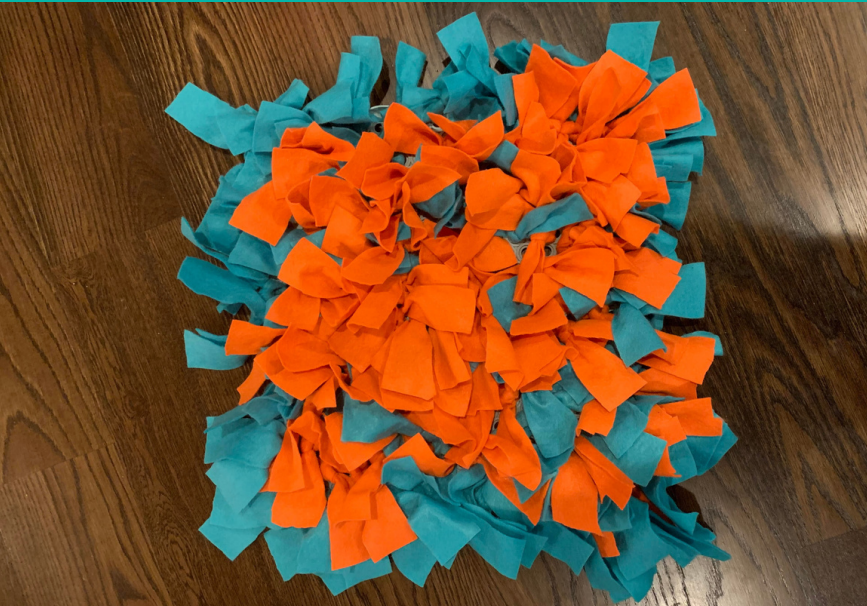




snuffle mats



Snuffle Mats for Homeless Pets

There are many reasons an animal may end up at a shelter or with a rescue group. According to the ASPCA, approximately 7.6 million companion animals enter animal shelters nationwide every year. Shelters are in constant need of items for these animals.

The Snuffle Mat is a homemade toy that provides a dog with an opportunity to sniff and search for hidden treats. It stimulates a dog's natural foraging instincts by mimicking the hunt for food in grass and fields, stimulating their noses and brains to earn their meals. Dogs prefer to discover their world using their sense of smell, so it's easy to understand why dogs love the snuffle mat so much.

MATERIALS

- Plastic sink liner or rubber anti-fatigue mat with pre-cut holes
- Sharp scissors
- One yard of fleece fabric (two or more colors make for a colorful mat!)

CONVERSATION STARTERS

- Do you get bored sometimes? Dogs and cats living in a shelter do too! What are some things dogs or cats would do if they weren't living in a shelter?
- Pets need to receive the right love and attention from their owners. What are some ways to care for dogs and cats?

START A RIPPLE OF GIVING

- If you are considering getting a pet, try fostering a shelter animal for a few weeks. This helps you understand the care that is needed and helps to socialize the animal too.



DIRECTIONS

1. Cut the fleece into 10–15 inch strips about 2–3 inches wide. The exact size will depend on the thickness of your mat. You will need at least as many strips as there are holes in your mat. Great snuffle mats have two strips per hole.
2. Choose one color of fleece strips.
3. Double knot the strips along the entire edge of your mat. Loop the strips through each hole, filling in the inside of the mat.
4. Choose the second color of fleece strips and flip the mat over.
5. Double knot the strips in the opposite direction of your first color strips. Push all the fleece through the holes and flip the mat back over to double knot the loose ends. This step saves time so that you're not constantly flipping the mat.
6. Hide your dog's kibble or favorite treats in the snuffle mat and let them forage!

NEXT STEPS

Pebble Tossers has partnered with LifeLine Animal Project to provide Snuffle Mats. Email volunteer@pebbletossers.org for details on how to deliver the Snuffle Mats to LifeLine Animal Project.

Other shelters and rescue organizations that may accept the Snuffle Mats include:

- Atlanta Humane Society
- FurKids
- PAWS Atlanta
- Bosley's Place

REFLECTION

Have your family come together after you have made the snuffle mats. Come up with 5 words that describe the day's experience and talk about these questions.

- Why was it important to do this project? How did you help?
- What was it like to work together as a family for this project?
- What was the most fun part of the experience?
- What else can you do to help animals?

