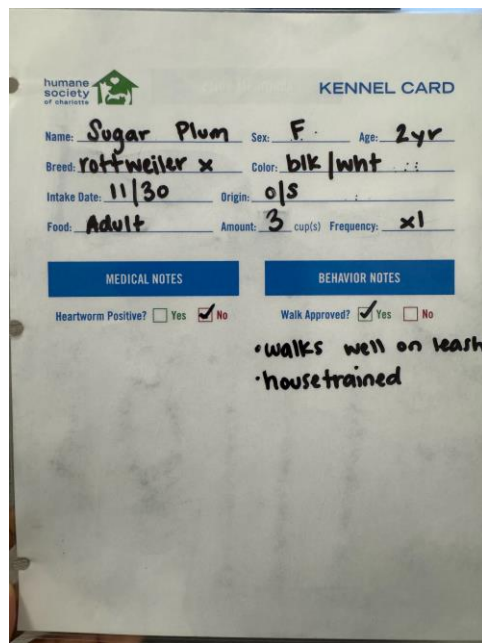


# HSC's Shelter Enrichment Guide

## Steps

1. Read the kennel cards in each dog holding area and cat holding area to learn about any special conditions, behaviors or rules such as dietary or toy restrictions.



humane society of charlotte KENNEL CARD

Name: Sugar Plum Sex: F Age: 2yr  
 Breed: rottweiler x Color: blk /wht  
 Intake Date: 11/30 Origin: o/s  
 Food: Adult Amount: 3 cup(s) Frequency: x1

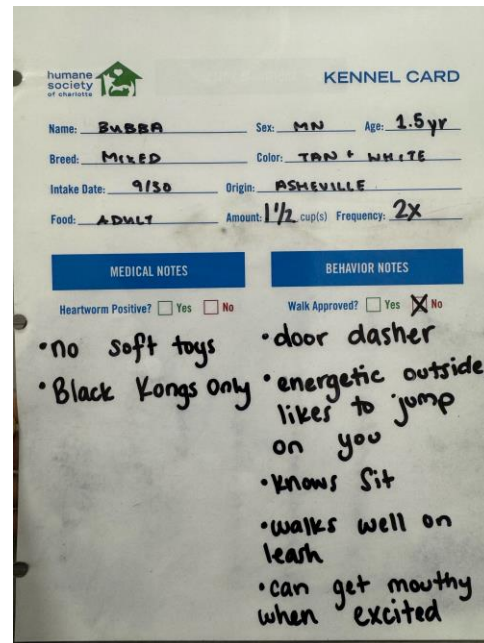
MEDICAL NOTES

Heartworm Positive? ☐ Yes ☒ No

BEHAVIOR NOTES

Walk Approved? ☒ Yes ☐ No

• walks well on leash  
 • housetrained



humane society of charlotte KENNEL CARD

Name: BUBBA Sex: MN Age: 1.5yr  
 Breed: Mixed Color: TAN + WHITE  
 Intake Date: 9/30 Origin: ASHEVILLE  
 Food: ADULT Amount: 1 1/2 cup(s) Frequency: 2x

MEDICAL NOTES

Heartworm Positive? ☐ Yes ☐ No

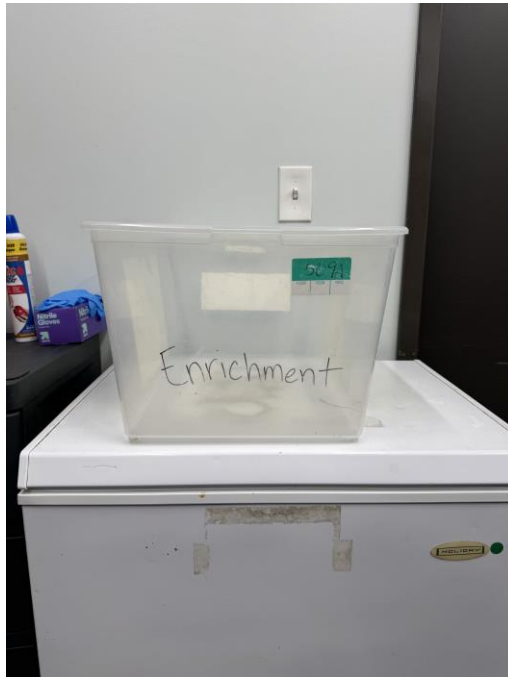
BEHAVIOR NOTES

Walk Approved? ☐ Yes ☒ No

• no soft toys  
 • Black Kongs only  
 • door dasher  
 • energetic outside, likes to jump on you  
 • knows Sit  
 • walks well on leash  
 • can get mouthy when excited

\*If the animal has an "Adopted!" note on their kennel, please refrain from giving them enrichment to reduce the chances of vomiting in the adopter's car.

