

Why does my dog pant?



After a dog runs and plays, it opens its mouth, hangs out its tongue, and breathes very fast. Huff, huff, huff! Why does a dog pant?



Why?

1. A running dog gets hot inside, and it can't sweat like you.

You cool down by sweating. But a dog's body is covered in fur, and it has hardly any sweat glands. Just a few, on the bottom of its paws.

2. So a dog uses its wet tongue.

When a dog pants, air rushes in and out, very fast, over its wet tongue. Each breath carries water bits away, and every water bit takes a little bit of heat with it. That is evaporation, the same trick as sweat!

3. A cool tongue cools the whole dog.

The tongue is full of warm blood. As the tongue cools, the blood inside it cools too. Then that cooler blood travels around the body.

Try it! Pant like a dog

You need: the back of your hand and a little water

1. Lick the back of your hand, or wet it with a little water.
2. Now pant on it, like a dog. Huff, huff, huff!
3. Does it feel cool?

What happened? The air carries the water away, and the water takes the heat with it. That is just how a dog's tongue feels.

Video + more questions:
whywhywhykids.com/pant



scan with a grown-up