example, seek out quieter roads or times of day while you work on things. Once your dog's brain and body have had a chance to disengage from frequent chasing, you can begin reinforcing the behaviours you want to see instead – like focusing on you. The key is to do this slowly so you and your dog are successful every step of the way. Reducing chase behaviour is possible. To enjoy a calmer dog and more relaxing walks faster, engage a force-free trainer to help.



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Dog In the Spotlight: Samoyed

The Samoyed descends from the Herding Laika, a dog bred originally by the Nenets people of Russia for herding reindeer. Nansen Johansen bought 33 of these dogs from the Nenets for his expedition to the North Pole in 1893. One of the dogs purchased for the expedition gave birth to a litter of all white pups, the original Samoyeds. Johansen noted that they proved themselves more than adept at both pulling sleds and hunting Polar Bears.

Today Samoyeds still find work on expeditions to both the Arctic and Antarctic, though of course most serve primarily as cheerful family companions. If you've spent time with a Samoyed you understand where breed nicknames like "Sammie smile" and "smiley dog" come from.

Samoyeds are active dogs who enjoy a good job or hobby. They're often to be found excelling at dog sports like agility, carting, flyball, tracking, mushing, and herding.



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