

 Absolute Dogs®



# PLAY SUCCESS

HAVE FUN - 10 PLAY GOALS



## PLAY TIP 1

# FUN, FUN, FUN!

### Smile and have fun

Play is about **FUN!** So many people treat play as an exercise, it's not an exercise its **PLAY!** So lose yourself, go wild, lower or lose your inhibitions, get silly, go wild, get on your hands and knees, play hide and seek, run and dance and lose yourself like no one is watching!

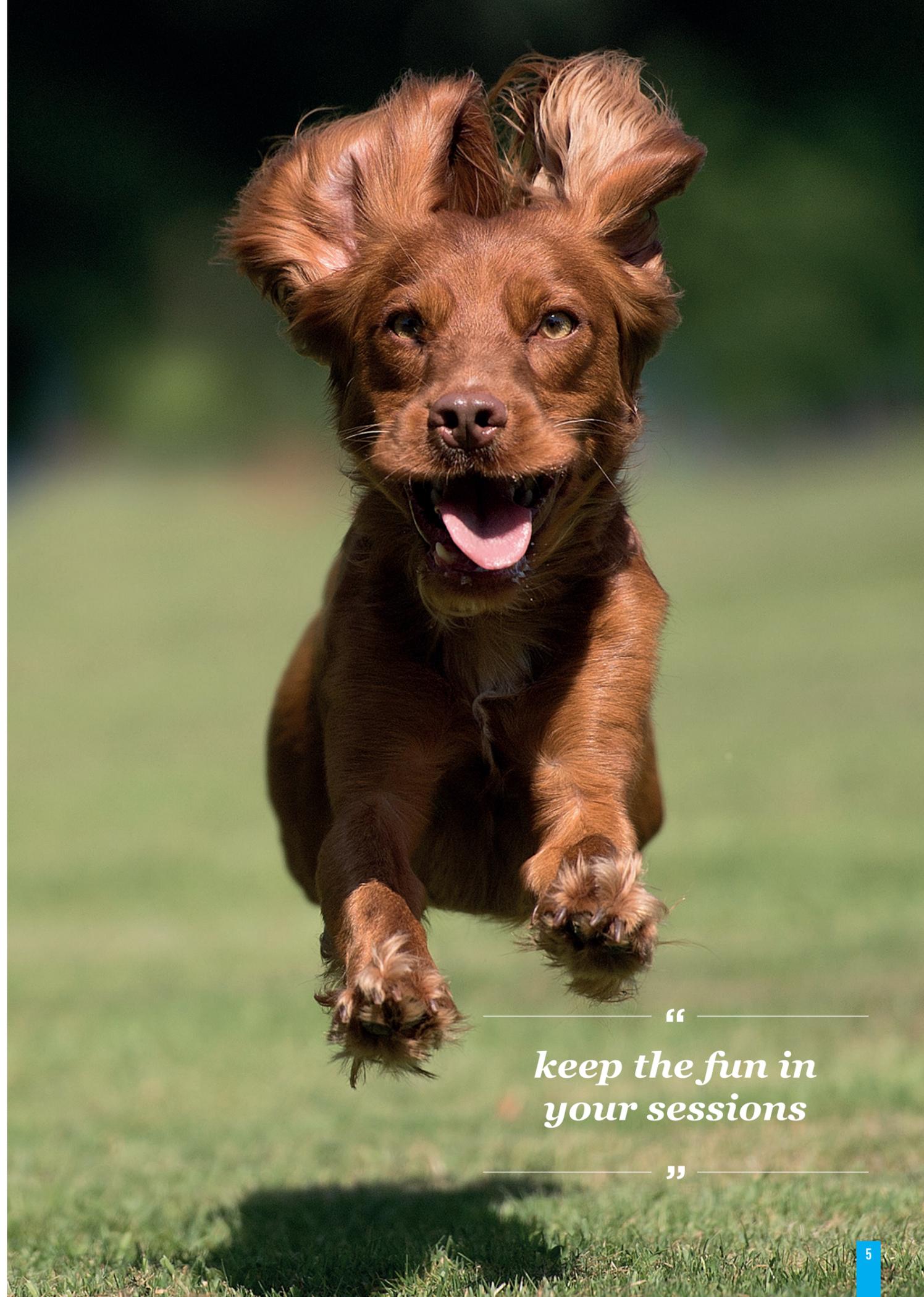
“  
*smile and  
have fun!*  
”

## PLAY TIP 2

# IT'S GOTTA BE A FUN TIME, NOT A LONG TIME

### Short & Sweet

So how long should a play session be? Well, how long is too long? What's a good time? How long is a piece of string? Play is something that is **FAST** and **FUN**, remember it doesn't need to be a duration thing, short and sweet and engaged is the key to success! You need to keep the engagement up and remember that 30 seconds of pure bliss is better than 2 minutes of average energy! Don't time your sessions rigidly but do keep an eye on them and always try to keep them spontaneous! Spontaneity is super for creating more **AWESOMENESS!**



“  
*keep the fun in  
your sessions*  
”

## PLAY TIP 3

# LOWER THE PRESSURE

### Easy wins for your dog

So many people pressure play, stress it out and in ways that you are not even aware sometimes! Give your dog EASY WINS, let them lead the game, dance with your dog, try to make it action packed but not over facing, now that's a fine art and a balancing act! If your dog doesn't want to play then give him some down time and chill. Try again later, and adapt the arousal to suit but don't over pressure and don't stress yourself or your dog out trying to make it happen. It really needs to feel good. We have learnt this most of all with our cocker spaniels who are not chase driven, they need to be in the mood!

