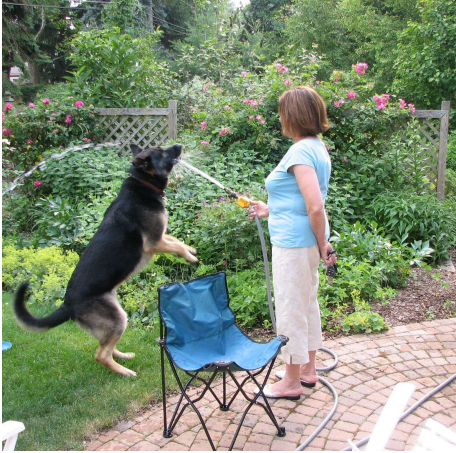


HIGH ENERGY DOGS



What can we do to help our high-energy dog?

As the owner of a German Shepherd, I can tell you some dogs have drive and energy at an almost incomprehensible level. A dog with lots of energy and not enough outlets will invent his own, and they usually present in the form of behaviors we don't like. Digging, barking, chewing and jumping are just a few examples. You can reduce these behaviors and even prevent them with a steady and large dose of exercise. Training will go more smoothly as well!

Like making a game out of anything and everything

How to reduce your dog's energy level

1. Nothing will exhaust your dog more than playing with another dog off-leash. Look for dogs in your area and approach their owners when your dog is not with you. On leash greetings aren't the best idea because dogs experience barrier frustration. You'll need to find dogs of similar age and size primarily. Play style is also an important factor. Some dogs want to play chase, while others want a rough wrestling match. You'll have to search for a few good matches for your dog.
2. Dog parks aren't for everyone or every dog. They sometimes have untrained overly aggressive dogs that shouldn't be there, but I think they can be helpful for high-energy dogs that have had a lot of socialization with many other dogs between the ages of 8 - 16 weeks. I would also be cautious about taking smaller sized dogs into a dog park when there are larger dogs there. Take a few moments to observe the dogs in the park before entering to see how they interact with other dogs and go for a walk around the park instead if you see overly rough play if that doesn't suit your dog's play style. Once in the park, watch your [dog's body language](#) to see what he's telling you.
3. Of course running, biking, cross-country skiing, roller blading, etc. are all great options, but even the best of us won't match the energy levels of most high-energy dogs. If you go this route though, start in a low distraction environment and teach your dog basic commands for moving in unison, like "this way" and "stop".
4. Hiking with a [long line](#). Many of us are fortunate to have forest preserves near us. If you go during less busy hours you can use a long line so that your dog has more freedom and can run much more than they would be able to on a 6' leash. I like to use a 30' long line (leash). You will have to be vigilant and watch for other people and dogs and you will need to constantly manage the slack. This type of line is significantly better than using a retractable line because the line doesn't hold constant resistance.
5. Tug of war taps into a genetic instinct dogs have in them and is an excellent way to wear them down. If pulling is hard for you, a bungee like rope with a toy or ball on the end, hanging from a fixture can sometimes be a good substitute. Before starting, review [The Rules of Tug](#) and later refer back to this [Quick Notes](#) document that I created.
6. Sniffing and other enrichment activities also use up your dog's energy. My favorite enrichment activity is a homemade foraging game, but you can also buy [treat puzzles](#) in various levels of difficulty. [My homemade foraging activity](#).

NOTE: Remember many unwanted behaviors will lessen if you get your dog's energy level down. This is especially true for dogs that are still in the puppy and adolescent phases.