

How to Stuff a Kong®

A Kong is a hard rubber, snowman-shaped toy with a small hole on top and a large one on the bottom. A stuffed Kong can keep your dog occupied when crated or when you have visitors. It can provide mental stimulation and provide an outlet for your dog's energy. And this wonderful chew toy can go a long way toward alleviating mild separation issues and boredom—just give a stuffed Kong to your dog as you leave, or hide it so he has to find it and then excavate. (Be sure to provide stuffed Kongs randomly, not *only* when you leave, so they won't become associated only with your absence.)

Be sure to purchase a Kong that is big enough to stuff. Tiny dogs get a small Kong, but most small dogs get a medium Kong, medium dogs, a large or XL, and large dogs, an XL. There is even a size above XXL for very large dogs. Kongs can be stuffed with anything that is safe for your dog to eat. (*Never feed chocolate, onions, grapes, raisins, or spicy foods.*) Just plug the small hole with a chewy treat or peanut butter, flip the Kong over, and stuff! The stuffing should be well-packed so that your dog has to work for it, but not so tightly stuffed that your dog will give up. For inexperienced excavators, make it easy at first by packing loosely and leaving a cookie sticking out of the large hole.

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To feed your dog's meal in the Kong:

1. Measure out your dog's kibble.
 2. Fill the small hole with peanut butter, cheese or a soft dog treat. Flip the Kong upside down.
 3. Scoop a teaspoon of canned dog food into the large hole. Then, add a layer of your dog's kibble.
 4. Repeat step 3 until you reach the top, ending in a layer of canned food.
 5. Pour leftover kibble in a dish and place the stuffed Kong on top.
- (This is also helpful for dogs who eat their food too fast, or eat theirs and then try to steal another dog's food.)

Suggestions for frozen Kongs that last even longer... Kongsicles!

- If you have a puppy, moisten his kibble with water, stuff it in the Kong, and freeze it overnight. He'll have a fun, energy-expending breakfast the following morning.
- Try various combinations of canned food, gravy, noodles, rice and mashed potatoes mixed with kibble, and freeze.
- Put a dab of peanut butter in the small hole. Turn the Kong upside down in a cup. Fill full of water, chicken broth or fruit juice and **freeze**. (Liquid-only frozen Kongsicles recommended for outdoor use.)

If you're in a rush, a fast and easy way to stuff a Kong is to fill it with dog cookies and hot dogs. Squeeze the large opening so it elongates, then stuff with hot dog bits and cookies. The cookies should be just big enough to fit through the elongated hole. If you wish, finish with a bit of peanut butter smeared around the inside of the opening.

Banana Surprise – Plug up the small hole. Then stuff part of a slightly overripe banana (1/2 banana for XL Kong, less for smaller sizes), then a few dog treats or cookies, then plain yogurt. Freeze. Dogs love it!

Kongs are dishwasher safe. Experiment and create your own recipes!

