

There are many reasons for dogs to chew: self-soothing during teething, boredom, exploring, lack of mental and physical stimulation, separation anxiety or just because a dog is being a dog. Dogs explore the world around them with their mouths, they don't have thumbs. They use their mouth for investigating new things. Here are some helpful tips to prevent and manage inappropriate chewing:

Choosing toys and appropriate chew items

- Have a variety of appropriate toys to chew on.
- Your puppy should have access to different textured toys like soft flexible rubber toys or tough hard rubber.
- Puppies may prefer chilled or frozen toys for soothing purposes while teething.

Teach your dog how to play

Some dogs have not learned to chew or have been punished for chewing in the past. Encourage play time with these appropriate items. Try food puzzles, food balls or peanut butter filled toys.



Trade game

- If you catch your dog chewing inappropriate objects, play the trade game. Grab a more appropriate object, make this toy seem more fun than the object they are chewing. Reward your dog for making correct choices with a small game of play like, tug-of-war or a few treats for leaving the inappropriate object alone.
- Avoid punishment: it's not your dog's fault for chewing certain objects. Dogs do not understand right from wrong.
- Avoid chasing if your dog runs away with object. This will create a game of chase me; they will learn to play.
- Do not grab objects/toys from your dog. Dogs will learn to guard these valuable items even more the next time. These behaviors can become aggressive and dangerous situations.

Clean up!

Set your dog up for success. Don't give them opportunities where they can get into trouble. Have fewer inappropriate objects laying around and more appropriate toys to chew on.

Management

Create a safe place for your dog. Place your dog in a confined space, crate or behind a gate in an area where they cannot get into trouble with appropriate chews during unsupervised times of day.

Supervision

A dog getting into trouble is due to the lack of supervision. Keep a close eye on your puppy or have them in a safe place if you are unable to supervise.

Provide plenty of physical and mental exercise daily

- Dogs need to explore. Off-property leash walks for sniffing and investigating are helpful for social enrichment but not helpful for physical exercise.
- To meet a dog's daily physical exercise, they must have access to off-leash exercise at the dog's own personal top speed. Play a game of fetch in the back yard or off-leash park. (only take your dog off-leash if your dog has been trained to have a reliable recall).