“  
*give your dog  
some down time  
to chill*  
”

## PLAY TIP 4

# LET YOUR RELATIONSHIP GROW WITH TRUST

Enjoy spending some good time together

We want to build big hearts and unbreakable bonds through relationship and trust. Make the game or the chase **CHALLENGING** but **ACHIEVABLE** for your dog, look after them in the game and make sure that you are in it together. Neither of you are winning or losing you are enjoying spending some good time together. Make sure you play safely and fairly and look after that element of **TRUST** between you!



“  
*build big  
hearts and  
unbreakable  
bonds*  
”



## PLAY TIP 5

# STAY ON TASK!

### Stay engaging

Remember **ANIMATION** and **ACTIVATION** action in all things play! Stay engaging and stay on task, with play you need to become the creator and the innovator of the game and when you are playing give your dog all of yourself. For example, sometimes I'm playing around the competition arena with one of my dogs and someone will come up to me with questions or friendly things to say but I politely let them know I'm busy and will catch up with them really soon! Try to give your dog your time, after all he is giving you his, and you are building up that trust **STEP BY STEP!**



“  
*when you are playing give your dog all of yourself*  
”

## PLAY TIP 6

# BUILD DESIRE!

### Stay engaged

Desire is the key to it all, it doesn't come over night, we grow it step-by-step, stage-by-stage, and we develop it and see it blossom and come to fruition as fun, trust, relationship as our time together develops. Desire is what makes them tick, this is what gets **THEIR HEARTS BEATING**. From a pine cone to their favourite tug-e-nuff toy, our dogs chose their best reinforcers, those that their hearts desire and we grow together from there. Don't be scared to think outside the box. Dogs aren't always predictable or 'normal,' go **WILD!**

“  
*desire is  
what makes a  
dog tick and  
what gets  
their hearts  
beating*  
”



## PLAY TIP 7

# THINK TRANSITIONS

### Dogs love transition

When playing with your dog think about the transitions. These are KEY to great games, start when the dog is in a good mood for the game, keep the energy up and engaging and then stop before the moment is lost! Hide the toy, down your pants or up your jumper, wherever you can lose it quickly. And then look at your dog like that was fun, where did it go, we LOVE to play! It's super key that work and play roll seamlessly into one by the end of it all. It shouldn't take long but it is worth paying attention to what's happening - a video session is always worthwhile to see what's really happening in your play!

“  
*transitions are  
key to great games*  
”

## PLAY TIP 8

# DOES YOUR DOG HAVE A RELEASE

### Get a fail-safe release

We don't teach a release until our play is crazy feral. If we can still get the toy back when our dogs re grip we don't teach a release, we simply whisk it away, there is no point taking more control over the toy and what your dog does with it if you can still steal it back, we want them crazy for it before we put any control over it where possible. When we do teach a release we make sure we keep value on the toy. Whilst we want our dogs to be polite and release its also really important for us that our dogs want their toys and understand they can have their toys and enjoy them without too much control early on in their world of games!



# PLAY TIP 9 THE RE-GRIPPER

## Sort out the re-grip!

So here at absoluteDogs sloppy mouths lose dinner, what do we mean by this? Well if you have ever been nipped as your dog goes to re-bite his toy you will know what we mean. Basically if your dog chomps on his toy rather than has a good and full grip, then you can work harder on this principle. Every time your dog goes to re-grip, give the toy a little pull away, don't hand it back, no self respecting rabbit would go back to allow the dog to re-bite him and you should treat your toy the same! So if your dog goes to re-bite the toy, then try to gently pull it away, very very quickly he will bite with better grip and you won't see him re-grip!

“  
*sort out  
the re-grip!*  
”

## PLAY TIP 10

# KEEP THE ENERGY HIGH

### Keep the energy up!

When you play with your dog, the energy is magic, it feels refreshing, exciting, sometimes even thrilling and you want to do it again and again! It's addictive! If it's not, then get the energy up!

A few top tips to up the energy!

- Listen to some awesome music before and whilst playing
- Go for a short run beforehand
- Have a quick snack before playing
- Let your dog chase you around something, in our old house the sofa on carpet was perfect, as you could easily get away and play a good game of catch me if you can!

“  
*when you  
play with your  
dog the energy  
is magic*  
”



## BONUS PLAY TIPS

# PLAY REAL & PLAY TRUE

Be aware of when to play, be kind to yourself and be kind to your dog, we are human and they are not robots, sometimes we aren't feeling like playing and neither are they. Pick your times carefully and think about where your energy is and also where theirs is. Have you had a long day? Have they worked hard all day? Are you feeling light and fun or are you on a mission? Does that suit your play partner and how they want to work? Remember we want the best we can get for you all and your relationship and it's all about what works for the **TEAM!**



## BONUS PLAY TIPS

# THINK HABITAT

It's not always easy for every dog to play everywhere, come to think of it it's not even easy for every owner to play everywhere! Think hard on whether the place that you have chosen to play suits your dog with their current confidence and energy state. It takes a lot to be that confident to play and be yourself in all new places and sometimes dogs are very vulnerable to what's going on in their environment. Be mindful of this and grow this confidence gradually and add to the bank account of success and happiness for you both!

**THINK HABITAT**



## BONUS PLAY TIPS

# CATCH THEM DOING SOMETHING RIGHT

Okay rather than look for the things you don't like, be an optimist, go for the things you do like, for example was there anything you did like? Even if it was just a glimmer of something more optimistic or energetic? Think positive and look for the good in every situation, we are growing this from the ground up and we may have to grow play in tiny increments. It's not about the outcome and the final destination it's about the journey and discovery and relationship you build on the way!





**Absolute Dogs®**

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