

# Chewing

Chewing is a natural activity for dogs. Puppies WILL chew. And, older dogs that have never been taught what is acceptable/not acceptable to chew...will CHEW!! Puppies absolutely will chew on things due to their natural tendencies and their 'teething'. When 'teething', chewing actually provides physical relief. Think about a child that is teething, we provide them with teething rings, etc. Infants will even 'gnaw' on your hand or fingers. For pups, they need teething rings, TOO!. They are just like the infants in that they will chew/gnaw on anything available that will offer them 'teething relief'.

Several approaches can help. Have plenty of chew toys available. PICK UP all items that are inviting to the dogs UNTIL they learn what is acceptable and what is NOT acceptable to chew. DO NOT GET UPSET WHEN YOUR PUP CHEWS ON SOMETHING YOU DIDN'T WANT THEM TO CHEW! Instead, realize that you should have kept a closer eye on them and/or removed the inviting NON chew items from their environment.

A supply of Bitter Apple (spray and cream) can help. The spray can be used on most items without harming them. The cream can be used on furniture, cabinets, wood, metal items, etc. The Bitter Apple has to be reapplied regularly as it will gradually lose its effectiveness.

Pups and older dogs that have not been taught previously, can learn WHAT is acceptable/not acceptable to chew. To correct the pup/dog for chewing, you have to catch them in the act. Punishing or scolding 'after the fact' makes NO sense to them. If your pup/dog appears remorseful, it is because they are reading your displeasure and reacting to that...NOT the fact that they chewed something. Remember that chewing is 'natural' for dogs!

When you catch your pup/dog chewing something inappropriately, the [SHAKE CAN](#) is VERY effective and highly recommended. If using the shake can, follow the described directions and say 'NO CHEW, GOOD NO CHEW'. Immediately, divert their attention to an acceptable chew item (toy). Play with them for a couple of minutes. If you are consistent with this routine, they will quickly learn that 'certain' items cause that unpleasant 'shake can noise' to occur, AND these 'other' items are great fun and even get me extra attention.

Please know that for the first 'several' times you correct for chewing, the pup/dog will NOT associate the correction with the chewing behavior!!! It will take numerous repetitions and consistency and PATIENCE on your part. If you are being 'fair' to your baby, you will recognize and understand that altering the CHEWING mechanism is actually modifying an innate part of their existence. You cannot expect them to change an aspect this major in only a few exposures. You have to 'train' them. Give them a chance to LEARN what you want.

Some additional HELPFUL HINTS:

- 1) Chew proof your house. Pick up all items that will be INVITING to a pup/dog's mouth.

- 2) Keep ALL sock and shoes out of harm's way. If they chew your socks or shoes, it is YOUR fault for leaving them out...UNTIL your pup/dog has 'learned' what is acceptable for them to chew. By all means, DO NOT give them their 'own' shoe or sock. How can they tell the difference from 'their' shoe or sock and 'your' shoes and socks!!!!
- 3) Know that rug/carpet edges, couch skirts, and pillows are exceedingly enticing to pups and untrained dog's mouths. Block their access to these areas OR use the Bitter Apple.
- 4) NEVER let a pup or untrained dog out of your sight. Just like children, if they are somewhere else and quiet...they are into something...probably chewing something!!!
- 5) For teething pups, keep nylabones or gumabones in your freezer. Always have a frozen one available. These are very comforting during teething. You can even freeze a wet rag, if nothing else is available.
- 6) Plaque Attackers are also helpful. They can be frozen or unfrozen. The nobbiness seems to message their gums.

Above all, be patient...be consistent....be vigilant....be fair!!! Help your pup/dog to learn. Do not 'set them up' to fail or displease you. They really want to please you, they want to learn the rules. Your pup/dog will EVEN change their basic 'innate tendencies' to please you...IF you will take the time to TEACH them and give them the chance to LEARN!!

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