



Smart Dog Italia

PROBLEM SOLVING AND PUZZLE TOYS

Mental Activation toys are both *fun and educative*, because they are meant to stimulate, develop and enhance the natural cognitive abilities all dogs are born with. A smart way to have fun! Here are a few suggestions from Eleonora Mentaschi and our dog-experts to get the best from these educative toys:

1. Always use treats your dog craves for, like a piece of sausage or cheese. Remember: **motivation** is fundamental. A high motivation is the fuel that makes your dog think hard, work hard and finally figure out the solution of the problem!
2. Initially present your dog with an easy task like Starting Kit, Osso or Scacchiera of the Smart Dog toys line or simply an upside down glass under which you hide a treat. Go easy, **step forward very gradually** and make sure you do not overdo. Remember it is a fun time and cognitive activity together with your dog, not a competition!
3. Dogs are different from one another: what a dog finds easy to solve might be demanding for another and vice versa. **Respect your dog's** pace and be patient – never raise your voice nor scold him.
4. Mental Activation is like a brain-teaser: your dog needs to **concentrate and think hard** to figure out the solution. Therefore, it's very important you let him work in a calm place, with no distractions. **Always supervise** your dog while he's playing with the Mental Activation toys: you'll be able to see his progresses and assess the best way to proceed.
5. Place the toy on the floor and let your dog go near it, at his own pace. Don't talk, don't give him any verbal clue. Let his natural curiosity make its way through his brain; let him decide what to do and how to do it. Mental Activation is something **dogs choose to do** – you can't force them to.
6. Give your dog all the time he needs to find the solution. He might need more time than you expect, so **be patient and observe him** while he thinks, takes a break, goes back to it again, changes strategy... In case your dog leaves the toy, it's fine. It just means it's too difficult for him at the moment and you'll have to offer him something easier.
7. Remember not to help your dog. Mental Activation gives huge benefits only if and when **the dog works on his own, at his own pace, using his own skills**. Your job is to be there and supervise him, without interfering with his actions: his self esteem

will increase tremendously, as much as his ability to face stress, frustrations and daily life's difficult situations.

8. Should your dog become destructive, it probably means the toy you chose is not **the right one for him**, at the moment, because the level of frustration it produces is unbearable. Just take it away and offer him a more suitable, easier toy.

9. **Always end on a positive note!** Your dog needs to end the Mental Activation training with a success!

10. Our Smart Dog Team is always available for suggestions. Just send us your dog's videos and we will get back to you as soon as possible. Alternatively, you can get in touch with a Problem Solving Practitioner and together plan a proper educational path for your dog.

Always supervise your dog while playing with Mental Activation toys. In case you notice any breakage in the toy, we recommend you to take it away from your four-legged friend.

Follow us on FB and share your videos and pictures at "Smart Dog" and "Attivazione Mentale – Dog Problem Solving".

Choosing Smart Dog, you choose to respect Dog and Nature

Italian design combined with innovation and professionalism: Smart dog line has been designed by dog-experts, and each and every part of our toys is Made in Italy. We guarantee the **highest quality** so that your Dog can have fun and learn in total safety.

Smart Dog toys are made of a new patented material which is guaranteed to be **eco-friendly, non-toxic and harmless** for your dogs and children.

✓ **Eco-friendly:** this material is made of timber mills waste, pine wood-chips and tree cortex (therefore, no trees have been felled) and is totally recyclable, just as the packaging.

✓ **Non-toxic:** glue can be dangerous if licked or ingested. That is why Smart Dog toys are assembled by natural resins only.

✓ **Harmless:** if or when chewed, this wood-like material does not splinter. Moreover, all toys are coloured by harmless organic dyes.

✓ **No waste:** the production and packaging of our toys aim to reduce at a minimum the environmental impact.

✓ **Certified:** This material is certified with CE Marking ISO 9001, NP EN ISO 9001:2008, CARB 2, E1, **Forest Management Certification (FSC® e PEFC)**