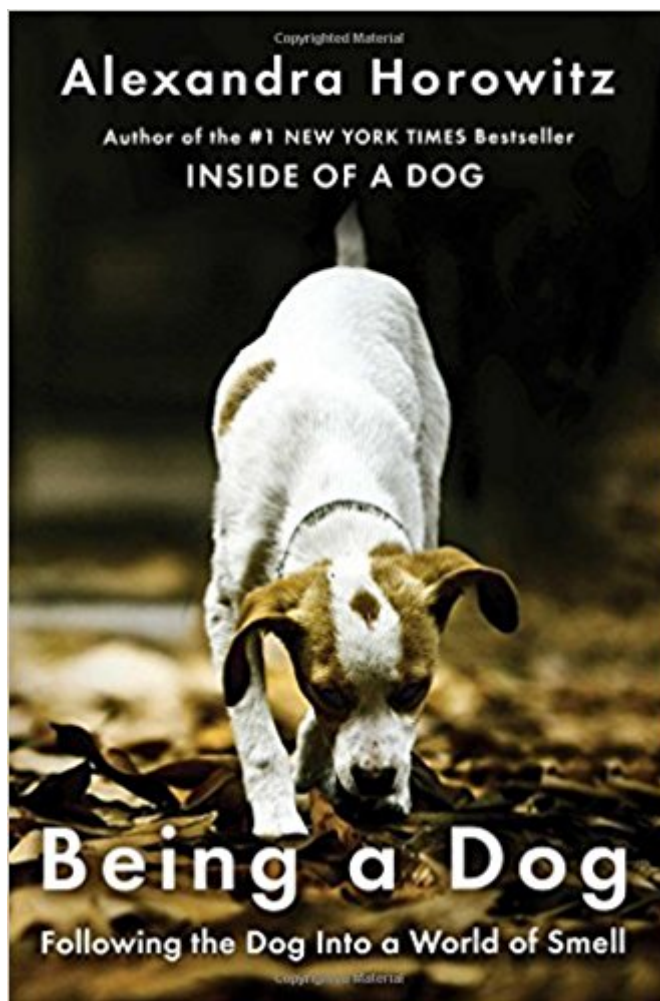


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Being A Dog: Following The Dog Into A World Of Smell



Synopsis

A New York Times Bestseller A Science Friday and Library Journal Best Science Book of the Year
Alexandra Horowitz, the author of the lively, highly informative New York Times bestselling blockbuster *Inside of a Dog*, explains how dogs perceive the world through their most spectacular organ—the nose—and how we humans can put our under-used sense of smell to work in surprising ways. To a dog, there is no such thing as “fresh air.” Every breath of air is loaded with information. In fact, what every dog—the tracking dog, of course, but also the dog lying next to you, snoring, on the couch—knows about the world comes mostly through his nose. In *Being a Dog*, Alexandra Horowitz, a research scientist in the field of dog cognition and the author of the runaway bestseller *Inside of a Dog*, unpacks the mystery of a dog’s worldview as has never been done before. With her family dogs, Finnegan and Upton, leading the way, Horowitz sets off on a quest to make sense of scents, combining a personal journey of smelling with a tour through the cutting edge and improbable science behind the olfactory powers of the dog. From revealing the spectacular biology of the dog snout, to speaking to other cognitive researchers and smell experts across the country, to visiting detection-dog training centers and even attempting to smell-train her own nose, Horowitz covers the topic of noses—both canine and human—from surprising, novel, and always fascinating angles. As we come to understand how complex the world around us appears to the canine nose, Horowitz changes our perspective on dogs forever. Readers will finish this book feeling that they have smelled into a fourth dimension—breaking free of human constraints and understanding smell as never before; that they have, however fleetingly, been a dog.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"I'm not entirely certain whether Alexandra Horowitz's *Being a Dog* has made me want to buy a dog or morph into one—but I do know that it was magical. Horowitz has crafted an utterly engrossing, witty, finely-observed narrative that will make you look at the power of the nose in a wholly new way." — Maria Konnikova, author of *The Confidence Game* and *Mastermind: How to Think Like Sherlock Holmes* "An incredible journey into the olfactory world of man's best friend." — *O Magazine* "Like a Mary Roach but with a solid scientific background to her credit, Horowitz is a skilled investigative reporter who takes readers into unfamiliar worlds, shares her experiences there, asks probing questions, and makes those worlds come alive. Dog owners curious about the lives of their pets will savor this book, but it deserves a wider audience than just animal lovers." — *Kirkus Reviews* "Fascinating...Horowitz combines the expertise of a scientist with an easy, lively writing style." — *The New York Times Book Review* "Horowitz explores the way dogs experience the world in this rich and absorbing examination of noses and scents. Both dog lovers and pop science readers will want to stick their noses in this book, and they may find themselves using their noses, like Horowitz and dogs everywhere, to experience the world more vividly." — *Publishers Weekly* "I have fresh appreciation for [my dog's] sniffing behavior." — *The New York Times* "Becoming more doglike, not surprisingly, can make anyone's life a little more vivid." — *Boston Globe* "A delight for dog lovers and anyone who enjoys the smell of breakfast, crayons, rich earth, fresh-baked cookies, and yes, even dogs. . . . *Being a Dog* is one great book to sniff out." — *Daily Citizen* "Spellbinding...This book will stay with you long after you've finished it." — *Forbes*, "The 10 Best Popular Science Books of 2016"

