

Why Does My Dog Chew Everything?

Chewing is a normal behaviour in dogs. In fact it is necessary to maintain the health of your dog's teeth and gums. Dogs chew for many reasons. However it becomes a problem when dogs chew the wrong things, and even a small amount of chewing can irreparably damage a valuable item such as a mobile phone or expensive pair of shoes.

The first thing to look at is how old is your dog? Puppies naturally explore the world with their mouths. As your pup starts teething he will chew to relieve the pain of his teeth coming through.



At this stage it is important to give him some toys such as kongs that he can chew, make these more interesting than things which you do not want him to chew. Prevention is also important here, and a crate can be useful to confine a puppy when he is not supervised so that he is not able to chew things he should not have.

If your dog is destructive only when left alone then this may indicate a separation related problem. Chewing is one way of a dog relieving anxiety when left alone.

Dogs may also chew through boredom and frustration if they are left alone for long periods and dog not get enough exercise.

A dog can also learn that chewing the wrong thing is a good way of gaining the owner's attention, and your dog can easily turn this into an exciting game of chase.



The following tips may help.

1. Put valuable items that are easily damaged out of reach of your dog
2. Provide your dog with plenty of toys that he is allowed to chew such as kongs, sterilized bones and stuff these with food to make them more attractive.
3. Supervise your dog so that he does not get the chance to chew the wrong thing.
4. Give your dog plenty of exercise so that he is tired and more likely to settle when left alone
5. If your dog does start to chew the wrong thing then redirect him onto a toy that he is allowed to chew.
6. If you suspect a separation related problem then it might help to set up a video camera to try to see exactly what your dog does when you are not there.

Some things not to do

Do not punish your dog for chewing something earlier, he is more likely to associate the punishment with your rather than his behaviour. It may mean he only chews when you are not there making the problem harder to deal with.

If your dog is causing a lot of damage then it may be worth consulting a dog trainer.