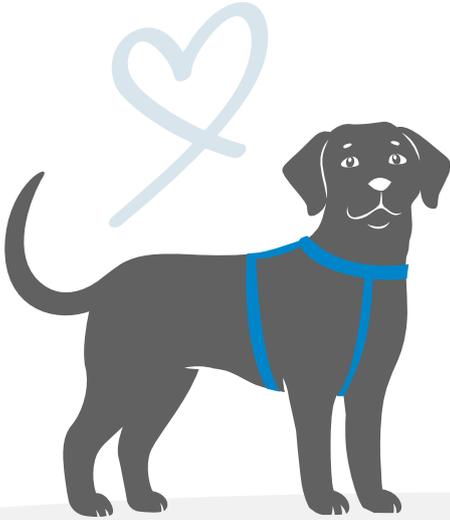


HAPPY, HEALTHY DOGS



Every dog needs certain things to feel happy, healthy, and safe.

Dogs that feel happy are easier and safer to be around – both as family members and as part of our wider communities.

Giving dogs what they need helps make them happy and healthy.

Dogs have their own likes and dislikes. Learning what your dog likes and helping them avoid things they find unpleasant or scary improves your dog's welfare.

Having good welfare means your dog feels good.

CHECK OUT OUR SUMMARY OF

WHAT DOGS NEED *TO BE HAPPY & HEALTHY* BELOW:



Health and Comfort

Dogs need fresh water, two meals a day, warmth in winter, shade in summer, and vet care.



Kind and Calm People

Treat dogs gently and with kindness. Watch their body language.



Good Company

Spend time together or with other dogs – whatever your dog prefers.



Safety and Choice

Let your dog make choices – like when to play, hang out, rest, or be alone.



Activity and Rest

Let your dog chew, lick, sniff, and explore every day. Make sure they get lots of sleep each day.



TOP TIPS

When dogs have what they need, they feel safe, healthy and happy. Happy dogs are easier and safer for people to live with. Every dog is different – take the time to learn what makes your dog feel good.

Use the tips below to create a happy, healthy life for your dog and a safe environment for your family:

WHAT DOGS NEED TO BE **HAPPY**



HOW YOU CAN HELP YOUR **DOG**



A quiet space to rest

Let your dog sleep without touching or waking them.



Sleep

Adult dogs need at least 14 hours of sleep a day. Puppies need even more: 16-20 hours! Dogs need to take naps during the day (4-6 hours) and sleep overnight.



Routine

Feed, play, rest, exercise and sleep at the same times each day. Dogs like to know what is happening next.



Kindness

Speak nicely to your dog. Don't punish them by yelling or hitting when they make a mistake. Instead, show your dog what you want them to do and give them a treat when they try to do it.



Time to relax

Dogs feel calm when they can chew or lick, so give them safe toys and treats. Let them sniff. Dogs sniff to learn and feel good.



Time with you and time alone

Dogs need to spend time with you every day. They also need quiet time alone.



To feel safe around other dogs (or avoid them if they don't)

Some dogs like playing with other dogs. Others are scared of other dogs. Watch your dog and learn what they like. Don't force them to be around other dogs if they don't like it.*



A safe home or yard

Check fences, gates and doors to make sure your dog can't escape. Don't tie up your dog or keep them in a crate too long.



For you to understand their body language

A dog's body will tell you how it feels. Learn how they move their tail, ears, mouth and eyes to tell us, and other dogs, how they feel.



Not to be touched when they don't feel like it

Some dogs love to be touched, others don't. Learn what your dog likes. Don't touch them if they are not asking to be touched. Let them walk away when they need a break.



*If you need assistance, you can contact the RSPCA's free behaviour helpline at mail@rspcansw.org.au