

Breed-Specific Exercise Needs

Daily targets by energy tier, with example breeds

Low (~30 min/day)

Short walks plus light play. Examples: Bulldog, French Bulldog, Pug, Cavalier King Charles, Shih Tzu, Pekingese, Basset Hound, Maltese. Brachycephalic breeds need heat- and humidity-aware pacing — collapse risk is real.

Medium (~45–60 min/day)

A solid morning walk plus an evening play session. Examples: Beagle, Cocker Spaniel, Corgi, Boston Terrier, Dachshund, Greyhound (yes, the couch potato), Standard Poodle. Mix walking with sniff work and short fetch.

High (~60–90 min/day)

Two structured outings plus mental work. Examples: Labrador, Golden Retriever, Boxer, Vizsla, Australian Shepherd, Siberian Husky, Weimaraner. Without structured outlet, these dogs build their own (chewing, digging, fence-running).

Working (~90+ min/day, plus job)

Border Collie, Belgian Malinois, German Shepherd, Cattle Dog, Jack Russell. Pure exercise isn't enough — they need a job: scent work, agility, herding, fetch with retrieve protocol. Without it, behavior problems are nearly guaranteed.

Puppies · the 5-minute rule

Old guideline: 5 min of structured exercise per month of age, twice daily. Modern revision: structured/repetitive impact (jogging, jumping) yes — but free play, sniff walks, and exploration are good at any duration. Avoid forced repetitive impact on growth plates until ~12–18 months.

Mental enrichment counts

15 minutes of nose work or a frozen Kong ≈ 30 minutes of leash walking for tiring out a working-line dog. AVSAB-recommended enrichment: scent games, training reps, food puzzles, novel environments.

Sources: AKC Breed Energy Profiles · AVSAB Position on Enrichment · Companion Animal Welfare Council