2. Follow the enrichment schedule to know which enrichment activity should be given that day. If supplies are low for that activity, please choose a different one.
3. When giving out frozen Kongs, look inside the freezer to see if there are already some prepped. If not, prep some Kongs with peanut butter for the next volunteer or staff member to hand out when frozen.
4. For handing out enrichment, prep your items and place them inside the large plastic tub with "Enrichment" written on the side for ease of transport.



5. When handing out enrichment, start with our healthiest population first, before going into URI (Upper Respiratory Infection) areas. Some areas are flexible spaces, meaning they may turn into a quarantine or URI space when needed (see example below). Always pay attention to signage on dog holding area doors.



- a. For dogs, we recommend the following order of handing out items:
  - i. Dog Adoption
  - ii. Dog Isolation (aka Dog O/S)
  - iii. Clinic Intake (aka Dog Intake or Dog Holding 1)
    - 1. For Clinic Intake, please do **NOT** give enrichment to dogs/puppies in the wall kennels
  - iv. Dog URI (aka Dog Holding 2)
- b. For cats, we recommend the following order of handing out items:
  - i. Green Room (Kitten adoption area)
  - ii. Cat Adoption Towers
  - iii. Cat URI
    - 1. Always wear gloves and change gloves between each kennel when going into the Cat URI area.
- c. Please ensure you are giving the correctly sized item to the animal. There is a Kong sizing guide in this booklet. Animals should never receive an item small enough that they could swallow.

6. How to place enrichment in kennels in Dog Adoption and Dog ISO:

- a. Open kennel door:
  - i. Use your foot or knee to block the door while you open it a few inches.
  - ii. Take a few pieces of kibble or treats and show it to the dog.
  - iii. Toss the treats to the back of the kennel.
  - iv. Once the dog turns around, open the door more and quickly place the item inside.
  - v. Close the door and lock it.
  - vi. If the dog does not turn around, try to slide the item in, if it's small enough.

\*For many items, you may not have to open the door very wide at all and can squeeze the item through the door crack.







7. How to place enrichment in Clinic Intake and Dog URI:

- a. Close guillotine door by pulling bone out of holder and slowly releasing upwards.
  - b. Go to the side where the dog is NOT located and open the kennel door.
  - c. Place the item inside the kennel.
  - d. Close the door and go back to the white bone.
  - e. Pull the bone down and back into its socket to open the guillotine door.
8. How to place enrichment in Cat Towers:
  - a. Close the Cat Tower entrance door.
  - b. Open the kennel a few inches and place your item inside.
  - c. You may place your hand up to deter a cat from moving forward.
  - d. Close the door gently but quickly after the item is inside.
9. Once you're finished handing out all of the items, log each item in each individual animal's enrichment log. You're encouraged to place extra notes in the log such as if the animal engaged with the enrichment or notes on their behavior.
  - a. If the animal does not have a log, you can typically find blank copies in Food Prep drawers or you can ask the front desk to print a blank copy.
10. Return the "Enrichment" bin to Bulk Food Storage and clean up your work area so that there are no food scraps or peanut butter smears on the freezer.

## Additional Info

- When handing out dog enrichment, we recommend keeping a leash on you, in case a dog escapes their kennel.

## FAQ's

1. If a dog's kennel or kennel card says, "no toys", what qualifies as a toy?
  - a. Soft toys, rubber toys, hard toys, paper bags, Kong Wobblers, and any other enrichment item all qualify as toys.
  - b. If an animal has specific restrictions such as "no *soft* toys", then you can place items other than soft toys or paper bags in the kennel. Hard rubber toys such as Kongs, hard plastic toys, and treat dispensing toys are allowed.
  - c. Another specific restriction could be "Black Kongs only". Black Kongs are a harder material than regular, red Kongs so we have this restriction when a dog has shown they can tear apart a red Kong.

- d. For any other restrictions that you have questions about, please ask a staff member at the front desk, or email [volunteer@humanecharlotte.org](mailto:volunteer@humanecharlotte.org)
2. Why are some dogs not allowed to have toys?
- a. Some dogs are not allowed to have certain toys because they have a history of destroying AND ingesting them, which can lead to blockages and cause great harm to the dog.
3. What is “K9 i/d” kibble and where can I find it?
- a. K9 i/d” kibble is an easier to digest form of dry dog food. We recommend using this type of kibble for enrichment to reduce the instances of vomiting and/or loose stool in dogs which is commonly associated with an abundance of regular dog treats.
  - b. You can find this kibble in the Dog Adoption Food Prep area in the labelled white storage container.