Alexandra Horowitz is the author of the #1 New York Times bestseller *Inside of a Dog: What Dogs See, Smell, and Know* and *On Looking: A Walker's Guide to the Art of Observation*. She teaches at Barnard College, where she runs the Dog Cognition Lab. She lives with her family and two large, highly sniffy dogs in New York City.

This is an outstanding book—for the right reader. It may not be what some readers expect in that much of the book is Horowitz exploring the human sense of smell as a way to better understand a sensory world dominated by smell rather than sight. When you finish you will better understand that

kind of world, understand the human sense of smell much better and your dog's sense of smell considerably better. Her writing is excellent. The book reads a little like science journalism and has a lot of first-person content as well as that person's two dogs. It's written with a light touch and some humor; you'll like her dogs by the end of the book, for sure. The major theme is that the world of smell is mostly overlooked by humans and that dog owners aren't very interested in their dogs' sense of smell. So pet dogs don't develop their full potential--and at the end Horowitz takes one of her dogs to what can be called smell training, and it's wonderful to read. The book makes it plain that smells are all around us all the time. A dog can smell the past from lingering smells, and smell the future in the sense of approaching storms. It's a vastly complex world mostly ignored by humans--one reason is that smells tend to concentrate close to the ground, so the dog's nose is a lot closer to the action, so to speak. As you read, Horowitz will take you on her field trips, which are fascinating. One is her field expedition (with a class) to smell city smells, in New York City. The intent was not to smell the city but become better at experiencing the city through smell as well as other senses. She describes at length, in a highly readable chapter, her visits to the Working Dog Center, which trains working scent dogs, who might become finders of the dead, tracking drugs, smell out insects, even cancer. Other sections of the book describe her expeditions with a couple of people training dogs to sniff truffles (in the Pacific Northwest), including a dog bred to smell out truffles, the Italian breed Lagotto Romagnolo. Another section is amazing--researchers into ecology rely on scats for a lot of information; the scat can be examined to determine diet, aspects of health, genetics can identify a particular individual and much more. Dogs can be trained to find specific scats for analysis, making wildlife population studies much easier and more accurate--and one dog can be trained on up to 20 species. One dog has been trained (encouraged might be a better word, the skill is inherent in most dogs) to detect killer whale poop at sea, which sinks in 30 minutes--and the dog has made aspects of orca study much easier. Another section of the book describes her exploring the world of professional human scent professionals--perfumiers and wine tasters. A human nose can be trained (though there are people who can smell little). And a trained human nose can better understand a dog's world. Still another examines human and other scents: we humans give off a variety of scents and each person's is unique. We give off odors from what we eat, from illnesses such as periodontal disease, from what we wear, and how we feel. Her point is that the chemistry of smell is complex but still chemistry and so is the human body. The book is full of intriguing information. Dogs have 200 million to a billion nasal receptor cells, far more than humans--and they may dream in smells as we do in vision. A dog's tail wagging spreads odors, because there are some scent glands in the dog's rear area. About a dozen muscles are dedicated

to moving the human nose around. The book explains quite well how taste and smell are related and how taste is connected to the brain (too complicated for a short review, but explained very well in the book).

I very much enjoyed her first book, being a dog lover and dog socializer for seeing eye lab pups and autism golden pups. I always want to better understand these amazing animals and their capabilities. However, in truth, I was somewhat disappointed in this second series book. It had some very interesting parts, but when it veered off into too many tangents about NON DOG related aspects of smell with humans, in medicine, in history, so in and so on I frankly got a little bored and wish it stay on topic, DOGS!

Horowitz has it right. I am a dog trainer and in her 2 books she has given me new insight into the dog world. She is a good writer, the books are well written and the information is priceless.

This was supposed to have been a gently used book. It was certainly handled with great care. I have found the information in this book very insightful and helpful. This is very beneficial to anyone who does tracking or nosework with their dog. Alexandria explains how the K9 nose works. I certainly recommend this book to those in the scent detection sports.

Enjoyable read for people who wonder what their dog experiences. Addresses what makes a dog do doglike things. Lot of fun with many, many interesting facts and insights. Best read after reading her first book "Mind of a Dog".

Book title more than a little misleading as it talks a great deal about human smelling. Does not compare favorably with Ms. Horowitz 1st book "The Inside of a dog"

Just started reading it. Absolutely fascinating. The analogies make her examples easy to understand. I am rapidly gaining a new found respect for our canine companions.

A great book to understand your best buddy.

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