MOVIES STARRING DOGS: YOUR 2018 ENGLISH OPPORTUNITY

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2018 is the year of the dog, and it's a great year for you to radically improve your English! I have waited a long time for this. Of course, I've waited for you to make rapid progress in your English, but I have also waited eagerly for the year of my favorite animal.

They say dogs are man's (and woman's) best friend, so why not let our best friend help you increase your English ability? For many decades, Chinese people have been listening to English movies to improve their English. Now you can celebrate the year of the dog and improve your English at the same time. As the idiom says, "kill two birds with one stone." Below is a list of some of some of my favorite dog movies. I hope you enjoy them.

There are many things I love about Chinese people, and one of those things is their ability to find anything online. In the past, I would help my students improve their English listening by buying and lending DVDs, and before those were out, VCDs. Today's Chinse people don't need these outdated discs, which in the near future will be as extinct as dinosaurs. So, I'm not going to give you these movies on DVD, but I do recommend you find them online yourself, and enjoy them while you celebrate the year of the dog.

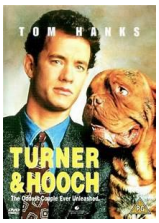
One final word on using movies for improving English: Of course, if you intend to improve your English, watch/listen to the movies in English, not Chinese. Actually, if your English is beginner level, it is OK to watch movies once in Chinese before re-watching them in English-only. That way you will understand the basic story before listening to the English. However, if your English level is intermediate, or higher, skip the Chinese altogether. Also, be sure you turn on both the English audio (sound) and subtitles. Even if the audio is in English, but you are looking at Chinese subtitles, but your Chinese brain will still focus more on the Chinese, which will greatly limit your English improvement. If you think your English listening is perfect, or if you are just testing your listening skills, you can turn off all subtitles, but in most cases, I recommend you turn on English for both audio and subtitles.

Here is the list. Look them up, turn off the Chinese, improve your English, celebrate the year of the dog, and enjoy!

Air Bud: Air Bud is the first of a series of 14 films. If you like sports and dogs, you will love these. If you only have time to watch one, watch the first one. They are all exciting, humorous, and excellent opportunities, for all ages, to celebrate the year of the dog while enjoying English.

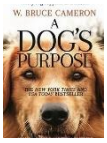
101 Dalmatians: The 1996 movie is based on a classic Disney 1961 animated movie. Although the original version was a children's movie, the later one is enjoyed by both kids and adults. The book, but the same title, is also a great tool for teaching kids (or beginers) to learn English reading.

Iron Will: A great film for all ages, about a boy and a dog sled race across the breathtakingly beautiful snowy countryside of Canada; you won't want to miss this adventure.



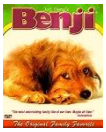
Turner & Hooch: You will certainly laugh while watching this detective comedy, starring Tom Hanks and Beasley the dog. An important English word you will need to know before watching this film: *K9*. K9 (canine) is used to describe a police dog.

Hachi: A Dog's Tale: Can you see the play on English words in the title? Animals have a *tail*, but a *tale* is a story. This British-American drama film is a story about a dog.



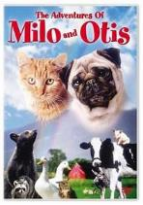
A Dog's Purpose: This 2017 American comedy-drama film, is based on a best-selling book by the same title.

Beethoven: Don't let the title mislead you. It's not about a famous music composer. It's a 1992 family-comedy film about a dog who escapes from a group of puppies that were stolen from a pet shop.

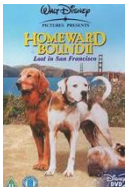


Benji: A series of five movies, Benji is a stray dog, who visits human friends. An older film, it was rated #3 for the year it first came out. This film is suitable for, and enjoyed by, people of all ages.

Eight Below: A movie set in ice-cold Antarctica, about dogs who were left behind when humans were evacuated because of a storm. Download the movie, set up English audio and subtitles, put on a warm heavy coat, and prepare for the ice-cold adventure!

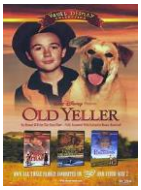


The Adventures of Milo and Otis: This one is a narrated children's show about a friendship between a cat and a dog.



Homeward Bound: Based on a novel by the same title, this 1993 adventure comedy is about a disobedient dog named Chance and his friends.

Scooby-Doo: This comedy adventure film, from 2002, is about a dog who helps his human friends to solve mysteries. The movie is based on the old TV series by the same name.



Lassie: This 2005 movie is based on a 1940 novel about a family that was having financial difficulties, so they had to sell their dog. The dog escaped from the new owners, and stared the five hundred mile journey back home.

Old Yeller: A classic, but popular, 1957 American drama movie. The dog is called "yeller" because the owner has an accent and pronounces "yellow" this way. This is a touching film that the whole family will enjoy.