BULLDOGGY CO

Too-Hot-To-Walk Plan

1. Check before you go. Look at the forecast the night before. If it's hot or humid early, plan an indoor day. On milder days, walk at sunrise or late evening only.

2. Do the hand test. If you do go out, put the back of your hand on the footpath for five seconds. Too hot for you means too hot for paws. Keep to grass and shade and keep it short.

3. Set up a cool base. Shut blinds, run the air conditioner or a fan, and put out more than one bowl of fresh water. RSPCA Queensland suggests dampening their bed or mat.

4. Prepare the lick mat. Spread a thin layer of dog-safe wet food or yoghurt, freeze it, and bring it out in the hottest part of the day.

5. Day 1: one sniffing game. Show your dog the hide-and-seek toy with the tail half poking out. Let them pull it. Praise and repeat three or four times, then put it away.

6. Day 2 to 3: make it harder. Tuck the tail fully into the pocket, or hide the storybook pieces deeper. Hide a toy behind a cushion and let them find it.

7. Add short fetch. In the coolest room, give two or three slides of the indoor fetch toy, then a rest. Watch their breathing and stop early.

8. Week 1: build a routine. Aim for a few short sessions spread through the day: a sniffing game in the morning, the frozen lick mat at midday, gentle fetch once the house cools in the evening.

9. Week 2 onward: rotate. Swap toys every couple of days so they stay interesting. Mix in five minutes of basic training, such as sit, drop and find it, for extra brain work.

10. Watch every session. If your dog pants hard, drools heavily or seems wobbly, stop, move them somewhere cool and check the warning signs above. For days when the weather cools and your dog has energy to spare, see our Needs to burn energy page.

From our guide:

bulldoggyco.com.au/guides/too-hot-to-walk-my-bulldog.html