4. Can I give enrichment to dogs that are not walk approved?
- a. YES, you can give enrichment to dogs that are not walk approved. Please read their kennel card and kennel window to best prepare you for the interaction.
5. Can I give enrichment to dogs that don't have their walk approved box marked either way?
- a. YES, you can give enrichment to dogs that do not have their box marked (unless they are located in the wall kennels). Please read their kennel card and kennel window to best

prepare you for the interaction. Remember to pull the guillotine door down and place the enrichment item on the side of the kennel where the dog is not located.

6. Can I pet the dogs and cats when giving enrichment?
  - a. We recommend against touching the animals while giving enrichment in case they resource guard, have a contagious disease, have handling sensitivities, are fearful of new people, etc.
7. I finished my shift quickly, what else can I do?
  - a. You can prep peanut butter Kongs, rubber toys, or muffin tins and place them in the freezer for future use.
8. What does the note “door dasher” mean?
  - a. Door dasher means a dog will attempt to strongly push through or escape from the kennel when you begin to open it. This note is meant to prepare volunteers to be extra careful when opening the door.
9. What should I do if an animal gets away from me/escapes their kennel?
  - a. For dogs:
    - i. Communicate to everyone in the vicinity that there is a loose dog. For example, you can yell out “Loose Dog!”.
    - ii. Ask for help from a nearby staff member or volunteer, if needed.
    - iii. Approach the dog and place a leash on them.
    - iv. Lead them back to their kennel.

\*Some dogs may hesitate to go back in their kennel. In that case, we recommend using treats to lure them in or ask a staff member or volunteer for help.
  - b. For cats:
    - i. Communicate to everyone in the vicinity that there is a loose cat.
    - ii. Ask for help from a nearby staff member.
    - iii. Approach the cat, pick them up and place them back in their kennel, unless they have notes of being fearful, dislike being picked up, or have a Staff Only note. In this case, ask a staff member to retrieve them.
10. Can I give enrichment to puppies and kittens?
  - a. Yes, you can give enrichment to puppies and kittens, as long as there are no more than two in the kennel. If there are 3 and above, please skip them as they may resource guard with



each other over the enrichment. If giving enrichment to a pair, please provide one for each animal, meaning there should be two enrichment items in the kennel.

11. What does “special diet” mean?

- a. A “special diet” means the animal cannot have certain foods or treats due to medical reasons such as allergies. Please do not give the animal food enrichment if you see this signage.

12. What about “no treats” signage?

- a. An animal may have this signage if they are on a weight loss journey or for allergy purposes. Please do not give the animal food enrichment if you see this signage.

13. Can I give enrichment to animals with cones on?

- a. Yes, you can give enrichment to animals with cones on. There are no restrictions on what you can give them.

14. Where can I find the items needed to make enrichment?

- a. In the Bulk Food Storage room, Dog Adoption Food Prep room, laundry room, and the Cat Adoption Food Prep room

15. What do I do when their kennel card has a different note than their kennel window?

- a. If you notice discrepancies between an animal’s kennel card and window, please ask a staff member for clarification.

16. Which areas/animals can I give enrichment to?

- a. For dogs, you can give enrichment in these areas:
  - i. Dog Adoption
  - ii. Dog ISO
  - iii. Clinic Intake (Dog Intake or Dog Holding 1)
  - iv. Dog URI (Dog Holding 2)
- b. For cats, you can give enrichment in these areas:
  - i. Green Room (Kitten adoption area)
  - ii. Cat Adoption Towers
  - iii. Cat URI

17. Should I take out the items after the animal is done with it?

- a. No, please do not take away the enrichment items when the animals are finished. Our Animal Care team will collect the items during their next cleaning.

18. I saw an animal eating something they probably shouldn't, what should I do?
- If you notice an animal eating an inedible object, please immediately alert a staff member. Do NOT go inside and take the item away.
19. I saw something online that looked like enrichment, can I bring my own things for the animals?
- Please only make the approved items on the list. If it is on the list, you are welcome to purchase and donate items for our shelter animals. For other items, please email [volunteer@humanecharlotte.org](mailto:volunteer@humanecharlotte.org) for approval.
20. An animal did something that was concerning to me, who should I tell?
- If you have a medical or behavior concern, please scan this QR code and fill out our concern form online



### BEHAVIOR CONCERN FORM

To share a behavior concern with  
our team, please scan below:



### MEDICAL CONCERN FORM

To share a medical concern with  
our team, please scan below:



21. What if I have an immediate question about enrichment and no one is around to answer it?
- If you have a non-emergency question, but the question impacts whether or not you should give an item to an animal, we ask that you veer on the side of caution and skip enrichment for that animal.
  - If you have an emergency question, please find any available staff member.

22. What should I do if I have a question that this FAQ didn't answer?

- a. Please ask a staff member at our front desk or email [volunteer@humanecharlotte.org](mailto:volunteer@humanecharlotte.org)

**Thank you for providing enrichment to our shelter animals!**