

Puppy Love

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Round & Round We Go...

While it is true that your little doxie might never ride a Merry-Go-Round, he may still do his own version of “round and round we go” before lying down. Wildlife biologists believe the circling behavior provides an evolutionary explanation for this innate behavior and is related to behavior seen in wolves today. Circling gives a wolf a final opportunity to check for lurking predators and to drive out undesirable inhabitants such as snakes and insects from their nest before lying down. In addition, wolves using their innate survivor skills, have adapted to the climate where they live and have learned to rearrange the soil and foliage around in their nest to protect them from extreme heat and cold. Many experts believe domesticated dogs inherited circling behavior from their distant relative, the wolf. However, it is a true some dogs still display circling behavior but it is not consistent with all dogs at all times.



Shu Shu lives in Ohio enjoying life with his adoring and loving dad.



The Circle Dance

A more contemporary theory is that dogs just want to be comfortable and perform the circle dance to create their own personalized nest. When outdoors they will get rid of grass, snow and leaves and then rearrange their nest to their liking. While indoors they rearrange their bedding to get their nest just the way they want it before they snuggle into their nest for a good snooze. Many pet parents use bedding that is permanently formed so their dogs miss out on this activity that possibly gives them much pleasure. A possible solution is to have both types of bedding at home to see which bedding they prefer, they might actually like both depending on their mood and their closest proximity to their family.



Excessive circling can be a signal that something is wrong. If your dog has difficulty settling down even after making several revolutions, consult your veterinarian. It could be a sign of arthritis or neurological disorders, such as spinal cord or back problems.



Dogs enjoy the thrill of twirling around just like humans do and it is hard to beat the Merry-Go-Round for the human experience. Zivabella and Reinibelle are on their first ride at the International Equestrian Park in the Blue Ridge Mountains.



A dog teaches a boy fidelity, perseverance, and to turn around three times before laying down. (This works for girls too.)

by Robert Benchley